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# THE

## House of Assembly Debates

### (UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

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PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

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#### HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Pursuant to the Adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, March 09, 2010.

#### PRESENT

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

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

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR M.Sc. (Econ.)

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, 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:

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)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.*

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now in Session.

#### MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, March 2, 2010.

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

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

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I am in receipt of the following:

1. Accounts and Statements for the months of August and September, 2009, as prepared by the Accountant General.

## PAPERS

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

1. The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, 2010-2011.
2. The Schedules of Personal Emoluments, 2010-2011.
3. The Actual Revenue and Expenditure (Dead Heads) 2008-2009.

## GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the Appropriation Bill, 2010.

## FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the following Bills be read a first time.

1. The Environmental Levy Bill, 2010
2. The Charities (Amendment) Bill, 2010
3. The Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2010
4. The Appropriation Bill, 2010

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

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

10.20 a.m.

Tuesday, March 09, 2010

## STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Barbados, aware of the economic significance of cultural industries in the growth of GDP, in developing countries, has given notice of its intention to introduce a new regime of incentives, concessions, credits

and exemptions for the benefit of the cultural practitioners and approved corporate, governmental and other entities, as a means of facilitating the requisite investment and capitalisation of cultural projects, including those designed for heritage development and preservation.

Mr. Speaker, cultural industry development has been 14 long years in planning and with that inordinately long gestation period, the cultural stakeholders appear to have adopted an "I-believe-it when-I-see-it" attitude. Today, with the laying of this policy in Parliament, the Government is signalling the end to that waiting period.

The year 2010 marks the transition from planning to implementation, the year for creation of the enabling environment essential for stimulation of cultural industries development in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, it was approximately 14 years ago in 1996, that the first National Consultation was held. A second was convened in 2006, six years later. The policy has also drawn on the 1997 Research and Recommendations of the Regional Cultural Policy of the Caribbean Community, studies by the University of the West Indies, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, and the CARICOM Regional Negotiating Machinery have benefitted from various other local inputs, including those of the National Cultural Foundation, cultural practitioners and the respective Ministries which held responsibility for culture.

Mr. Speaker, the inputs of the industry stakeholders have, therefore, been assured, as have those of researchers and planners in the cultural sector. The people of Barbados can, however, rest assured that the views of the stakeholders will, again be canvassed. These are important to the process and will continue to be factors into future planning and programming.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is committed to the forging and sustenance of the partnerships, since we intend to ensure that the ongoing practical application of the policy, which caters to the needs of the people of Barbados as a country. Our commitment is to the implementation of a policy programme of incentives and concessions specially designed to stimulate the development of the creative arts, of artistes in the various genres and of the Barbados cultural industries.

Mr. Speaker, a generous package of Customs Duties and Income Tax incentives is, therefore, being agreed which will be accessible by individuals, groups, governmental and corporate entities. The incentives will be available to those involved in, investing in, or otherwise contributing to approved cultural projects and programmes, including heritage and film development programmes, and will also include the duty-free importation of related tools

of the trades and capital assets. These will shortly be enacted in legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the incentive regime will, in effect, offer a mechanism of assimilation and funding of the cultural industries, for reducing the operational costs of cultural industry practitioners for nurturing and giving vent to creative expression, the essential abundant and renewal resource for creative development, for developing, establishing and sustaining culture industry initiatives, for entrepreneurial business development and potentially for creating a climate of philanthropy.

Mr. Speaker, culture industry development will be pursued through meaningful focus collaboration between stakeholders in the public sector, the private sector and industry practitioners engaged in the following:

1. Arts and culture which will include the performing arts, dance, music and theatre, visual arts, literary arts. For example, prose, poetry, script writing, photography, craft, libraries, museums, galleries, archives, heritage sites, festivals and art supporting development in enterprises.
2. The design relating to advertising, architecture, web and software, graphics, industrial design, fashion, communications, interior design and environmental design.
3. The media, which will encompass broadcast media, including radio, television and cable, digital media, including software in computer services, film and video, recorded music and publishing.

Mr. Speaker, the cultural industry development policy and legislation, offer viable responses to the identified challenges of under-capitalisation of the sector and limited access to finance. The high cost of production, the unavailability of statistical data on the sector, the inadequacy of physical facilities, entrenched patterns of stifled creativity, coupled with a propensity for imitation of other cultures and leakages resulting from piracy of intellectual property.

Mr. Speaker, the main objectives of the policy will, therefore, be to achieve national unity, recognise cultural and ethnic diversity, and refine and market our unique identity to make culture an integral part of our national development, to partner with stakeholders in business and in the society at large, to create a facilitating and enabling environment for development of the arts and culture, to create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship, investment and development of the cultural industries, and to protect the cultural heritage of the country.

The programmes for execution will be geared toward the allocation of focus, development, expenditure for skills development, unique branding and marketing, the establishment of systems for improved data collection, the pursuit of improved inter-sectoral collaboration as a means towards improved market access for Barbadian cultural goods and services, business development and co-partnerships, infrastructural building, institutional strengthening, the establishment of appropriate funded mechanisms to facilitate access to financing for small and medium-size cultural industry development and the introduction of a legislative regime of tax incentives and concessions.

#### SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. R.D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the 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. 2 – NATIONAL INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SECURITY (Amendment) BILL, 2010.

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

*H/A59/10.30 a.m. Sequence 3*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Dr. The Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to speak on the Amendment of the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010, Chapter 47, to provide for a deferment of the payment of the National Insurance contributions payable by employers with effect from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, if there is compliance with the set of conditions that are outlined in the Bill, in 18C through 18D.

Sir, this Amendment in effect gives legal strength to the policy positions outlined in the Budgetary Statement 2009. As a result of the throes of the economic crisis, this Administration thought it necessary to provide a job stabilisation policy, so that those businesses that are having difficulty with respect of their cashflows, because of reduced demand in the country for their goods and services, would have an opportunity to maintain their cashflow position by deferring the contribution that would normally be paid to the National Insurance for a period of one year

and, to have it converted through a loan to be paid over a five-year period with an interest rate of 3 per cent. Sir, this is an initiative that is part of a number of important initiatives that have worked extremely well in the control of job losses in Barbados.

Sir, what is the evidence of that? The evidence of that comes from an analysis of three things. One, this is the worst financial crisis the world has ever seen post 1929. As a result of that we have had a situation where we went from essentially a credit crisis within the United States to a financial crisis, which then mushroomed into an economic crisis that enveloped the entire world, essentially.

As a result of that, the impact in Barbados was much more serious than any economic crisis that we have faced in the past, including the economic crisis of the period in the 1970s, when we had an oil crisis situation. It was even more serious than the economic crisis of the 1980s. It was even more serious than the economic crisis of the 1990s, and it was even more serious than the economic downturn associated with the 9/11 crisis in 2002.

Sir, to add on to that, the other piece of information relates to the unemployment that attended those periods of economic crisis that I just related to. I will refer to the 1990s, when there was a crisis that was not close to the type of magnitude that enveloped the world. At that time the unemployment rate in Barbados, as a result of the economic crisis at the time, mushroomed to 27 per cent.

It is important to note that even though it mushroomed to 27 per cent during the 1990s, and it was a crisis that was not even close to the magnitude and difficulty in terms of the natural impact on the Barbados economy that now exists in 2008, the unemployment rate at this particular time is 9.2 per cent.

Sir, I want them to understand that because of Government's measures, we were able to maintain unemployment at the level of 9.2 per cent. What is even more significant, when there was only a 9/11 crisis that affected one industry, the tourism industry, under the former Administration the unemployment rate was 10.9 per cent, and it was going to 11 per cent.

At no time, even though this Administration was facing the most difficult crisis the world has ever seen, our unemployment rate ever went past 11 per cent. Take the evidence, because of our economic measures in the most difficult economic crisis, we had an unemployment rate that was lower than the unemployment rate of the 1990s. Our employment of 2002, at a time when that Administration would have had all of the bank money and other money that they could have put programmes in place to safeguard our unemployment. I do not have any use for

the "moutherers" on the Other Side. I bring the facts as there are.

Sir, let us go to the Government's policies and programmes. We speak to the Special Working Group. In the midst of the crisis the Prime Minister, in his wisdom, understood the importance of putting a team of economic experts together. As a result, a Special Working Group was convened, headed by an eminent IDB executive, and also surrounded by a number of senior economists within this country. What is the result of that?

The Special Working Group was able to devise a document, known as The Short and Medium-Term Action Plan. That Action Plan outlined within a set of stabilisation measures, of which this measure we are speaking about to today is one of them. We have to understand that the Amendments must be taken together, so as to appreciate the impact of this Government's policies on stabilising the job situation in this country. Let me go through them one by one.

What are the Government's initiatives that we speak to? The first one is outlined in the Budget of 2009, and that one pertains directly to why the Amendment is being executed, that is the deferment of the contribution of the employer to the National Insurance for one year, converted as a loan, to be paid over a five-year period at 3 per cent interest.

The second one relates to the waiver of penalties and interests. As a consequence of the current economic downturn, I am going to quote, at Page 48 of the 2009 Budget:

"As a consequence of the current economic crisis, government has already introduced a programme for relief to employers and self-employed persons by way of a waiver of interest and penalties, in respect of outstanding National Insurance, Income Tax, Land Tax and Value Added Tax."

Sir, the importance of that waiver is to put more money within the hands of businesses so that they can maintain employment in this country. Those are two policies that are working specifically together. Let us proceed.

Sir, with respect to the tourism initiatives that were put together, which played a significant role in job stabilisation in Barbados, because the economic crisis affected the world economy and in particular, it affected the tourism industry significantly as well as the manufacturing industry in this country. In addition to that, other sub-sectors of the tourism industry, food and beverage, and so on.

What did this Government do in an attempt to support the tourism industry and to maintain employment in that sector?

Sir, the first thing this Administration did was to increase the support given to the Barbados Tourism Authority. We did that by way of two Supplementaries that resulted in an additional \$90 million to the Barbados Tourism Authority, so that they could carry out their marketing, working within their source markets. They would have used some of those funds to expand the Best of Barbados Programme.

*H59 11.40 a.m. Sequence 4*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*House A59, Sequence 05, 10.40 a.m.*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, what also occurred through that activity of increased funding, is that those monies were used by the Barbados Tourism Authority to especially stoke and continue the development within the Canadian and United Kingdom markets. Mr. Speaker, this is what it redounded to. This is not talk. These are facts.

Mr. Speaker, I now speak from the short and medium term action plan, the Third Quarter Report, implemented actions, not talk actions.

Sir, with respect to the U.K. market, this Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was able to have British Airways continue to fly, nine flights per week from London, to keep tourists coming to Barbados and keep people employed in the tourism sector, also, Sir, for Virgin Atlantic to continue to fly from London, seven days a week and from Manchester two days a week.

Mr. Speaker, due to the hard work of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, out of the United States of America market, first time ever, JetBlue commenced service from New York, seven days a week from October 1, 2009.

*Asides.*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, nobody had to take the pain out of tourism. They said he was doing nothing. Mr. Speaker, with respect to US Airways, they commenced service from Philadelphia four days a week from October 1, 2009. In addition, seven days a week from December 17, 2009, US Airways has been coming to Barbados, Sir, and all this is due to the hard work of this Honourable Member.

Mr. Speaker, I go further. In the middle of a crisis, American Airlines continues the following services to Barbados. Miami 14 flights a week, New York seven days a week and San Juan three days a week. Mr. Speaker, this is important because there are some rumours saying that the Government has done nothing, and these are things the Government has done to support our number one industry that maintains economic growth and development in the country.

*Asides.*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: I will continue, Mr. Speaker, because I have to educate the Honourable Members on the Other Side.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to Canada, the inaugural WestJet from Toronto, November 2009, will continue for five days each week. Again, these are things that were implemented and in the middle of an economic crisis, and we were able to get Air Canada to continue to fly from Toronto, nine flights a week and from Montreal two days a week.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please keep it down, Honourable Members.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, it is important that the Prime Minister in his wisdom established the Barbados Family and Friends Club, because we believe that the Diaspora has a significant role to play in times of crises. Sir, all-in-all, we have always been told that the best seller for Barbados is word by mouth.

Sir, when we use the Barbados Family and Friends Club, it is a mechanism to advertise Barbados by your friends and family worldwide. It has redounded to excellent work, and it has worked beautifully for this country over the last couple of months.

Mr. Speaker, let me go a little further because sometimes it is good to talk and let me speak to the marketing initiatives that were done. These are facts and if the Honourable Members on the Other Side want the document, I can give it to them.

Sir, the hard work and the diligent work done by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central have been able to do this. Sir, from the United Kingdom market, he has been able to not only do increased advertising in the print media, but he has been doing a lot of additional work on the Internet as well, to continue to have tourists coming here to Barbados.

In the United States market, Mr. Speaker, a sales blitz was done on July 6, 2009, to more than 450 stores in the country in the tri-state area and the list can go on, but I want to make a very quick switch, Sir, to two other things.

Mr. Speaker, under the Barbados initiative to help stabilise jobs, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central piloted a Tourism Industry Relief Fund (TIRF), which has been utilised so far by those owners of hotels, as well as those persons who provide ancillary services to hoteliers.

Mr. Speaker, we did not make the mistake like that which was made by the former Administration in 2002, because what they did when they provided \$30 million as a Tourism Relief Fund, they only allowed those monies to be used by hotels, but this Administration, understanding that you have taxi operators, water-ski operators and other small persons who also operate in the tourism industry, we had our TIRF expanded to include those ancillary service providers. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central will be able to bring the numbers to that because I know it has been well-utilised in Barbados and has worked effectively to maintain jobs within that sector.

Mr. Speaker, when I hear all the mouthings about we are not doing anything, let me go now to monetary policy.

Sir, we have put measures in place, and when they are working together, have resulted in the fact that the unemployment rate in this country, in the middle of the worst economic crisis that the world has ever seen, is down to 9.2 per cent. I made the point earlier that in 1990, and in 2002, the unemployment rate under the Barbados Labour Party went as high as 11.9 per cent, but let me continue.

The Central Bank reduced its minimum deposit rate on three occasions. Since October 2008, the Central Bank reduced the deposit rate by 150 basic points down to 2.5 per cent per year and that was effective from August 19, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, this means that banks now can lend businesses money at a cheaper rate. It also means that new loans can be acquired at a cheaper rate. It also means that the businesses, which are now struggling for liquidity, can access funding to maintain their businesses, and to keep people employed in Barbados.

Sir, that is what this measure would have done, but I would not expect the Honourable Members on That Side to understand what I am talking about, Sir, because they are daft and dumb.

Mr. Speaker, what is also important is that the Central Bank has also reduced the discount rate, and let me try to educate the Honourable Members on the Other Side

what that means. It means that is the rate of lending that the Central Bank would charge a commercial bank, and in order to ensure that the commercial banks maintain their liquidity so that they can lend to various businesses. What has happened, Sir, that rate has been reduced from 12 per cent in December 2008, to 7 per cent in June 2009.

This is another measure that is designed to make sure that businesses have access to liquidity, access to loans, and because we have already reduced the deposit rate, Mr. Speaker, access to cheap loans, so that they can continue to maintain their business operations.

Mr. Speaker, that is all that happened because the Honourable Members on That Side are sleeping when a lot of things are happening. The Central Bank of Barbados reduced the foreign reserve and exchange requirement from 6 per cent to 4 per cent. This means that the Central Bank was giving the commercial banks greater liquidity, in terms of their net international reserve section of the total overall reserves, so that they can lend foreign exchange for businesses to carry out their normal activity.

Mr. Speaker, these are wonderful policies that have worked effectively to keep businesses operating in Barbados, with respect to the liquidity programme.

*Asides.*

*House A59, Sequence 05, 10.50 a.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Let them come and challenge that, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, what also happened is that the Central Bank of Barbados introduced a repurchasing facility, which was set up in February 2009, to provide additional support for commercial banks, if required. That means that banks are allowed to access financing at concessionary rates of 5.9 per cent using this security.

Mr. Speaker, these are measures that were designed to give the business sector, that was under grave economic difficulties, access to needed financing to keep their operations going, and to keep their businesses ticking over and maintaining employment in the country. That is what is going on.

Mr. Speaker, I will say more. The Central Bank of Barbados also expanded the Credit Guarantee Scheme. Sir, this is important, because I know that one of those Honourable Members on the Other Side who reads very little and understands nothing at all, will get up and attempt to say that the usage of the stabilisation programme has not been as good as it should.

Mr. Speaker, I will explain why. All of the other measures that allowed the commercial business sector to get access to funding would explain that reason. I know they have to go and start all over again.

Mr. Speaker, the critical one here is the expansion of the Credit Guarantee Scheme, which is a biggie. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew does not know what a biggie is because...

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. SPEAKER: Continue.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: The range of entities eligible for the Small Business Credit Guarantee Scheme was widened to include medium-size businesses. That means that companies which had revenue above \$2 million and up to \$4 million, could also qualify for Central Bank guarantees to go and get money to carry out their operations. That is the reason, Mr. Speaker. You had two elements. It is called a small business and then it was expanded to a medium business, so we capture the small businesses as well as the medium size businesses in this programme.

Mr. Speaker, in the tourism sector, we went to the small and medium size hotels, this applies to hotels of less than 50 rooms - we do not go for the big hotels like them - that we knew were having difficulties and made sure that they had access to funding, because there was a short-term guarantee programme of \$150 000 and then a medium term programme to the tune of \$300 000.

Mr. Speaker, that is not all. We also introduced a technical assistance grant that was put together by the Central Bank of Barbados to assist businesses in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes when I hear the Honourable Members on the Other Side speak to not doing anything, I become a little bit concerned.

Mr. Speaker, let me now go to the specific fiscal measures of the Government. Part of this Administration's job stabilisation programme has been spoken to within the stimulus programme. What are they? They are numerous and significant increases in the road works that include, not only public finances, but joint venture road works arrangements to make sure that businesses continue to keep their workers employed in Barbados.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, there are enhanced housing development programmes in Barbados. It is not only housing development programmes that are being financed from Government's own purse, but the Honourable

Member for St. Philip North can speak ad nauseam about the number of joint venture partners that have been involved in the "Housing Every Last Person Programme", so as to keep persons employed in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we did not stop there. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central can tell you about the number of schools that have been put out there for renovations, upgrades and rebuilding, all in an attempt to keep Barbadians employed.

That is not all, Mr. Speaker. We also contracted, through the National Insurance Board, to build two new office complexes in Warrens to maintain employment in the construction sector in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we did not stop there. We have, now on the drawing board, the CXC building, which is to start soon, and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, that is a Government at work maintaining employment and that is why today we can boast of an unemployment rate of 9.2 per cent, which is unheard of in an economic crisis of this sort. Sir, those are the sorts of programmes that this Administration would have put together.

Mr. Speaker, we would expect the unemployment rate to continue to decline, because we not only have a significant number of projects coming on stream under the Barbados Water Authority, but the Barbados Water Authority has already started the infrastructural work, and with the assistance of the international financial institutions, we will be looking for \$1.3 billion in investment in infrastructural work in Barbados to keep employment going in this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is not only with respect to the mains programme at the Barbados Water Authority. It has a lot to do with upgrading, not only the human resource infrastructure, that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East would speak to, but also the new office building to be built for the Barbados Water Authority workers.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member can also speak to the new input of technology, the new SCADA system, the new systems of upgrade of bulk monitoring and reading of the various mains, all to be done within the next financial year that is being done by this Administration. Sir, the Honourable Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. John, has already spoken to the increased activity within the foreign direct investment sector in Barbados, particularly in the tourism sector. Let them challenge that. Sir, that redounds to continued employment.

Mr. Speaker, I know that they are asking what is happening to Four Seasons, but that is coming on stream as well and you cannot stop it.

Mr. Speaker, you hear this talk about the Government has done nothing, but I just outlined about 50 different measures that this Administration would have taken as a means of assisting with and maintaining jobs in this country.

Mr. Speaker, let me just quickly speak to one issue because sometimes repetition is important for slow learners. I would have to repeat because a slow learner...

*Asides.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are almost mashing the crease as you put it, so please be careful.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Pardon me, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not too sure who you are referring to, but you are getting very close to being unparliamentary, so please.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: I will honour whatever your Honour prescribes, Sir.

*Asides.*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, recently, I heard a few commentators talking about the economic crisis and trying to give the impression to Barbadians that when this Administration came to power, that we were responsible for the fiscal deficit problems in the country, but let me bring the facts.

Mr. Speaker, when we came to office, the fiscal deficit and the overall fiscal deficit balance in this country was already 5.1 per cent when the normally accepted level is 2.5 per cent by international standards.

Mr. Speaker, what has happened, for all the naysayers that do not understand what is going on, is that when this Government had to accept the shift in methodology from the cash system to the accrual system, it forced this Administration to bring on to the debts of Barbados... That is nothing the Honourable Member for St. John did. The Honourable Member for St. John had to comply with a Law that was put in place by the former Administration in 2007-2008, a Law which says that you could no longer hide your debt.

*House A59 Sequence 6*

11.00 a.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, that Laws says that as long as you were paying a lease, under the new accrual accounting system, you had to register an expenditure when it has been incurred. That means that the Prime Minister had to bring the debt of the prison to book.

Sir, I want Barbadians to understand this morning, when they hear Honourable Members on the Other Side speaking, that we would have also brought to book the debt of the ABC Highway. Therefore, it would have been two debts that we had to bring to book under the Laws of Barbados, Laws that were set up by the former Administration.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain to Barbadians once again. We may very well have to bring to book the debt of the Hall of Justice building. We have no choice. Sir, when those persons out there, and persons on the Other Side who do not understand certain things, say that we have pushed up the debt, I want Barbadians to understand that it is the Laws of Barbados which was put in place by the Barbados Labour Party, with which we had to comply. Sir, it was nothing done by the Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. Speaker, these are the facts, and I am a man who loves facts. I am a scientist. I understand inductive and deductive reasoning and how to apply them succinctly.

Sir, let me repeat. I want to tell Barbadians that when the fiscal deficit was increased in this country, it was that the Laws of Barbados mandated the Democratic Labour Party to bring to book the debts of the Barbados Labour Party. We had no choice, therefore, when we saw the increase in debts, we had to do what we had to do.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what was interesting in all of this talk? Sir, we are part of an international financial system, and we will follow good financial accounting practices. If you all choose to follow bad practices, that is your business, but we will follow correct international practices.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the national economy, I think it is important to put unemployment in that context. Sir, when one speaks of a macroeconomic framework, one usually speaks to economic growth, to the rate of inflation, to employment levels, to net international reserves and to balance of payments in relation to net international reserves. You will also speak to your external position.

Sir, let me put that into context, so that Barbadians will understand of what I am speaking. Sir, when this Administration came to office, I said we have a fiscal deficit of 5.1 per cent, we had an inflation rate of more than 7 per cent, we had an external current deficit of

approximately 8 per cent Gross Domestic Product (GDP). They were all out of wack with what is accepted internationally.

Mr. Speaker, what is also important is the fact that when it came to the crisis, impact on the macro-economy, I already said that tourism is our major engine of economic development, as well as our foreign exchange earnings and that by extension, spinoffs in the economy have all suffered badly. What that meant was that we were not getting the level of foreign exchange in the country, in addition to reduction in our foreign direct investments, in terms of real estate investment. In addition, reduction in remittances were also part of the problem.

What is also important with respect to our foreign exchange earnings, because the international market had a weak demand for Barbados' goods and services, also meant that our export earnings were done. Sir, what is the impact of that? It means that our revenues started to fall. When the revenues start to fall in a situation like this, the only thing that could happen would be that the deficit would get wider. It does not take a brain surgeon to understand that. Therefore, that was not caused by the Honourable Member for St. John. That was international economy affecting local economy.

Mr. Speaker, if Honourable Members on the Other Side would attempt to delve very deeply into the recesses of their minds - I do not know how far they may have to go - they would need to remember in a Budget in this Honourable House, I spoke ad nauseam about the former Administration developing a consumption-based economy that was putting stress on the balance of payment of Barbados. I remember that day when the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter refused to speak, he hid himself.

Sir, why I go back there is for Barbadians to understand that one of the things that has happened because of the crisis, is that we have to take this opportunity not only to restructure the economy, but that this Administration is way ahead in that regard, because we have developed a medium-term development strategy. From that strategy, we looked at the various sectors that are critical to the continuing development of the country. We looked at new economic sectors that could be developed. We determined, from our projected national budget, which sectors we could finance more efficiently. Sir, this is called cherry-picking in economic terms.

Mr. Speaker, out of that we were also to distill what is now known as a medium-term fiscal strategy. That strategy is a road map. It is a look to say this is a path on which we can go down, that it will get us to that objective, but that we may need to tweak it here and there.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of that medium-term fiscal strategy is that it is designed to do two things. Sir, it is designed to move the economy from stabilisation into the realm of recovery. Secondly, from recovery to economic growth. Therefore, out of that, we have a methodology and strategy by which we can move the country from an untenable fiscal deficit to a tenable fiscal deficit, by which we can move the country from a position with a negative economic growth to a positive economic growth, by which we can move the country to a position where it has stable inflation.

Sir, it is the understanding that the rate of inflation in Barbados is largely driven by imported inflationary elements, in addition to certain domestic demand elements.

Mr. Speaker, it is also designed to stimulate economic growth. It is also designed to help us improve the efficiency of the Barbados economy by looking at the sectors that contain economic growth.

Sir, we have, through a competitiveness programme with the Inter-American Development Bank, embarked on looking at those bottlenecks in the economy that undermine this economy's efficiencies and its economic growth and development. That is what is called developmental pathways, because we believe that every dollar saved is a dollar earned and that by putting these measures in place, they are all designed to move Barbados' economy from a platform of macro-economic instability to one of a stable economic platform, one that will redound to economic growth and development in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I put that there, because the job stabilisation programme to which I spoke earlier will be set up within the context of the strategy, so that we understand that these are short-term measures and measures that we would have to continue to evaluate.

Sir, let me say this for all those persons who are unemployed and who may be getting close to their 26 weeks unemployment benefits. I would want to say that this Administration is very much aware of some of the challenges they are having, and that we are working to develop a policy that would look at how we could deal with those persons who are now unemployed, who might not be able to find a job in the immediate short-term because of economic circumstances.

11.10 a.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: This Administration will find a mechanism to ensure that they are supported. Mr. Speaker, I can speak with some authority on that matter because as the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee

of Economic Policy, I know what was advanced, but I will wait for the final determination by Cabinet before a final pronouncement is made. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to Barbadians, those persons who are in that situation, that relief is coming very soon to help you during this economic set of circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of those who believe that the international economy will not rebound as robustly as some may want it to. I believe that there are going to be some continued negative effects here in the Barbados economy and, therefore, there is unpredictability.

Mr. Speaker, what that does is this. It means that our developmental strategy is a strategy and, Sir, any strategy you will adjust depending on what the economic circumstances will develop for you and that is only common sense.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, when one looks at the provision at 18 (c)...

*Asides.*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, I want to be very accurate, so I will read it:

With effect from June 30, 2009,

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, that provision must be taken in context with the waiver of penalties and interest. It must be taken in context with all of the enhanced stimulus projects that I spoke to, the housing projects, the road projects, the office building projects and the new project to come on board through the international financial institutions.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I spoke to a number of financial measures and those financial measures are important, because they allow for small businesses and medium-size businesses, to access money from the commercial banks with a guarantee from the Central Bank of Barbados, so that it gives the small business an opportunity to get access to funding outside of Government's funding only.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to leave it there. I want to speak now quickly to the STAP Fund and also the Micro Enterprise Fund. Sir, I want to thank the Prime Minister for his foresight in understanding that during an economic crisis, that you have to turn internally to help support those operations that are having difficulties.

Sir, apart from those programmes outlined already, in the 2009/2010 financial year, 138 grants were provided to micro businesses to keep them ticking over and to keep them employing people in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, for the financial year 2009/2010, that is supposed to come to an end shortly. Within the first six months of the crisis, we had given out and allocated to small businesses in Barbados, the entire \$342 500.

What did the Honourable Member for St. John do, recognising the need to keep supporting small business? The Honourable Member brought a Supplementary to the tune of \$750 000 so that small businesses could get access to money to keep themselves ticking over. Mr. Speaker, do you want a better job stabilising programme than that?

Mr. Speaker, I do not mind the talk and that is why I said that the whole thing has to be taken as a set of measures, and this measure that we debate today must be set within the context of all the measures that I speak to.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would expect Honourable Members on the Other Side to get up to say that the programme was not well utilised, but I want them to understand that if small businesses are getting grant money, if the hotels are getting TURF money, if the small businesses can go to commercial banks and get money guaranteed by the Central Bank of Barbados Credit Guarantee Scheme, then that would explain quite clearly that when the need is there, that they would use it.

Sir, when the need is not there, in the same way that we anticipate because it is always access to financing for businesses in Barbados, as demonstrated. Mr. Speaker, I would expect that argument to be a moot one when they get up to attempt to bring it to the forefront.

Mr. Speaker, without any further input, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, Sir, sometime between today and the end of this month, this Honourable Chamber is going to have to confront a situation where we will embark on a protracted debate, and considering that, Sir, my initial response to the histrionics of the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, was that he was doing a dress rehearsal for his second reading speech when that occasion comes. Sir, then I changed my mind after I was persuaded by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West himself, when he said that he speaks ad nauseam, ad nauseam, ad nauseam.

Sir, in this context, I rise to make some observations, some in contrast to what were made by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, all of which will reflect some

accuracy and, at the same time, Mr. Speaker, I shall issue some words of warning.

Mr. Speaker, we on This Side are by no means insensate nor unintelligent, and we understand precisely what Government is aiming for in this measure that has been brought.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West took the debate beyond the narrow confines of an Amendment to Cap. 47, and indicated that the primary import of the Amendment he has brought is to offer relief to a cadre of business people in Barbados and, as I understand it, this relief has been very much a budgetary measure, and considering its original timing and where we are, effectively, what we are doing, is amending Cap. 47 and ratifying measures that were passed before.

Mr. Speaker, a relevant question is, considering all things, including the relief granted by Government, how many businesses have actually applied for comfort. Sir, our answer on This Side is exactly two of all the hundreds of businesses in Barbados. Sir, not confident that the Government fully appreciated the extent of the pressure that businesses have been under, only two businesses have asked for comfort.

*H/A59/11.20 a.m. Sequence 8*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: One of the primary needs is capital, and the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, to his credit, in the last three minutes made reference to it. Running a business on a day to day basis, often involves an element of meeting certain statutory needs, often has to see certain things to take into account like the cost of production, the cost of factor inputs, the cost of raw materials and other factors like marketing, so any package intended to bring relief and comfort to the business world must take into account very many variables. We are merely scratching the surface in respect of this little comfort that we are offering persons in getting to the National Insurance Scheme.

In a situation where, last week, I think it was, Government was warned that the way forward is not necessarily to increase taxation. A question I would want to put to Government. Before January 2008, in excess of \$134 million has been owed to the National Insurance Scheme. I want to know from Government, in a situation where this is a substantial sum, whether Government has plans to pursue those entities that are responsible for the non-payment, or whether Government is minded to do a write-off?

At the same time, considering the plight, the experience and the frustration of many a small business,

notwithstanding the fact that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West suggested that his Government had made specific proposals to support small businesses, I want to know what complete and holistic regimen has been envisioned, with the aim of carrying forward small businesses, in circumstances where there are those businesses in this community who will argue that some small businesses and entities in the informal sector have not yet been embraced by our National Insurance Scheme.

This Government is a Government that has taken particular pride in its social policy and its social programmes. I am saying, in a situation where life expectancy will increase, in a situation where Barbados is seized of an aging population, we need to make sure that all who should pay National Insurance do pay. I am not saying so mainly to take money out of circulation and put it in an entity that is already something of a cash cow. I am uttering what I am saying with the aim that all those persons in Barbados involved in the micro business sector, the small business sector and the informal sector, pay up their National Insurance and ensure that they build up enough credits to look after themselves when they fall sick and grow old.

Sir, somebody might ask me, what are you saying? Somebody might raise the question, what are you saying? Can these entities to which you referred, can really afford to pay, considering these economic times that the Government of Barbados has imposed on Barbados, or the economic times that the Government of Barbados has taken note of? There are times when you feel that the Government has not taken note of what has happened than anything else, especially when Government blames external circumstances on its plight.

One other thing about the National Insurance, it needs to modernise its approach to collections and compliance. If you go to the National Insurance Department at 3.30 p.m., or 3.45 p.m. the probability is, they will tell you to come back the next day because they close down collections early, like many other Government departments.

In this modern era, too many Government departments, the Court Registry, included, the National Insurance Scheme and other agencies, do not take money after a certain time. It must be frustrating for a business person to give up an hour-and-a-half in traffic, in a line and then to be told afterwards that no collections are being made.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West has often prided himself on a fact that he is a voluminous reader and he even made reference to somebody on This Side who does not read. I do not know which Honourable Member he was referring to, because the Honourable

Member for St. Philip West, this is fact, has a sense of humour. This has often gotten the better part of him. On this occasion I would not say that he was fantasizing about any particular Member. I would just suggest that it is a slip of the tongue and he did not mean to say that any Honourable Member on This Side does not read.

Sir, of significance, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West trumpeted the fact that right now, unemployment is 9.2 per cent. In January 2008, unemployment was about 6 to 7 per cent under a different Administration, not under this current Administration.

Before mid-2009, Barbados had been going forward without seeing \$104 million in new taxes inflicted on the people of Barbados. Barbados was going forward.

Let me refer to the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, again. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West is a man you cannot dismiss. Everybody knows that. At least one of his colleagues, not necessarily here present, knows that he is a man who does not “skylark” and he can be as futuristic as Mohommed Ali and as effective as a 20-year-old Mike Tyson. That is what we call him in the annals of the Cabinet Government in this country.

Sir, the only thing that has to be said in favour of the consistency that has issued forth from the Honourable Member for St. Philip West is, when he was in Opposition, he was extremely worried about our national debt. He took his concern and his worry to a new high.

Do you know that when the Honourable Member for St. Philip West was in Opposition, he not only looked at everything to do about direct national borrowing, he looked further and indicated that when Government guaranteed debts by non-governmental and other agencies, that effectively the guarantees should be taken in counting the national debt. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West can correct me if I have misquoted him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am not in a position to correct you, but I am in a position to question the relevance.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I am quoting fairly and squarely. I would want the Honourable Member who led the debate for the Government - There has been no objection, he went far and wide. There has been no objection.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, if you want to question the Honourable Member there is a time and place for that, but I want it to be relevant to the matter before this Honourable Chamber. Proceed.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, does that permit me to respond to my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West?

Mr. SPEAKER: That were made today? What is its relevance? Proceed, make your point.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, during the debate today I heard mention of the Export Credit Guarantee Fund.

Mr. SPEAKER: I heard that being said today.

*Asides.*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I did not speak to the Export Credit Guarantee Fund. I spoke to the Small Business Guarantee Programme and the Central Bank.

*H59 11.30 a.m. Sequence 9*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*House A59, Sequence 10, 11.30 a.m.*

Mr. SPEAKER: This is where he listed the measures that would have been taken to assist small businesses in connection with this particular measure.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, in what I can only consider a comprehensive approach to introducing this measure, spoke in glowing terms of the success of his colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Sir, on the whole question of the extent to which persons in tourism can afford, or ill-afford to pay their NIS and need relief, we heard a functionary of the Central Bank of Barbados, a Mr. Harold Codrington described as an advisor to the Government, speak on tourism in a non-political way, and suggested to us that the outlook for tourism was not what the Honourable Member for St. Philip West was painting.

I would want to find out also from the Honourable Member for St. Philip West if he is aware that in this same lecture, Mr. Codrington said that at the time of January of 2008, the foreign reserves cover extended to six months cover, but now our foreign reserves do not amount to six months cover.

Investor confidence was mentioned too, Mr. Speaker, and this is one of the more interesting aspects of

what the Honourable Member spoke about, in relation to the finances, because in fairness to the Honourable Member, if you are discussing the National Insurance Scheme, of necessity, you have to discuss money.

The contribution made by the employer cannot be disregarded and the many different benefits that you get from National Insurance cannot be disregarded, Sir, but in a situation where the Honourable Member for St. Philip West has, in the past, and even today, suggested that one should not be irresponsible about borrowing, he mentioned something - and I do not want to misquote him - in the region of \$1.3 billion.

Sir, my understanding of it, even though he said that some of us on This Side need to be educated and are not easily able to assimilate what he was saying, he did mention that part of that \$1.3 billion injection would come in the form of borrowing.

Sir, if the country was as badly off as we were led to believe by the Democratic Labour Party, in a situation where we were supposed to have done such a bad job, how come Barbados can still be creditworthy, even after the institution that was supposed to have failed, is no longer in office?

Sir, now we are in a situation where our net reserves are falling, in a situation where tourist arrivals are increasing, but tourists spend is very much an unknown entity, in a situation where there are many social programmes that need to be developed, in a situation where we have to keep watching our deficit, and in a situation where we have to win back the confidence of John Public, Sir, not John Boyce, the confidence of John Public has been lost in this Government on the question of the returns of Income Tax, as simple a matter as that.

Sir, the question of the returns of Income Tax has caused a lot of people to lose confidence in the Government, and especially those entitled to the Reverse Tax Credit.

*Asides.*

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, the Honourable Member spoke about restructuring the economy and this is something that I will conclude on by making some observations. Sir, both That Side and This Side would do well to imbue themselves with clear, reflective considerations as to where Barbados' economy is going to be positioned in the future.

In 1959/1960, it was not so difficult to think of restructuring. We had mono-culture in 1959/1960, eased up somewhat by massive migration. In the context, Sir, of restructuring today's economy when we already have

agriculture itself intrinsically diversified, when we already have a manufacturing industry, when we already have tourism, when we already have international businesses, and when we are seeing an emergent amount of small businesses, we now have to think creatively, as to what new sectors and sub-sectors we can create, in the interest of making marginal increases to the gross domestic product (GDP), in the interest of further employment, in the interest of tapping the creative energies of our people, and in the interest of long-term development.

Sir, merely to say we will restructure is not enough, and I call on all Barbadians, including those who have the time to raise interesting suggestions on radio and TV, to look closely at what possible constraining factors that could be holding us back from further diversifying our economy and what stimuli are there, even though latent, that we can tap, Sir, to be able to carry our economy forward.

In the circumstances, Sir, in a situation where certain businesses would have been hard-pressed to pay National Insurance, in circumstances where certain businesses would have wanted elbow room, in clear circumstances where it has been the experience where - Mr. Speaker, I am going to tell you the truth - in some instances, certain well-meaning employers - not dishonest employers who intended to comply with the National Insurance regulations were so hard-pressed, that they would take out the NIS contributions and mean to pay it, perhaps go at 3.30 p.m. and turn back. Then, when they catch themselves, Sir, because of financial problems, have often had to take what they should have paid over to NIS and use as short-term current cash flows for their businesses. This is a reality that has happened in this country.

Sir, of course, it goes against the interest of employees, because where employees' contributions are not paid, you have a situation when they make claims, all kinds of difficulties and complications arise. I would want to urge the Government to consider that too, Sir, that we do have instances where, notwithstanding three provisions in Chapter 47, there is injustice to many an employee.

I close, Sir, by suggesting to this Honourable House that we need a bigger public education programme, in respect of our unemployment insurance.

Barbados is perhaps the only CARICOM country that has unemployment insurance. I know that creative thinking can direct you, Mr. Speaker, to how unemployment insurance works and perhaps we may have come to a situation - and I hope the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would listen to this - where considering unemployment benefits and how they work, we can tinker a little bit with a kind of small levy and put that levy into the NIS' pot and then build up a fund to train persons who have lost their work.

I hope the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has got it.

*House A59, Sequence 10, 11.40 a.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, in other words, Sir, when people who are short on marketable skills for the job market lose their job, their only comfort is 26 weeks of unemployment money. Sir, after 26 weeks, you are back to square one and you need money to support your family and yourself. Have we not come to a situation, Sir, where we can seek actuarial advice from the experts on making adjustments to the unemployment mechanism by which funds created through a kind of training fund can be used to train persons and increase their skills?

Sir, there has been a lot of debate about where education should go, and where skills training should go.

Sir, I conclude by suggesting that the future of anybody in Barbados today between age 12 and 25 lies in being multi-skilled. There is nothing wrong with being both a historian and a plumber. There is nothing wrong with being both a doctor and a part-time lecturer in elementary economics. We have had such lecturers in elementary economics in recent memory in this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, the future of our people lies in multi-skilling. There was a time when some of the champions of old, especially representatives of rural Constituencies, felt that the relief in the short-term and medium-term, was through migration, but migration itself now being under review is no automatic panacea for high and increasing levels of unemployment, so we need to ensure that more Barbadians are multi-skilled.

Every Honourable Member of this House runs a Constituency clinic. There are people who come to the Constituency clinics for help and who would, as a short term measure, take a \$50 or \$100 and call that "Wally".

Mr. Speaker, we have to be responsible enough to encourage those people who come to us, many of whom come and say, "man, I want a Government job", and then when you ask them specifically what Government job they want, they do not know. Sir, some of these people have had 12 and 13 years of good schooling. Sir, what we should do is to point them to where the opportunities are.

The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown recently made a profound pronouncement in respect of skills training and in respect of ensuring that our people are really properly developed.

In the context of development, we have all types of theories and all types of approaches. Sir, do you know that some people feel that a sure sign of development is how many cars, or vehicles are in a country? Another school of thought would suggest to you how many clothes of a certain kind are available to people.

Sir, true development has to do with developing the human person, so that the person can be properly fulfilled in every way, especially here. We have to take our level of development beyond the mere narrow material into the realm of the intellectual and even the spiritual.

Sir, This Side is not going to object to the measure that has been brought by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, but we reserve our right to express the gravest reservation about the unfounded and unwarranted attacks which he has inflicted on this innocent Barbados Labour Party, an innocent party ready to serve, willing to serve and no doubt likely to be called on to do so in the foreseeable future.

Thank you very much, Sir.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that in an economic crisis that any serious political party would find alternatives to ensure that the status quo remains as it is in terms of employment.

Mr. Speaker, no one can fault any political party for coming up with ideas to ensure that the masses of people in a country remain employed.

Mr. Speaker, I was very glad to hear the Honourable Member for St. James North admitting that His Side has finally recognised that when they introduced unemployment benefits in this country, that they could have done better.

Sir, I have always argued that the way the Unemployment Scheme was tailored, it was tailored to encourage people to remain at home and not to seek work. I have said this in this House on many occasions.

Mr. Speaker, if you go through Barbados, you would hear people telling you that they have paid their unemployment levy and that when they do the calculations, it pays them better to remain at home than to seek work elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, what was most interesting and what was dangerous about it, is that at the same time the Unemployment Benefit Scheme was introduced, soap operas were also introduced into Barbados. Sir, you were

given some money and you were told that you could stay home and watch some soap operas.

Sir, what happened is that instead of this country becoming productive, all we did were to encourage people not to be productive anymore. Sir, that is why if you go through the records and the Bible of this Parliament, you would recognise that I have argued that we needed to change the approach to the Unemployment Benefit Scheme to a way where you offer an employee a lump sum payment up front, discounted of course.

Sir, I want to repeat, this because if I do not repeat this, I might be misquoted. I said that we needed to pay the employees a lump sum payment up front discounted, so that those persons would be encouraged to get back on the production line.

Sir, it does not benefit a country to have people who could produce, home sitting down not producing, but that is exactly what occurred in this country. Sir, it got so far that we not only did that, but at the same time we were offering our own people unemployment benefits, we were inviting others to come to Barbados to do the work that those persons should have been doing. Sir, that created massive social problems in this country.

Sir, when one looks at where we are at today, one could understand why it is that some people thought that other people liked work, and Bajans did not like work. What actually happened is that we created a social climate where we are today at this Bill, because we alienated our own and created a passion for other people.

Sir, we now need to do some correction. We need to ensure that we continue to collect unemployment benefits, but we have to find a way where Government can use those unemployment benefits, not to pay unemployment, in a productive way to keep people at work. In other words, Government has to find some productive agency, that when someone is laid off, instead of the fund paying them to stay at home and not producing, that they keep them employed so that they can help produce for this country. Mr. Speaker, politicians who do not want to think will use this as a red herring against what I am saying, but at the end of the day I am not out there about cheap politics. I am out there about protecting the development of this country, because whenever we find a situation like this, the only thing that will suffer is the country. Sir, we have to be very careful how we allow this country Barbados to suffer, because at the end of the day, somebody has to pick up the mess and somebody has to run with it.

*House A59 Sequence 11*

11.50 a.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is known that whenever the Democratic Labour Party runs this country, it has to clean up the mess. Sir, the first thing you will hear, in less than one year after picking up a Government, is that it is the management of the Democratic Labour Party, when the facts would have been there to prove otherwise. Sir, we have to deal with those facts.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to hear that only two persons have applied for this. I am happy to hear that the employers are so committed to the cause that there are out there.

Sir, I do not know why the Honourable Member for St. James North could not use moonlighting. Sir, what the Honourable Member talked about was actually moonlighting, which was something I have always advocated.

*Asides.*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew wants me to believe that people are faceless and that we are just sending people home. I am not saying that. I know that whenever I speak to small business persons, I always tell them that the time is now theirs.

*Asides.*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is an impression that whenever people hear the word crisis, that it means something negative. Sir, I want small business persons to understand that this is their time and that those persons who before had time to look at them, do not now have that time. Those persons have to spend their time in the boardrooms and on the production lines looking after their own businesses. Sir, this is where small businesses can now do what they want to, without being watched and matched.

Mr. Speaker, this is the time for small businesses. Small businesses must not allow naysayers to give the impression that they should shut shop and walk away. This is the time that they can now do what they want to, without being monitored. Sir, this is the best time for small businesses in this country to dig in and do what they want to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am also saying that we have made a number of serious errors although we were forewarned. We bastardised the sugar industry in this country, an industry that has and will always continue to have a history of rebounding. Sir, I was in here when I warned the Other Side when they decided to cut the sugar production by 10

000 tons. Sir, this can be found in Hansard. I had worked out the statistics to prove that it was a wrong decision.

Sir, it was a wrong decision. What happened is that while we were cutting back, places like Brazil were increasing. What is the end result today? Sir, that end result today is that those persons who understood the importance of the argument stayed in and today they are better off because of the fact that there will be a demand. Sir, if more people are dropping out, why should you drop out too? Once you remain, it means that you have something that would always be needed, which is exactly what we are seeing today.

Mr. Speaker, I am very quick to point out in this Honourable House that the Other Side is very famous. They always accuse us of things, but when you really look at the facts, they are very famous at taking international dictates and putting those dictates on the people of Barbados, without first thinking about them.

Sir, when they are doing good, they do not even know they are doing good. Sir, there was a time when we were doing well in the offshore business and they allowed the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to blacklist them, when they were not doing anything wrong. Sir, because it was an international organisation, they accepted it. Sir, the record is there.

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying today is that we have to understand that this crisis was not created by Barbados. It is a worldwide crisis and we need to stop focussing as if it is an internal problem. We have to recognise that we have to put our best foot forward, that we have to move forward and cut out the negativity. We must stop bad-talking Barbados.

When we were Opposition, we were not bad-mouthing anybody. We were offering suggestions. Now, everywhere you walk, instead of having a responsible Opposition, all they are doing is bad-mouthing a one-term Government, as if they would hope that tomorrow the Lord would send an earthquake and destroy Barbados, so that they could get back in Government.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what you would wish for a country that you want to run. When you wish those bad things and you get them, what are you going to do? What are you going to rule? It is best to have an economy like what they got whenever we give the Government to them, so that they could bat on a good wicket. Sir, I remember the former Prime Minister talking about having a good wicket on which to bat.

*Asides.*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I also have to say that we have to understand that we have to put confidence in Government and that Government must also understand that it has to put confidence, both in the workers of Barbados, and in the investors of Barbados. Sir, if we are to get out of this crisis, the only two groups, apart from Government, that would be able to help pull us out of this crisis are the workers and the investors. Therefore, we must all come to this table as equal players. Sir, in a crisis that is exactly what is needed. Government will have to understand the needs of the employers, who are the investors and also the needs of the workers.

Sir, what we now need is a formula that will make Government happy, make the workers happy and make the employees happy also. If we do not do that, then you would get one group becoming disgruntled and you would not be able to satisfy the wants of the other two groups. Therefore, what we need to do would be to come to a common ground. We have to recognise that those things that have worked for us for more than 365 years, will not continue to work for us anymore. We have to be innovative and find new ways.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to hear, like I did from the Barbados Labour Party when I used to suggest things on this Floor, that it was not tried somewhere else and therefore, they could not try it.

Sir, the impression in this country, which has been created by the Barbados Labour Party, is that we can only copy. Sir, the days for copying are over. We have to stop copying and start thinking outside the box. We have to start trying new things. Sir, the truth is that it is those new things that also create the right climate and allow certain things to happen.

Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that the Democratic Labour Party did not get the opportunity to introduce VAT themselves. Sir, it was introduced by the Barbados Labour Party and it was bastardised. If one looks at the statistics around 1997-1999, one would recognise that the deficit we are now talking about, we should not be talking about that deficit, but that we should have been building on that surplus that was created.

Sir, in business, they will tell you that you have to make a profit, but with Government they will tell you that you need to borrow and that you need to create a deficit.

Sir, I have never seen it in this world where people believe that they could continue going to Hell all the time, and that they should not turn to Christ. Sir, I think the time is ripe for the Democratic Labour Party to turn this country to Christ. I think the time is ripe for us to be positive.

*Asides.*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I was never one for deficit financing. I have always supported the view that the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow who said... Sir, there are persons here who like to quote him, but they do not quote him correctly. The Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow has always said that the current account has to help the capital expenditure. Instead, I hear people giving the impression that he said you should run deficits. Sir, they would have heard him in the past, but I would have heard him in the present.

Sir, I do not know of any business that could continue to lose money, borrow money and could still survive. Therefore, the same thing applies to Government. Government will have to understand that if it wants to service the loans it is borrowing, then it must create mechanisms to service those loans. If they continue to lose money, how can they continue to service those loans? All we are doing, if we continue like that, would be creating a death trap.

Mr. Speaker, in a climate such as this, one can understand Government having to increase the deficit. Anybody who tells you that a Government should not increase the deficit at this point in time would need their heads examined, because the world is in a crisis. Sir, what we would not accept is that when the economy gets better, for us to continue to run high deficits.

*H:No. A59(12)12:00 noon.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: What we would expect is that we run a surplus, so that we can start to repay the loans that have been borrowed, et cetera. Sir, that is what is needed.

Mr. Speaker, in good times, you do not expect to have a high deficit and high borrowing, you would expect the reverse to be true, but what have we seen? We have seen 14 years of growth, as said by the last Government, deficits increasing and borrowing increasing, yet still, we are told that we had 14 years of growth. What can you expect of a Government that has now come to office, had no opportunity to get growth, was left a hand well stacked with debt and now also has a crisis? Sir, people would expect the Government now to do the things that they could not do when they had everything in their hands.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that it is impossible, but I am glad for the confidence placed in the Democratic Labour Party by the Opposition. Sir, actually, they are saying to us that we are better than them, because in bad times, they expect us to have a surplus and to reduce the debt, which is something that we could not do when we had growth in good times.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know why Honourable Members on the Front Bench are worried when they make that charge, because all they are saying, is that you are better than them. They expect you to do the impossible when they could not do the possible.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today to ensure that we continue to offer to the public of Barbados, those things that would help keep the engine running and we have to ensure that whatever we do, we do not ignore the workers of Barbados.

Sir, I have said when I was in Opposition that one thing about the masses and the small businesses of Barbados, is that when the country is in crisis, they do not run anywhere. Sir, one sure thing, they do not run anywhere and the mere fact that they do not run anywhere, we cannot run from them either.

Sir, even though I sit here, I am not going to isolate myself and make anybody believe that the decisions which have to be made in this country are any one-man show, and that one man must take all the blame. We came here as a Party and we are here to put our hands to the plough and ensure that even though we are behind here, the diddle stick is always at the back of the boat and not to the bow and we will ensure....

*Asides.*

Mr. SPEAKER: I thought you said, "Pardon me."

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I will never say pardon to you because I know you do not speak in these debates. I have been in here for 14 years, so I do not expect you to speak in a debate. The Head Table would tell you that I am too au fait with the Rules to make an error like that. Furthermore, I will help guide you and I will protect you in this House even though you are supposed to protect me.

Mr. Speaker, what we need now is for the Opposition to be loyal to their country and to stop believing they can win back a Government in only two years. If they want to win a Government, they have to wait until it is Election time. Sir, we are not in Election mode yet, so I do not know why after having a Government for 14 years...

*Asides.*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member wants me to believe that they can now beat me when they do not even have a Prime Minister next to me anymore, and I had to live my whole political life, 14 years, with my only neighbour as a Prime Minister and they could not even interfere with Lucy's child. Sir,

now they are out in the woods bastardising the world, they believe they could touch Lucy's child.

*Asides.*

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we have to understand that we have to do those things that are important. Sir, as much as the Honourable Member for St. Andrew might say that the development of Barbados lies in that beautiful parish called St. Lucy, I have said in this House already that in order for Barbados to be developed and to become a developed country that St. Lucy has to be developed.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, who is worrying about St. Lucy, needs not worry about St. Lucy. He must ensure that even though he is the Chairman now, because of "vexatious" moves, that he can continue to hold that position two years from now when the big chief walks back to take over control.

Mr. Speaker, I do not fight for position. I am quite happy being in the most northerly parish of Barbados, and I am quite comfortable to have the moon shining over my head. If the Honourable Member is right, I would not be vexed. I would ride away gracefully and say to the people that I am proud of what has been done for me. Sir, I will not get vexed. Mr. Speaker, what is also interesting is that the same people who would now want to bad-mouth St. Lucy can appreciate the finery of St. Lucy, so I do not mind those negatives.

Mr. Speaker, what we have to do now is to ensure that we come together as a people, that is the Government, the workers and the investors. Sir, we need to treat each other in a common way and to appreciate the contribution of each other.

Mr. Speaker, for too long in this country people have behaved as if workers were not important, and people have seen investors as criminals. Sir, I am saying that it is wrong, that people have to understand that in order for a country to be developed, that you must have all three working in tandem.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying today, that this is the right climate to create that atmosphere and for us to work hand-in-hand and to pull the country out of the rut. Sir, it is an international problem, but because it is an international problem, it does not mean we cannot beat it from a local solution. We have to create solutions to deal with the problem.

Sir, I have said that we cannot neglect the service industry and agriculture. We have to ensure that we maximise the benefit of it.

Mr. Speaker, that is why community tourism must not be ignored, it must be enhanced. Sir, agriculture cannot be ignored, it must be enhanced and all other services must be supported, so that we can develop this nice country called Barbados, because there are many people who would love to be here with us.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, in this debate I suppose we could have ranged far and wide because the measure that is being discussed was placed before this House in the Budget of 2009. Sir, it was placed in the context of what the Prime Minister called expanding our social safety net. The Opposition on that occasion spoke on the specific initiative and view then that it was likely to achieve any meaningful results in terms of keeping people employed. We did the maths and reckoned that it would be the equivalent of saving a business nothing more than one month's wages.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and other Members on the Other Side are heartened to know, as they put it, that only two enterprises applied. Sir, we are concerned that only two enterprises applied because it either means that the initiative was ill-conceived and that the Government put in place a programme that had no factual basis, or alternatively, it means that the Government has put in place a programme that holds no attractiveness to the private sector, simply because either the prerequisites were almost impossible to meet, or that the prospect of securing one month's wages would mean nothing at all to an employee.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose that all of us in this Chamber have some rudimentary knowledge of how businesses work. Sir, some may have significantly more knowledge than others, having been involved in businesses themselves.

*H/A59/12.10 p.m. Sequence 13*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Let us begin by being truthful about what businesses require. Businesses require cashflow. Sir, cashflow is money coming in. It has to do with being able to turn over your product. This cashflow will be used to help to turn over an investment, but in a situation where an enterprise has to resort to nothing more than a referral of a National Insurance Scheme contribution on a month by month basis, really is not having any

significant amount of cashflow in its hands to achieve its goals.

Sir, from where we sit, the fact that only two businesses have sought to benefit under this initiative, we consider that to be a damning statistic. It seems to us that in an environment where people are continuing to lose their jobs, where the very sector in which the Government is saying jobs are being kept. In fact, being introduced into the economy, are not the sectors from which these two businesses come, then we have to doubt the effectiveness of this policy.

The Honourable Members on That Side, seemed to be engaged in what could be called a mutual admiration society. Sir, every day in this Chamber, we hear the most laudatory comments coming from one Member to the next, or from one Back Bencher to the next. Their speeches are filled with that kind of praise, but I do not know if they are only listening to the sonorous sounds of their own voices, because when we in the Opposition are in the trenches, we are not hearing those words of praise being showered on the Government.

Sir, I am not hearing those words of praise being showered when among my constituents I have an alarmingly increasing number of people who are unemployed and want housing, whose day to day needs are simply not being met, yet still every day one Cabinet Minister will be showering praise on another, how they are doing such a wonderful job. Sir, they are entitled to do that, because if they do it often enough, perhaps, they will begin to believe it.

Sir, I would like to suggest that they wake up because the people who were on their side, people who have no side, people who have no axe to grind, those people are beginning to speak in voices that are singing a tune very differently to the mutual admiration that is happening on the Front Benches and Back Benches of Government.

Sir, there are a number of people in this Chamber who lay claim to being economists, people who try to convey the impression that they are well-versed in their economic skills and so on. Sir, some of us cannot, some of us do not, but one wonders how is it possible that we in this country could be in the worst economic crisis ever...

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us hear the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: How it is that we in this country could be in the worst economic crisis ever, yet still increased taxes were in the way in which it was done over the last two years? How could this country be in the worst economic crisis ever, be reeling under the body blows that

were being dished out to us, but yet still we are able to have free camps, bus fares being waived, a whole set of other things? How is it possible?

Sir, the Opposition is not upset by entitlement programmes, but we do not understand if we have to deal with all of these challenges, then how is it possible the Government is going to deliver these things?

Sir, unemployment we know has increased significantly in the last two years. We know that. Thousands of Barbadians have gone home. I would like the Honourable Member, who introduced this Bill to tell us how the \$1 million that went to the small businesses has been used up. I would like the Honourable Member, instead of saying the money was used, tell us how many new jobs were brought into the economy as a result of the using up.

We know that the Supplementary and the Explanatory Note, as far as I recall, the Supplementary said it was to be used to help in incorporation costs.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, is this dealing with the Supplementary? I am a bit concerned as to your relevance and so on. Of course, Honourable Members will make comments in passing to the general economic situation, but do not expect that a debate as such as is before this Honourable Chamber, will be an entire discourse on the economy. Please be relevant.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Sir, I would urge that it is relevant because the essence of the debate referred to keeping unemployment down, with employing people. That is what the Bill is dealing with.

The Honourable Member, who introduced the Bill, proffered to this Chamber that the Government had a whole raft of mechanisms that they introduced to bolster up the National Insurance Scheme initiative, including the million dollars they lent to small businesses.

Sir, from that point of view, I would suggest that the question is relevant. How many jobs were introduced in the economy as a result of that particular initiative? How many jobs had been introduced into the economy as a result of the initiatives that have been put in place? That is the issue I am trying to focus on.

Sir, this initiative has been in place for a year. It is our view that it has not yielded any fruit. The Government takes the view, the fact, that there were only two businesses that applied for it, is in fact, a positive thing. We submit that it is very much the opposite. We support any measure to keep Barbadians employed. There is no doubt about that.

Sir, when last I checked, my constituents were Barbadians too, as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, and are taxpayers. There is that old saying that the rising tide floats all ships. We want to see Barbadians employed and we will support any measure that will have a meaningful impact on delivering those goods to the Barbadian people.

It does not benefit any Honourable Member of the Opposition to castigate a Government for measures that seek to employ Barbadians, but as an Opposition, we reserve the right to comment on those measures as to their efficacy and to try to see what else are the issues.

Sir, in this particular Amendment, and based on the statement by the Honourable Minister of Finance, in the last Budget, companies had to be up-to-date with their contributions before they could benefit from this particular initiative. The real challenge that faces companies with cashflow problems is that they are often not able to meet their statutory obligations. They paid wages. They had to pay wages. They paid suppliers, but we believe, and the Honourable Member for St. James North mentioned this when he spoke, one of the earliest things in which a business is suffering will be to default on its statutory obligations, whether it is paying income tax, or paying NIS. Those are the early things to go, because when a company has a cashflow problem, it immediately starts to deal only with those things that are staring in the face, suppliers and employees. Other things, I believe, statistics will show what are allowed to slide. Even utilities are allowed to fall into arrears until the company can catch itself.

*H59 12.20 p.m. Sequence 14*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*House A59, Sequence 15, 12.20 p.m.*

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: I believe, therefore, that in circumstances where a company reaches this point, to say to that entity, you must first have brought all of your arrears up-to-date, is to put a company in a position where it is even worse off than before, because if it has no cash flow, if it is at the point where it is moribund and really unable to sustain itself in business, the question has to be asked, Mr. Speaker: "How is it going to be able to bring arrears up-to-date and still benefit from this?"

I am aware, Mr. Speaker, of businesses that are several hundreds of thousands of dollars in arrears. Those businesses, Sir, have been negatively affected by the economic climate and face the prospect of sending home people, but this particular legislative initiative does not represent a lifeline to those businesses.

Sir, if they had the cash available to bring their arrears up-to-date, I would venture, Sir, that they would not even need to approach the Fund for this particular deferral.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition, as I have said, does not oppose this particular legislative measure. I have no doubt, Sir, that in the weeks to come, we will be hearing a lot more about the economy. I would like the Honourable Members on That Side though, to put aside the mutual admiration mode that they have been in for the last year or so, and let us tell the Barbadian people what the next steps are going to be, Sir.

With those words, Sir, I thank you.

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

### SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

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

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

*House A59, Sequence 15, 12.22 p.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

### RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this Sitting of the House of Assembly is now resumed. The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill.

I want to say at the beginning of my presentation that I was rather alarmed and amazed by the attitude of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who, when he made his intervention before lunch, referred to the Democratic Labour Party's camp programme for the children of Barbados and the waiver of bus fares as if they were not important and as if the Barbados Labour Party was not supporting them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I reiterate my call for the Opposition forces not to oppose merely for opposing sake, and let us rise above narrow partisanship and really put Barbados first.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has admitted that Barbados is suffering as a result of the global economic downturn, so whatever social services in terms of the safety net that a caring Government could provide to the masses, should not be frowned upon, but this is exactly what the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has done. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has frowned upon and has heaped ridicule on this Democratic Labour Party Government for introducing the Easter and summer camps programme and the free bus fares for the nation's children. I really do not understand the logic.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am trained in Mathematics and if one is presenting an argument... We have learned attorneys-at-Law in this Chamber, including the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, and we must really think before we speak. If you say that the people need assistance, and this Democratic Labour Party Government has risen to the occasion and provided free camps for the children of Barbados, you cannot in the same breath seek to chastise and condemn the Government for introducing these very visionary welfare programmes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I speak from the perspective of being the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown and I am happy to report that last summer, there were five camps registered in the City of Bridgetown, two at Westbury, one at the Wesleyan Holiness Church on Whitepark Road, one at Faith Temple Church on Roebuck Street and one at the Nazarene Church on Hall's Road.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, just hold one minute please.

#### SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

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

*The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 1.45 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.*

#### RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this Sitting of the House of Assembly is now resumed.

#### SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be further suspended until 2.10 p.m. today.

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

*The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.10 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.*

#### House A59 Sequence

1.35 p.m.

Tuesday, March 09, 2010

#### RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. When the Suspension was taken, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown was on his feet. Honourable Members, to that we will resume.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if what I said at the beginning of my presentation before the technical break was captured and so, I will just seek to summarise briefly.

Sir, I rise to support this National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010, which seeks, among other things, to enable businesses to defer payments of their National Insurance contributions payable by employers up until June 2010, so long as compliance with the various conditions specified are adhered to.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that I am rather surprised to hear the argument put forward by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Deputy Opposition Leader. In terms of when the Honourable Member spoke, as I understand it, the Honourable Member admitted that within the global sphere, the country is affected by the global economic downturn, yet in the same breath the Honourable Member frankly criticised this Democratic Labour Party Government for introducing our Easter Summer Camp programme for the children of this country. The Honourable Member also alluded in a negative way to the free access to bus fares by our school children. Sir, I am saying this is not consistent, or logical.

Sir, I am trained in Mathematics and I must admit that the argument of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is not logical. Sir, I am calling upon the Opposition to desist from criticising for mere criticising sake and not to criticise for narrow partisan political benefit only.

Mr. Speaker, we as a Parliament must always keep Barbados first, so that there is nothing wrong with an Opposition realising the tremendous benefits to be realised by a Government's policy and for that Opposition to support those policies.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that beyond any shadow of a doubt, it is clear that the visionary policies of this Democratic Labour Party, in terms of providing these summer camp programmes for the children and Government waivering bus fares, are deserving of bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, I can report - this is not hearsay - this Honourable Member visited a number of the camps that were held in the City over the last year. In fact, during the summer, there were about five camps registered in the City of Bridgetown: two at Westbury School. St. Mary's School was being utilised by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and so, the children from that catchment area, Cat's Castle, New Orleans, Chapman Lane and Mason Hall Street, Murphy Pasture, were accommodated at Westbury School. There was another camp at Westbury Primary School.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge that the Honourable Member would stay within the Standing Orders. I do not know how this is relevant to the Bill that is before this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I am responding to what the Honourable Member said. The Honourable Member who spoke before me criticised this Democratic Labour Party Government for having these summer camps, so I am responding directly to that intervention made by the Honourable Member. Sir, is the Honourable Member saying that what he said was not relevant? I am not sure. Mr. Speaker, I must counter that non-point made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Sir, as I was saying, we had five camps in the City in the last summer vacation, which is nearly one-tenth of the total number of students accommodated, in terms of the whole island to that summer camp programme coming from the City. Therefore, we in the City fully embrace and support this wonderful initiative of the Democratic Labour Party Administration.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I was able to visit camps at Westbury School. We had two there. We were not able to get the Emmerton Community Centre and we took children from that area over to the Wesleyan Holiness Church at Whitepark Road. Sir, I thank the Pastor and his administration for accommodating us.

The Faith Temple Church also had its camp in Roebuck Street at the Church of the Nazarene at Halls

Road. Sir, nearly one-tenth of those students islandwide in that total summer camp came from the City.

Sir, last Easter I remember visiting a camp in your Constituency at St. Leonard's Boys' School and saw hundreds of your constituents, some coming from the City. I also went to Wesley Hall Primary School and I saw people from the City and from your Constituency. Sir, these were all young children, who are the future leaders of our country, who were all excited getting training in skills.

I remember the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East was with me at Wesley Hall School, where there were hundreds of children. This was captured in the media, and people were thanking the Democratic Labour Party for introducing this visionary initiative. Sir, within that programme, it is a fact that those children were provided with wholesome meals, for example, baked chicken and macaroni pie, on a daily basis.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you should not be misled with the content of the speeches of Honourable Members before you. When the Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke, his speech was a repeat with asides and introductory matters. Obviously, if you spend your speech dealing with those introductory matters, your speech would also be irrelevant. Please, I want to caution you, just to keep you on your feet.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have made my point pellucidly clear to the public to determine, and I will come on another occasion to go into more details.

2.20 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, these camps provide wholesome, nourishing food for these children. We even had children who were not officially in the camp, who were provided with meals.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that this is essential for working class people. We are talking about the social safety net and it is very relevant to this Bill. I am saying this Bill is realising that we need to give ease to the vulnerable groups, be it businesses, or persons who are not unemployed, or under-employed, and these savings add up.

Sir, this Government has nothing to be ashamed of in terms of providing this ease to vulnerable groups within our country.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying as well that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, in his introduction to this Bill, made the point that this Democratic Labour

Party Government was able to pump some necessary funds into the Micro Enterprise Fund, which provides small grants to small entrepreneurs.

I remember being first introduced to this Scheme when I was given the opportunity to act for a few days as Minister of Economic Affairs. I toured part of that Ministry housed at the Warrens Building. The Permanent Secretary and his staff were very proud of this initiative where we saw \$325 000 voted for, was utilised completely within six months and this caring Democratic Labour Party Administration rose to the occasion and provided a Supplementary of an additional \$725 000 to ensure that these small entrepreneurs are given a lifeline in terms of financial assistance to keep these businesses viable.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking of grants of BDS\$5 000. Sir, they were not even loans, they were grants to small businesses that qualify. Sir, large businesses would not be eligible because you have to be within a certain size, in terms of the number of people you employ, your annual earnings, expenditure and so on.

Mr. Speaker, these are the small entrepreneurs, persons such as hair dressers, people into landscaping, barbers, food vendors, fruit vendors, persons who may be into textiles, small production of clothing, craft and jewelry.

Sir, small entrepreneurs, who I must congratulate as taking the bull by the horn and not waiting for Government, or anyone to provide them with a job, but are seeking to empower themselves and provide a decent income for themselves and their family.

Sir, I fully support this Government's support for this class of business entrepreneur within our country. Sir, I look forward to this programme being strengthened as time goes on.

Mr. Speaker, I remember going to a graduation of the Rural Development Commission at Foundation School after we assumed office, and I saw literally hundreds of these small entrepreneurs benefitting from the Rural Development Commission Loan Programme and their assistance in training, where you had self-employed persons grateful for that financial assistance from Government and, Sir, they add up.

Mr. Speaker, I remember viewing the international media on CNN recently and they made the point that in the City district in India, be it Mumbai, or what have you, that sort of informal sector, small "higglers", or hucksters, as we would call them in the west, that small retailers were able to actually account for the majority of the legal/economic activity in the various cities in India.

Sir, if we were to take away support from these small entrepreneurs, you would have a lot more people unemployed and on the breadline, depending on the State for welfare assistance tempting to get into crime and other illegal activities. Sir, I congratulate them, once again, for taking the risk, Sir, however small the risk.

Mr. Speaker, people would have taken their entire life savings to invest in a weedwacker, or Lawn mower in order to start a business as a landscaper, to buy a barber's chair, or a hair dresser's chair, or a nail technician's equipment to ensure they can start a legal business to employ themselves and maybe, one or two other persons to provide a necessary service for the buying public. Sir, they have taken the risk, so I support this Government by meeting mid-stream in terms of providing this grant facility.

Mr. Speaker, this Democratic Labour Party is not just talking, but we are acting and the public must be aware of this fact.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to delay the House because I know we have a long day ahead of us. I am just saying that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph in his presentation was asking how many new jobs were created by the Micro Enterprise Fund, but I will ask the Honourable Member for St. Joseph to note that even if we did not create any new jobs, we were able to save those hundreds of jobs in terms of keeping those small entrepreneurs employed, then we would have ensured that the unemployment rate does not escalate.

Sir, it is not just a matter of creating jobs. That is important, but if we can save jobs in the process, we would have done a very positive move in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to reiterate the commendation that must be given to the private sector, where many of these businesses have run down their inventory in the most severe aspect of this global recession, to keep their employees employed, and they must be congratulated.

Sir, that is why this Bill provides this assistance to these businesses in terms of keeping their cash flow in a positive way, in terms of giving these businessmen an opportunity to defer their payment of the employees' National Insurance contribution. Sir, this is a creative way that this Administration has devised to ensure that the cash flow position of these businesses is not undermined to the extent that these businesses would have to shut down, or lay off people.

Again, the Opposition, if they are really thinking of the national interest would support this measure whole

scale, in the national interest, rather than seek to score cheap political points and opposing for opposing sake.

Mr. Speaker, I told the Honourable Member for St. Philip West that it is a job well done, that he has my full support, and I congratulate this Democratic Labour Party Administration for supporting the young entrepreneurs of our country, supporting the business sector, to keep the people of our country gainfully employed.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

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

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, as I move to wrap-up this debate, I would first want to thank those persons who have contributed to the debate. I would want to first try to explain, through you, Sir, to the people of this country a few things.

Mr. Speaker, it might be because the Honourable Member for St. Joseph does not understand the function of the Barbados Micro Enterprise Fund and, is confusing that with the Special Technical Assistance Programme of the BIDC.

Sir, the Special Technical Assistance Programme deals with businesses that are incorporated, but the Micro Enterprise Fund does not deal with that at all. In fact, the Micro Enterprise Fund is a stabilisation fund, designed to help small businesses access equipment and other materials by giving them monies to do so.

Mr. Speaker, that is a stabilisation programme. Therefore, in the midst of the economic crisis, when those businesses are having difficulties, there is a place to turn to for financial support, so that they can maintain their one, two, or three jobs in Barbados. Sir, that is what this is about, so I really do not have much time to get into the side politics.

*H/A59A/2.30 p.m. Sequence 2*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: I want to address very quickly two things. I have full confidence in the intelligence of Barbadians. I also have full confidence in the understanding of Barbadians, and if it is to be said that the stabilisation programmes with respect to unemployment in Barbados have not worked, I would want the brilliant ones on the Other Side to explain to Barbadians how come that in 2001 the unemployment rate was 10.3 per cent 2002, 10.6 per cent? How is it that when the crisis started in Barbados it went to 11.9 per cent, but now, today, it is 9.2 per cent? How could that have happened? How could

that have happened if the stabilisation programmes, under this Administration were not being effective? It would have been totally impossible for this to have occurred.

As I said, I have confidence in the common sense of the good people in this country, and I do not have much more time to get into any further discussions on that matter.

I only want to address two other issues. I heard this from the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, as he spoke to the matter of the foreign reserves cover. Let me explain to the Honourable Member that for many years in Barbados, the accepted foreign reserve cover was three months. For many years it was 12 weeks. Then it moved after the crisis in the 1990s to some measure between three and six months. Today, we have a comfortable net international reserve cover of 20.6 weeks, which under any economic circumstance, is an excellent cover to have.

How did we get that cover? We got that cover because of the Prime Minister understanding that we would have had difficulties with our reserve position, so we went very early on the international market in Trinidad, through Scotia Bank Trust, and borrowed US\$100 million. That is the prudent position taken by this Administration.

Sir, all the talk, if we were not persons who understood and could prognosticate as to how the economy was going to behave, we would have had more difficulties, but we have evidence. We have now a solid net international reserve position. I just want to discard that statement made by Honourable Members on the Other Side.

I also want to say that there was some ire again, in appreciating funding from international financial institutions. It was stated: how it is that we can borrow, or get access to \$1.3 billion for infrastructural work without damaging the economy?

What the Honourable Members on the Other Side seemed not to understand is that we are not borrowing on the international financial market. We are borrowing from via our developmental partners, so the loans are soft loans, the developmental loans, over a 25-year period at a low interest rate. Therefore, it does not have the impact as though you had gone to borrow on the international credit markets.

Sir, what we are hearing, and what we are seeing is a total lack of understanding of borrowing through a developmental partner, known as International Financial Institutions, and borrowing on the international market. Again, I dismiss the logic of the Other Side.

Sir, I only want to say that very soon we would be in a very serious set of economic debates on two matters to

come before this House. It is at that time a more fulsome evaluation will be done here. I will, therefore, wait for that period of time to engage in more specific matters.

Sir, I would say this before I sit, because some of us seem to have very short memories and sometimes you have to remind people. The Budget of 2008 - do you know what this Administration did to help maintain and support the people of this country? Sir, we forgot that we increased the Reversed Tax Credit in Barbados. Do you understand that we increased the Reversed Tax Credit from \$800 to \$1 100? Do you understand that in order to help Barbadians get access to food, we also decreased the VAT on a whole number of food items that were not in the basket? Sir, do you know that we removed the environmental levy of 2 per cent on a whole slew of products in the interest of Barbadians?

Sir, what is even more ridiculous, do you remember when we increased the pension for old aged people and the disabled in 2008? In that Budget we stand as a Party that understands social engineering, and we stand by free bus rides, because it does not affect your balance of payment, because there is no foreign reserve component to that. There is no foreign reserve component fundamentally of camps in Barbados either, and we stand by that as well.

Sir, when I hear all the talk, I am only beginning to rev up for next week, because it is going to be reasonably brutal, because there are a lot of matters that will be brought.

I will stand simply by saying I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

S59A 2.40 p.m. Sequence 3

Tuesday, March 09, 2010

House A59A, Sequence 04, 2.40 p.m.

#### COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

*Clauses 1 and 2, were called and passed.*

*On the motion of Dr. the Hon. D.C. ESTWICK, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one*

*Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.*

*On the separate motions of Dr. the Hon. D.C. ESTWICK, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Act, 2010.*

#### RECOMMITAL -

#### PAPERS

Dr. the Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Medium Term Development Strategy of Barbados 2010-2014.
2. Medium Term Fiscal Strategy of Barbados 2010-2014.

#### RECOMMITAL -

#### GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Mr. SPEAKER: 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 One Million, One Hundred and Sixty-Eight Thousand, Eight Hundred and Seventy-One Dollars 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. 13 2009-2010 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

#### ORDER NO. 6 – RESOLUTION TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF THE SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF THIS ISLAND

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

#### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$12 586 964 000

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.12 WHICH  
FORM

THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION

HEAD 13 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE -

\$11 599 059

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, the sum of \$11 551 269 is required to Supplement the Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial Year 2009-2010. As is well known for some time, the Government has been trying to sort out the whole issue of pensions due to members of the Barbados Defence Force, and after careful combing of all the relevant legislation and plugging all of the loopholes related thereto, the Government is now in a position to deal with this issue more frontally than would have been possible before we sorted out all of the niggling difficulties which had bedeviled this problem.

We are now in a position, therefore, to meet the requirements of the former members of the Barbados Defence Force, who have rendered inestimable service to the security of this island, and this Resolution is intended to satisfy their demand for pensions to which they have been entitled.

The Barbados Defence Force, as this Committee knows, is involved in a wide range of activities related to the security and development of Barbados, and those persons over the years who have served the Defence Force, and by extension, who have served the country, have placed us everlastingly in their debt. We cannot separate the security of our environment from the contribution that these distinguished former soldiers of the Defence Force have made to Barbados.

Sir, I am pleased today, on behalf of the Government, to be able to pilot this Resolution and to move the passing of this Head which puts the lid at last on an issue which I know, and which we know had caused former soldiers of the Barbados Defence Force some sleepless nights and some anxiety, because they had

contributed so wisely, and so sensibly, and so selflessly to the security of this island.

Mr. Chairman, that said, I beg to move that Head 13 stand part.

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

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

*House A59A, Sequence 04, 2.50 p.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

HEAD 19 - TREASURY

\$47 113

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Chairman, an amount of \$47 113 is being requested under Head 19 for the Barbados Youth Service to purchase a vehicle to replace the vehicle which they had previously owned, which was written off after an accident in 2008.

The Barbados Youth Service operates out of various locations. During the residential phase, they are located at Paragon in Christ Church. Otherwise, their offices and other activities are usually housed in Warrens and most of the inventory is kept at Warrens, so there is a definite need for a vehicle for them to carry staff and other supplies over to Paragon.

The three-month residential programme that is conducted at Paragon is quite a useful programme, and is the first of a three-phase programme. During that three-month programme, students are taught discipline and adolescent development through self-esteem building and counselling and team building exercises. Emphasis is also placed on academics, cultural activities and sporting development.

This programme at the Barbados Youth Service is for those students who may not have been very successful in school, so as to give them a second opportunity to get their academic career going, and to prepare and train them to become skilled, to be able to initiate employment opportunities, not necessarily in the area of academia, but in the exploration of other avenues. It is also an opportunity for young people to learn to be disciplined and to be able to adopt a positive attitude.

This programme is used by Youth Commissioners. Guidance Counsellors and the Juvenile Justice System may

also refer students to the programme. This is a programme for students who may have lost their way and just need to be focussed to get their lives on track again. This programme is one that has been very successful for them.

Mr. Chairman, during this three-month residential programme, students have to surrender their iPods, cell phones and everything else and adhere to a programme of strict discipline. There is drill, sporting and cultural activities. This programme has proven to be quite successful. The last intake at October 2009, was 92 students.

This programme is in great demand. Unfortunately, we are only able to do one residential programme every year, because the facility at Paragon belongs to the Barbados Defence Force, but they have been gracious enough to allow us to use it during those three months. For the remaining period, the Barbados Defence Force has other uses for it, but there is the demand for it and so we are now challenged to see how we can find opportunities to extend this programme.

Given the current economic difficulties that we are experiencing, the development of a new facility may not be on the cards, but we certainly need to see how we can have some of these activities going on in the communities. It would also allow for more students to be able to participate if we have it decentralised.

The other phases of the programme would be a skills training phase and a job attachment phase. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank corporate Barbados, because they have been very good to this programme. They have allowed our students to be able to come on board and get this training as part of their job attachment programme and very often the students have been able to find employment with those companies.

Mr. Chairman, that speaks to the preparation that they get in the programme, because when they get to the workplaces, they are able to apply themselves and so impress the employers that they are able to hold down a job.

Mr. Chairman, we want to thank corporate Barbados for their support in that and to encourage others to see how they can be a part of that programme.

The programme at the Barbados Defence Force is a total programme. The students who are involved are required to do 44 hours of community service. The last two graduations that I attended, the students had done well over 44 hours. There were some students who had actually done more than 100 hours of community service. Many of them had never had an opportunity to serve before. They have never been engaged in school in any sort of programme and

so they had not developed any civic mindedness, but once they got themselves involved in those programmes, they enjoyed the experience and so they continued with it.

The students at the Barbados Youth Service go on parade at the Independence parade. They have volunteered at the Give Back Programme at the Division of Youth Affairs. They comprised part of the teams that went out to paint the houses of elderly persons to bring them some cheer at Christmas and indeed, beyond. They have just partnered with the National Conservation Commission in their quest to plant trees and beautify Barbados.

Sir, we are finding opportunities with corporate Barbados, civil society organisations and other agencies, both in the Ministry and across Government, for our young people to be able to develop proper attitudes and skills.

Mr. Chairman, of note, is that with this last intake, the parents of the students were particularly supportive. An aspect of the programme is counselling, not just for the students, but for the parents who are usually brought on board, because when the students leave after the three-month programme, they have to go back into a certain environment, and it helps to have the parents to understand the students, to understand their particular needs, to be able to understand communication difficulties and to help to further the foundational work that would have been done at the programme.

Mr. Chairman, the parents are always invited, but usually the response is lukewarm at best, but with this last intake, the participation was extremely good as most of the parents came out and participated in those counselling sessions. This, therefore, redounds to the benefit of those students.

It says that there is a message that is getting out there to parents that they need to be more actively involved in the lives of their young people, that they need to learn how to talk to their children.

The Division of Family is doing parenting seminars and the Barbados Youth Service is a part of that also. In the Ministry, we are looking to build alliances and help to make things more efficient as well. Sir, things like that are happening, so you would see that rather than duplicate programmes, we are tending to cooperate and collaborate.

The programme, as I said, needs to be expanded, because there is indeed a cry for more. We had 92 students this past year, but of course, there are so many more students. We get calls from schools, parents, youth commissioners and other concerned people who are concerned about young people who have left school who are unemployed and have no skills.

There are young people on “the block” who would stop you every day and say they want work, but they do not have any skills, or qualifications and so we are always looking to find avenues for them.

Mr. Chairman, a programme like this is certainly one that needs to be built upon, so we are looking to see how we can do that, given the constraints with which we now operate in. As I said, one approach to that would be to have a community-based approach. Certainly, if we move to decentralise our operations, we would definitely have more need of that vehicle.

Mr. Chairman, I want at this time to also thank the staff at the Barbados Youth Service for their commitment.

*House A59A Sequence 5*

3.00 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Chairman, the staff at the Barbados Youth Service have worked under some trying conditions, at Paragon and also in the shuttling back and forth from Warrens to Paragon, but they have stuck to their task. They appreciate the significance of their contributions and to say they have kept the course. I want to thank them, for indeed, it has paid off.

Mr. Chairman, there is to be a tracer survey to follow up some of these students. We have found that the rate of recidivism from the Barbados Youth Service is lower than that of the Government Industrial School, so that it is preferred by the Juvenile Justice System, wherever possible.

Sir, we would have heard a magistrate recently in the paper and on the electronic media, singing the praises of the programme, because it has provided an opportunity for students who may not necessarily need to be in the Government Industrial School, but who may only need to refocus. This has carved its own niche on the youth development landscape.

Mr. Chairman, having outlined to you the major features of the programme, I would like then to ask for this money to have the vehicle for the Barbados Youth Service.

Sir, I beg to move that Head I9 stand part.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I would wish to indicate from the outset that I am very much aware of the need for a vehicle, and possibly vehicles to be a part of the Barbados Youth Service, in the functioning of that

institution. Therefore, anything that will assist in the development of our youth and in the development of our people as a whole, will be supported by This Side, the Opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I can speak with a fair measure of experience about the Barbados Youth Service. Sir, I was waiting to make my overall comment later in light of what the Honourable Member for St. George South was referring to, the \$47 790 for the vehicle.

Sir, I am happy to be able to recognise that the programmes of the Barbados Youth Service continue. I trust that despite whatever may happen in this economy, we will continue to focus on the youth of Barbados, who are the future of this country.

Mr. Chairman, the residential component is extremely pertinent. Sir, the Honourable Member spoke about taking away the various devices from them, even jewelry. Sir, that has always been the stance and I support it. I support the fact that no one will be able to have access to them, except in the areas of tutors, counsellors and others, who will be working with them to help them shape their character.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that in Barbados we need to look more seriously at how we nurture our youth, not only when they reach 18 going on to 30, but at a younger age. I say that because we recognised within our systems, within the homes, communities and schools, that very few parents and guardians are nurturing children in the way that we knew, that has helped us to be able to become the good citizens we have become.

Mr. Chairman, I believe it is pertinent that character building is included in whatever training that takes place in the classroom. It is unfortunate that over the years many of us, as teachers and caregivers, have sought to look at the academic strength that is being offered to the children, to the detriment of the spiritual and moral, and the kind of fabric, which is necessary for a stronger citizen of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I always complain because I always believe that character building is pertinent, while I know we need to look at the book aspect of things. I believe that every lesson introduced should have a component of value education included, so that our youth understand that there are certain principles in the Bible, and in any other society that they have to work towards, in order to live and get along with others in the society.

Sir, we are seeing the outcome of losing track of that in the various business places and places of leisure and entertainment, that sadly reflects on how we nurture our youth.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Barbados Youth Service, its staff and other members in corporate Barbados, as well as civic-minded people, should be highly commended for offering service to that department for almost 20 years. I do not believe that enough is being done for the parents. Of course, I welcome the idea of the National Teachers' and Parents' Association and the efforts I have heard about coming from the Ministry of Family, but I believe that more has to be done if we are to harness the skills, knowledge and the characters of our youth, so that when we pass on, at least we would know we have left a cadre of citizens who would have good attitudes, who would want to volunteer their services, who would want to be able to see Barbados go to the next level. Sir, I believe the Barbados Youth Service will continue to do that.

Mr. Chairman, it has always been the perception of a small percentage of Barbadians, that the Barbados Youth Service is only for those young people who have become very deviant, who have to go before the Law for whatever infraction, or those on the fringe. Sir, we all know that the Barbados Youth Service is for all young people between 18 and 30, who want to build character, who want to be exposed to opportunities for employment and socialisation.

Mr. Chairman, I will never forget when a then popular calypso tent portrayed the Barbados Youth Service in such a negative way, that it destroyed the image of that institution at that time. I am happy that over the years, with the injection of funds and resources into the Barbados Youth Service, under a Barbados Labour Party regime, which continues, that image has slowly begun to disappear. We are now seeing the Barbados Youth Service developing again.

Mr. Chairman, I think it was unreasonable the way in which it was done. I think too, it was unreasonable that the message sent to the youth of Barbados that they only go to the Barbados Youth Service if they want to smoke "weed", or have sex. Sir, there were all kinds of nonsense stories that helped to impact negatively on that institution.

It was no different when we had conceived the idea of the Alma Parris School where people, whom I expected to know better, had an acronym associated with that school. Sir, I thought that was unprofessional and unwarranted.

Sir, today we can speak of the advances of the Barbados Youth Service and of the other institutions that help with our youth.

Mr. Chairman, no one has to go to any university, or institution to learn parenting, but it is a pity sometimes when we see what is happening to our youth, that a parent should not have to go to a university, or to an institution to have a degree before they could have a child. Sir, it is a pity when we look at the way people are now raising their

children. Sir, people are cursing, beating and insulting our youth, and this is what is impacting on our youth, particularly the males.

I believe that more could be done by others in society in nurturing our youth. Mr. Chairman, no one has to ask for help in raising a boy, or a girl, but the traditional development of families in Barbados, where we have adopted that style that is ours as Africans, that it takes a whole village to raise one child, should really be reinstituted so that people in the village would help to hold these young people and guide them along, to make something good out of them.

Sir, these children all have innate abilities that once we tap into them, and help them, to be able to determine the positives from the negatives, if we keep following them, this could make a tremendous difference in their lives.

3.10 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: I can speak of it because I have not just come to town. I have been a community worker for many years and still devote my time to this because I believe that any time we lose sight of the fact that we are to nurture children and young people that we will lose more of them.

Mr. Chairman, it is so unfortunate that, as we speak about the rise in indiscipline in our homes, schools and villages, about the drug abuse, violence and crime that we seem to want to invent ways that would further cause the indiscipline rather than to devise ways and means of treating to these issues.

I do not think that our young people need to wait until they get in front of the Magistrate for them to be given community service, or for the Magistrate, or the Judge to determine that a young person should go to the Youth Service. There has to be more being done by the Ministry to go into communities with the Youth Commissioners and help to target those young people.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, at this time of the year, we talk about the season of Lent and from a little girl I always hear my parents say that the devil finds work for idle hands to do and that in the season of Lent, it seems to be worse. Therefore, if our Youth Commissioners get back on the ground and be able to be the eyes and ears of the people in the communities, I believe that more young men and young women would be saved from that crime and violence, and the negativity that would follow them and that would cause them to be getting into trouble on a daily basis.

Sir, we see it in our newspapers and we say a lot about it, because these young people feel it is cool for them to be in the newspapers with their faces on the front page, without understanding the serious repercussion. Sir, sometimes we seem to be glamourising this thing and making it even worse for what will happen in the future.

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

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Thank you. Sir, with the few minutes left to me, I would just like to implore upon the Honourable Minister and this Administration, to pay closer attention to the proposals from the National Youth Service. While I believe that the project for the 100 children per year will go a long way in helping to stymie the violence and so on that will emanate from the young people if they do not get help.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the National Youth Service will help to make a tremendous difference. From what was proposed by the then Dr. Henry and, indeed, Richard Carter and those who were an integral part in the consultation to make sure that the National Youth Service come on stream, some of those components can be instituted without having that central location to house the young people, because it included volunteerism, young people getting engaged in community projects in a more systematic way, similar to tithing their times at Day Nurseries and Old Peoples Home.

Sir, we must not lose the fact that generational links are pertinent to passing on a lot of the cultural norms, the good discipline and so on that have helped to shape our people over the many generations. I believe that making sure the project is not stigmatised, ensuring that everybody's child, not just the child that is delinquent, or the child of the working-class person, or the child of the middle-class person, but that everybody is engaged in the activity, so that there can be some system of reward and so on for them, whether a certificate, or something that can be taken to the school, or the university, and used to show that this person is rounded and has been intimately involved in helping to build the community, or the society.

Mr. Chairman, I believe if some of those efforts are put in place that it would help us to better understand and to treat to some of the issues out there, because the generational links would help to educate them, shape their minds and help develop character.

Mr. Chairman, I am a person who believes in giving testimonials and any time a person comes to me, I give them a testimonial. If I have not taught that person, or I do not know you, he cannot come to me because I am not going to tell a lie in a testimonial, then something happens

that says I wrote it, but I did not know the person. Sir, it could be very embarrassing and it could reflect on me.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would wish to lend the support of This Side of the House to this particular Supplementary for the \$49 790, for a vehicle that I consider to be very necessary in being able to transport the youth and help them to become better citizens as the years roll on.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I rise to support the purchase of this vehicle for the Barbados Youth Service as contained under Head 19. Let me say that I remember very well in 1991, when the Barbados Youth Service was launched then by the Democratic Labour Party Government at that time. It was part of a set of youth policies which started to emerge in Barbados during that period.

I also very well remember the Barbados Defence Force Sports Programme as well as being part of that initiative where we had within the Barbados Defence Force, this very pioneering programme and discipline such as football, cricket, boxing and track and field, were placed within that programme with the Barbados Defence Force. Some of the persons that you see even now playing the sport like Tino Best passed through that cricketing programme of the Barbados Defence Force. Mr. Chairman, that was set up by the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, you had footballers, some of them are no longer playing at the international level, but they are still playing at the domestic level, persons like Nobbie Parris, Gregory Lalu Goodridge, Norman Forde and that group of outstanding young Barbadian players, came through that Barbados Defence Force Sports Programme initiative of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, we do not shout these things too often, but these were serious developmental programmes for a cadre of Barbadian young people. Sir, all those names that I have mentioned have gone on to become outstanding citizens of Barbados with wives and children, yet many of them still play the sport even though it might be at the Masters' level, but some of them still compete at Premier League level. One still sees Tino Best bowling his heart out, once he gets an opportunity to play for Barbados. He still has the fire and enthusiasm which is obviously part of his personality, but even further ignited by the programme of the Barbados Defence Force.

Mr. Chairman, the Youth Service for which this Supplementary is needed, is important to the development

of many of our young people. I agree with the last speaker that we must not see the Youth Service as a place where only persons who might be at risk go. Sir, because of its whole developmental focus, one gets a mix of young men and women going to the Barbados Youth Service.

Mr. Chairman, there will be youth between the transition from secondary school, maybe to the world of work, or maybe to further education who might say to themselves, or their parents might say to them that they need that disciplined environment to go, and they go and spend the nine months, or a year within that programme.

*H/A59A/3.19 p.m. Sequence 7*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Hon. R. D. JONES: It is something that we should continue to build on. One can look forward, of course, to the expansion of the programme.

There was talk about the National Youth Service which has been resisted by some within the community. In other parts of the world the Youth Service is used for all citizens as a means of giving back to their society, or may be can develop a hybrid model within Barbados.

We have a situation where from nursery to university you have “free education”, but we have to train our people that nothing in life is truly free. Somebody has to provide those resources for you to be the beneficiary of them. Therefore, to give back, you can see a Youth Service assisting in the cleaning of our beaches, the cleaning of our gullies and in maintaining some of our parks, is part of a developmental activity which would help to hone their character and give them a feeling of understanding and fully appreciate what their country has done and will continue to do for them. Within the context of a formularized structure, genuinely give back to the society.

Sir, at the end of the rainy season, this entire country is covered by bush, we would want to see if these young people will volunteer as part of that system to help in the debushing of Barbados, along with the work of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, you would see workers giving back, by working within the wider society and community.

Sir, at a time when the values of our young people are being threatened, when the values of our young people are being questioned, when we have the incursion of so many evils into the hearts and minds of our young people, which persuade them to act in a way not common to the Barbadian landscape, to the Barbadian value system and to the Barbadian environment, we need institutions such as the Barbados Youth Service to help.

We need the institution of teachers as a fraternity, the institution of the Priests, not only as a coercing, or controlling force, as some people would see them to be, but also with the programmes which they have to assist in tracking our young people towards positive value systems.

I do not want to fool myself that we are going to save every one of our young people. I do not want to fool myself. We cannot. We just simply cannot do that. For each one that we save we should shout “Hallelujah.”

Sir, the young people today face an environment that persons of my age did not have to face because the technologies that are present now, and I do not simply mean the technologies of the information and communication period, the prevalence of guns that you just pull the trigger and all kinds of bullets spray out from them, I mean the bill. Many of you may not remember the bill. I used it to help cut my grandfather’s, parents, grandmother’s, and canes of neighbours within the village. That is what we did, so we graduated from the bill to the cutlass, which to us was a modern invention.

*Asides.*

Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, I am talking about cutting canes. I am not talking about anything else, so I would want the Honourable Member for St. Philip South to stop interrupting me and talking about cutting other things.

The technologies that we knew, we assumed to be a simpler technology than the ones which are present now within the environment of our young people. Therefore, they are pressurised within this environment to deal with the negativity, which can come as a result of those technologies within the environment. Even then the bill could have dented someone’s head because of the long point at the end. You could have chopped someone with it. We resorted to stones, sticks and things like that.

Sir, today with the presence of the guns and the prevalence of drugs within those children’s environment, sometimes rational thought is lost. You combine this Molotov cocktail and then added to it, is some of the most debasing music that you can find anywhere, beautiful rhythms, but when you listen to the lyrics - I must thank the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

I was on a cruise some time ago, an excellent cruise, and the Honourable Member sent a message to the DJ. I did not understand what was being said, but it surprised me that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown understood quite well what were contained in the lyrics. He repeated to me exactly what was being said in the lyrics. I must credit the DJ for coming out and apologising. He did not realised that within that mix were these two songs, and as explained to me by the Honourable Member, should not

be played anywhere where decent people dwell, or where decent people try to have some level of entertainment. We might not recognise, or might not feel because of our intellectual capacity that in the world forces of good and forces of evil exist. It is always a contestation for the gathering of man's hearts.

I am not preaching, but these are the forces in the world and contestation would fight a battle, particularly of the soul of young people, where there is a saying that innocence dwells. Once they find fertile ground and you remove the support mechanisms, which would have kept the Honourable Member for St. James South stable up until this time, that came from the village of Bayfield, St. Philip, and has the nurturing influence of a steady father and the presence of his community to help him stay on that straight path.

We too had incursions in our minds, but we had those modifying influences within our communities. We cannot remove our hands, or our words from our young people. Too many persons just past young people by, just pass students by. They no longer say, you can dress better than that because they are scared of the words that might come from the young people's lips, and they retreat.

Sir, there are many young people in our country who want an adult to have a conversation with them. Many of them are crying out for help, and the manifestation of the behaviour which we see is a loud cry for help. I am imploring all of us not to retreat, not to surrender, but to engage our young people. In the school system we are trying, but the school reflects many of the situations within our communities, within our homes and within our wider society. None of us can retreat, none of us can surrender.

I commend the Barbados Youth Service for its work and all agencies that work with young people for the work in this country.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Dr. The Hon. D. S. LOWE: I rise to make a contribution to this debate on Head 19. I do so especially because it really reflects on a discussion that is of paramount importance to our society.

*H59A 3.30 p.m. Sequence 8*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*House A59A, Sequence 09, 3.30 p.m.*

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Chairman, it covers a number of issues that are important for us to contemplate, given the concerns that resonate from the society about the behaviour of our youth.

It is true that the youth that would benefit from this programme are not necessarily youth who have fallen out of the norms of society. I would argue that a significant number of them are persons who would perhaps be considered as casualties of development, casualties of poor family structures, casualties of non-performance in the educational system, individuals who need to be refocussed and redirected.

I very much enjoyed the presentation of the speaker who just took his seat because he reflected on a number of issues that I think are important. Let me say this, Mr. Chairman, that in the construction of a modern society, in creating a society where there is still some cohesion and adherence to the normative values of that society, it is important that we remain conscious of those persons who have fallen by the wayside, and that we do not throw our hands in the air and pretend that it is okay for some to be saved and others to be lost.

I am concerned like others in this Chamber, that there are too many young people out there galloping along a path so very fast, not knowing where they are going and not knowing what destination they seek to reach, and it is not uncommon to young people who grew up in my era.

When I was a youngster growing up some 40 years ago, I did not have the benefit of the kind of tight mentoring and leadership that many of our children would have at their disposal today. Sir, what I did have at the time though was the benefit of older members of the society, who took it upon themselves to ensure that even if your home was a weak home structure, that you would still benefit from the riches of their wisdom, and they found time to sit around and to teach you the rudiments of development in growing up.

Mr. Chairman, I think that we have to do something quickly with the institutions like the Barbados Youth Service.

Sir, my understanding is that this institution that was hatched under the Democratic Labour Party, and I believe the Honourable Member for St. John may have had some reach in those areas through community development and so, it is a tradition that we must continue. It is a commitment that we must continue and that is why we constantly say in this Government that we do not see Barbados simply as an economy, but we see Barbados as a society, with an economy that enables that society to make its strides along the way of development.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to think that the age group captured in this net is an age group that very often is in a vulnerable stage of development. For example, Mr. Chairman, a lot of these individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 are persons who are still seeking a sense of identity. They are still trying to come into their own. They are still trying to decide what kind of individual they wish to be and where they fit into their society.

This is a time when they are seeking a sense of purpose and they are asking themselves, Mr. Chairman, what do I wish to become, what am I capable of becoming and how am I going to get where I believe I should get as an adult, in a professional sense?

Mr. Chairman, they are also trying to work out a sense of sexual identity and very often they are those struggles that many of the young people are going through now, especially in Barbados today.

Mr. Chairman, I think we all have to agree that there is a kind of unbridled sexual conduct out there in society among young people that if we are not careful we are going to take on as a society, a number of social perils that will not only cost the health care system, but would cost the criminal justice system and a number of other systems in society, if we do not put a handle on these things as urgently and as quickly as possible.

Mr. Chairman, then they are searching for a sense of self. Sir, I separate self from identity, because identity really is the rudiments of those belief sects given to us by our families and our socialisation. A self on the other hand is that authentic innate creation that we come to call who we are. A lot of young people are not making contact with those kinds of personal inquiries. I am saying that the Barbados Youth Service is a perfect place where once you fall out of the formal system, you should be able to get the kind of support you need to get on track.

I am fortunate to be one of 10 children, the third in line, if you will. I am surrounded by four brothers and five sisters. Only recently I was talking to my oldest sister and we were reflecting on our growing up days. There came a time when because your parents were so caught up with earning, that it was left to some of the older siblings to raise the younger ones.

I am proud of who I have become and I am very proud of whom my brothers and sisters have become, but there are things that we would have liked to have at the time that we did not have, but again, because of the practice of the extended village, because of the fact that there were persons who were willing to take charge when your parents were not around, and ensure that you stayed on track, we were able to benefit from that extended socialisation.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this Government has to continue to work on creating an environment where our young people, especially those who have fallen by the way, as casualties of a fast paced society, have a place where they can go, people whom they can meet and reach out to, that will help them to get themselves back on track.

Sir, I would want to believe that in spite of the pressures of their peers, because one of the great struggles among our youth is peer pressure, that very often they fall into certain types of social and sexual traps because of the pressures of their peers and because they are trying to fit in and be accepted and so on, and so forth.

I believe that it is important that we begin to reverse those trends in our society and help our young people to stay focussed on the virtues that will make them great Barbadian citizens.

It is not only peer pressure, Mr. Chairman, but cultural penetration, and there is a lot of that going on in our society and in regional societies, where we are influenced by what is happening in the north and where the advent of cable and all kinds, of all types, of mechanisms, are impacting on the minds and mind sets of our young people.

What must we do? Must we allow this to become a counter culture in the society? Must we allow this to become a part and parcel of how our young people see themselves growing up in Barbados? I say we must not. We must fight it back by creating other institutions, not just the Barbados Youth Service, but there are other institutions across Barbados.

I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is well aware of a number of organisations that young people can be involved in, that will give them a sense of structure and refocus them on the way they should live a productive life, and that the Government gives assistance wherever possible.

I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was making the point that even in stringent economic times, there are some programmes that are not dispensable. We have to stick with them and we have to make sure that they are available to our youth, so that they can benefit from those programmes. How do you pull them back?

Mr. Chairman, how do you pull back those youth that are out there and that are stranded somewhere along life path? How do you get them back on track?

*House A59A, Sequence 09, 3.40 p.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I would suggest you re-socialise people by trying to journey them back to their roots, journeying them back to those values that made this society what it is and, getting them to understand that there are some virtues out there that are “must haves” and that they must understand that those virtues would get them far in life if they could reconnect to a process of re-socialisation.

Mr. Chairman, once you begin to re-socialise people, you have to re-ground them, therefore, you have to create an environment where once you have been able to arrest their thinking and their mind sets, you can then point them in a new direction and create a fertile environment where they can begin to thrive and to develop.

How can you develop that environment? I would want to suggest that there has to be a strong learning and training programme, a strong mentoring programme and a strong coaching programme where some of the seniors of society, who, in fact, have lived and demonstrated a certain type of social and psychological stability, become available to these young people so that they could help them become the kind of citizens that they should become.

Sir, then there are job attachments and getting them placed in situations where they can learn certain types of practical skills and learn how to adjust to the formal work environment. I believe that is also important.

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

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: There is also the need for a teaching programme. The teaching programme, in my view, should involve teaching these young people good family life skills and good money management skills. I think a lot of that is lacking among many. Even young families, persons who are in their early 30s, who are married and perhaps have children, have very poor money management skills.

We have also to teach them child rearing practices. Sir, that is important because even though our parents may not have benefitted from the world's greatest education, they understood how to raise their children and how to put at the disposal of their children values that stood the test of time. We here are examples of that kind of process.

Of course, I believe that the creative and performing arts is another wonderful outlet where young people in our society, within a structured environment, can learn some of these essential values of life.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, Barbados tomorrow would reflect what we have done today to help to shape the journey of our youth. I was at a school yesterday among

some primary school children, and it brought tears to my eyes when I heard those children express themselves on their views of the environment and what kind of environmental stewardship we should practise. I believe this Government has a special responsibility, because of the nature of the times, to pay special attention to our youth.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I sat in my chair and listened to this debate and I was most amazed at the quality of this debate so far. Mr. Chairman, I should not be surprised, I should have known better because the social practitioner who spoke before me not only spoke from a theoretical perspective, but also from a very practical perspective. Certainly, the very last speaker who spoke...

Sir, it is always a pleasure to hear a practising community practitioner expose his craft in an honourable setting like this. It is, therefore, against this background, that I certainly want to join with all Honourable Members in this Honourable Chamber to support this Supplementary before this Honourable Chamber as brought by the Honourable Minister of Family, Youth and Sports for a bus for the Barbados Youth Service.

This Supplementary gives me the occasion to pay another tribute to the very first Director of the Barbados Youth Service, Mr. Ralph Walker.

Mr. Chairman, I keep expounding in this Honourable Chamber all the time, the work and worth of this Honourable gentleman who is not in this Honourable Chamber, but who perhaps some time in the history of Barbados, when our social history continues to be written, would be etched on the pages of history.

Mr. Chairman, I remember him coming to the Pine at a time when the Pine Housing Area was considered to be the worst place in Barbados. In actual fact, he was sent there to fail, but he took the community and turned it around. I do not want to expound too much on it, but just to say that the work that he has done in Barbados should always be remembered and always be etched in the pages of our social history.

Sir, this debate is a very deep debate, that is why Honourable Members are asking to come back because it goes to the heart of what is happening in the communities of Barbados right now. Sir, that is where I would switch pace a bit and start to focus on a very real and living topic that is existing in our society, that is, violence among the youth.

Sir, when we look at that area, it is a very topical issue every day in the daily newspaper and on the news and the call-in programmes. Sir, everyone wants to know what we could do to solve the problems that are confronting the youth in Barbados.

Perhaps, we could take our minds back to the early 1990s when “Lil Rick” had the song “How the yute get so”. Sir, we itemised that in a play called “Of Age and Innocent” at the Parkinson Community Centre.

Mr. Chairman, I would never forget that in the year 1993, we dealt with that issue that is facing Barbados now, and the teachers in Barbados at the time said that these things were not happening in the schools.

The Royal Barbados Police Force came to view the production and they could not believe it, they said that the production was bordering on fantasy. What happened now is that fantasy has turned to reality.

Mr. Chairman, how are we going to deal with this crisis that is pervading throughout the communities of Barbados? First of all, it is a community problem, therefore, it has to be dealt with at the level of the community, and if it is being dealt with at the level of the community, then I want to propose in this Honourable Chamber a decentralisation of the Barbados Defence Force Sports Programme.

Mr. Chairman, we tend to live excitedly within the confines of what has already been established. I dare Honourable Members to step outside the proverbial box, and let us meet the challenges that are facing us within the communities across Barbados. I do not want to call this empty rhetoric.

I am proposing that the Barbados Defence Force Sports Programme be decentralised in the communities across Barbados, particularly in those communities that are in what we call the Government housing areas.

From the perspective of that sports Programme, could you imagine what it would be like within the communities if these young people, let us say, from Grazettes, Gall Hill, the Ivy and the Pine, get out of their bed, take in the discipline of exercise, soccer, or cricket on mornings and during the afternoon, they go to the resource centres that are nearest to them and do what I call the theoretical framework, which is computer science, et cetera, and then in the evening they then go back into the communities and adopt what they learn within that Defence Force Programme, and then they come back in the evening and take part in active activity within the community.

Sir, those participants within that decentralised process would be given the same stipend, but here it is they

do not have to trek to the Garrison, or go through the rigours, if they have tattoos on their hands to get them burnt off, to be eligible, because we are reaching out to save those who we consider cannot be saved.

We are reaching out to the lost, therefore, a new strategy and a new implementation system has to be adopted in the communities, if not most of the youngsters are going to wind up, because of a lack of activity in the communities, in front of a magistrate, and depending on the emotional feeling of that magistrate in any particular day, or how that youngster answers that magistrate, that youngster is likely, as a first time offender, to be facing the wrath of that Magistrate, or Judge, and be sentenced to Dodds for a simple thing that could be solved at the community level.

*House A59A Sequence 10*

3.50 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is a real world, the problems confronting the youth of Barbados, particularly what we call on the “blocks” could be dealt with, but it has to be dealt with holistically. It has to be done in terms of partnership with the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community-based Organisations (CBO), Council for Barbados Youth Development and emerging global leaders.

Sir, perhaps one of the most revolutionary organisations in Barbados now is called the Barbados Youth Action Programme. Here it is that you have persons being sent back to Barbados from the United States prison system remix. These persons are settling in Barbados, after having left Barbados when they were three or four years old. They are now being sent back here. Sir, instead of getting into a life of crime, these persons have dedicated and devoted themselves to working with the youth.

Sir, I have had the privilege of visiting with them on two occasions, primarily the Lester Vaughan School and St. Michael School. Sir, I forgot to bring what the Principal said of the programme. They also went to Princess Margaret and the Garrison Schools.

Sir, you should have been there to witness the way they started to tell their stories about their periods of incarceration in the United States prisons. Sir, some of these persons have been incarcerated for 25 years. They made one startling revelation to these youngsters by telling them that they have travelled that road, that it is up to them, that the choice is theirs, that if they want to go that route it is up to them, but that they have to take responsibility for their action, which is critical.

Mr. Chairman, these men could have easily gone back to a life of crime, because Barbados could be a bait for them. I am saying that the members of the Barbados Youth Action programme have determined that this is where they were born and that they were not going to let this country of theirs fall into the hands to the ills of society.

Mr. Chairman, what is most amazing is that parents from throughout Barbados are consulting these young people for assistance with their children. Sir, the results are remarkable.

The Youth Action Programme has a membership of more than 3 000. Sir, the fact is that you can check Facebook and the other technologies to see the membership and the responses coming from persons overseas, who want to join in the movement to give lectures and advice to the young people. That is what the Honourable Member for Christ Church East said. He spoke about the fact that identity has to precede participation. We now have to refocus our youth, we have to teach them about who they are, we have to teach them their history.

Mr. Chairman, too many of us grow up in communities and when we reach a level of financial sustainability, we run away. When we return, we are like Lot. We cannot identify with those communities. I would know that best because I come from an area that was considered a bastardised community. Sir, I will keep repeating it because I myself am not ashamed of my history. Sir, I will never believe that if I say something twice in this Honourable Chamber that it would be remembered all the time.

I can remember that this great society of ours once imported a Magistrate from Guyana, who put three P's: "P" for Perry, "P" for Pine and "P" for prison and that when he came into the Court, he would put all the people from the Pine on a bench and whatever the infraction was, he would send you to prison.

Sir, people of the Pine had to live with that stigma, they had to live with that whole act of discrimination, they had to live with the stigma of bastardisation. That has enveloped the majority of the communities across Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, there is too much money being focussed on the Barbados Defence Force Sports Programme alone as a centralised programme, while it should be decentralised in terms of the active community Programmes in Barbados. There needs to be synergies between the community practitioners, the community organisations throughout Barbados in a holistic form and the Royal Barbados Police Force. It is the only methodology I know that we should talk about in terms of

countering criminal activities within communities across Barbados.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, in my remaining two minutes, I want to say that we seriously have to adopt communities and adopt approaches to community development. The business sector in Barbados is using this particular period of time to blame the economic recession as not to support communities across Barbados. Whenever you go to them, the first things they would tell you is that there is a downturn in the economy and that they do not have any money, yet you could see them supporting other causes outside the communities. Sir, the genesis of all social development in Barbados comes from the heart and soul of communities across Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, there are very few communities that are more energetic, or creative than Pineland, Grazettes, Gall Hill Nos. 1 and 2 and Silver Hill. When you talk about community-mindedness, community spirit and community cooperation, you can check into the housing developments across Barbados. There needs to be far greater relations and synergies between the National Housing Corporation, and as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North proposed, that Tenants' Association, every social norm that we know must come into being.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make this final point because it is critical to everything that is going to happen. The Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados talked about Teen Barbados. This is really a call for all of us who have a social conscience, who are socially minded, to come together in Barbados as a national cooperative, to help the social cause and to provide that necessary safety net. Mr. Chairman, that could only be achieved with that kind of partnership as in the Millennium Development Goal 8, Partnerships for Development.

Mr. Chairman, as I take my seat, this discussion is a very emotive one for me. It is one that unless we take the necessary adventurous steps to bring about a kind of new thinking and a new approach to community developments and socialisation in Barbados, the youth in Barbados will continue to struggle.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this debate and to say that in discussing the question of what we perceive as the role that the Barbados Youth Service should be playing, it also makes me reflect on

some of the things you hear people say in respect to the responsibility that our current institutions have in society.

As a matter of fact, one of the things that we commonly hear people saying is that our institutions have failed us. Sir, we talked about the fact that it seems as if our educational systems have failed us. We talk about the fact that it seems as if our Churches seem to have failed us, but what is clear is that if a society really is to succeed, very often we do not focus on what is the essential ingredient.

Sir, as a civilisation, every civilisation has had foundation to it in which the values that each civilisation passes on to each other would have begun somewhere.

Sir, very often we neglect the responsibility of families in terms of moulding individuals in our society. Sir, if you recall, when we went to school, very often, in those days we were a finished product in that our parents would say to us, they are sending us to school to learn. In a sense that in itself was where the coaster started, because it then imbued you with an attitude that said you came here to learn.

4.00 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Chairman, very often, in terms of trying to access the role that the Church has in our society, the role that the school has in our society and whatever social institution you have, we forget that when that institution receives a child that it is receiving a product of a home.

Sir, I want to begin there and to say that the extent to which Barbados Youth Service can make some kind of impact on the young people that it has to deal with, really depends on the extent to which the homes imbue those young people, who they are sending to it, with the kind of attitudes that would help them to be able to take advantage of the opportunities that are presented to them.

Mr. Chairman, very often we forget that the ability of individuals to take advantage of the opportunities that are presented to them depends on the extent to which they are able to identify those opportunities, then to take hold of them and make use of them.

Sir, it is a fact that some children are able to grasp those opportunities while others are not. Sir, sometimes when you try to explain why that is happening, it is largely because of the fact that some of them have been adequately prepared somewhere else and, usually, that place in which they are prepared is in the family.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things I would like to support here is the call to actually take what the Barbados Youth Service is doing into the communities, because when you look at it, there is some justification for it. Sir, when you look at the fact that our community needs bolstering, one of the things that we find about communities in the past was that the community is what shapes the individual and, by and large, the family is bolstered by the community but, in this day and age, we have a situation where negative behaviour is glamourised.

As a matter of fact, I was reading the newspaper yesterday and I noted that they were commenting on the behaviour of some young people, but nowhere in the headlines did it say that the young people were negative. Sir, no where did they say that the young people were behaving in a disgraceful fashion. Instead, what they portrayed was the behaviour of young people.

What we have today is people who want to sell newspapers. They are not interesting in taking a stance on the behaviour that we see young people exhibiting, instead, inadvertently, they create heroes out of these young people. They do not carry a headline that says it is not the kind of behaviour they should engage in.

Sir, that is an indictment on the newspapers in this country today. They sit on the sidelines, print the news but, at the same time, they do not take a position on the kinds of behaviour they see young people exhibiting. They only want to sell a paper and, Sir, it is unfortunate that is the kind of thing we are getting.

Mr. Chairman, not only that, but when I listened to the presentation from the Honourable Member for St. Joseph from the Opposition this morning, the Honourable Member said what sounds like good politics but sometimes we forget that every single thing we do in life has an impact on something else.

Sir, it is all well and good to give the impression to Barbadians that this Government can solve, on its own, all the employment problems that we have in this country.

Sir, the fact that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph goes into his Constituency and some constituents say to him that they do not have a job, he then says that it is the responsibility of the Government.

Sir, I am not saying that it is not the responsibility of the Government to create the environment in which jobs could be created for people in this country, but when you look at it, it is not just about me, or about you. It is about all of us and the extent to which we are prepared, as a people, to bring out our collective energies to solve the problem together.

Mr. Chairman, I go back to the question of families because, fundamentally, what we do not understand is that extent to which we have families in this country, determines the characters of individuals that we produce. Sir, that is why I go back to the call of communities.

Sir, generally, what happened in the past is that our communities supported strong families and our communities ensured that families survived but, in this day and age, when it is about me, and not about you, and where there is a Narcissus approach, we are in love with ourselves. Sir, to the extent where we are happy and all our wants can be satisfied, we do not care about the other person.

Mr. Chairman, that is why, even in terms of the approach that the National Youth Service has taken, I want to put in a few words which emphasise where we are going and that is in the area of values, and the extent to which we are imparting proper values in our youth.

Sir, the creation of value does not come only from the educational system, because when the educational system receives a child, he is already a finished product and, when the Church receives a child, he is a finished product.

Mr. Chairman, I hear parents and the bleeding hearts in society saying that the Church is not doing enough, and that the educational system is not doing enough but, Sir, I am sorry to say that some of these have children and sometimes they do not know where they are. Sir, the point I am trying to make is that we have to recognise that the National Youth Service can only work with material that is presented.

Mr. Chairman, you would remember Mr. Ralph Walker, but I also remember Mr. C. Lomer Alleyne in terms of my own upbringing, when as a young man in St. Leonard's Church, he basically started the Church Lads Brigade. He was a gentleman who came faithfully every Tuesday and Friday evenings to the Church Lads Brigade in St. Leonard's Church and was prepared to work with us as young men. Nowadays, when I listen to the work of volunteers, I laugh because he did not receive one cent, but he came and worked with us. Sir, that kind of interaction at the level of nine years, or 10 years with young boys to build them up, created values that helped.

Sir, to that extent I recommend what is said about the whole question of values and of the National Youth Service going into communities helping to build values that in themselves, would be supported by the communities, but also to help families to find their roles and responsibilities in the society. Sir, that is what we need.

Mr. Chairman, at the schools, we the Parent Teachers' Association and, Sir, you are lucky, if you get any participation. I have no difficulty in saying to the Minister in this regard that may be we need to involve the parents of these children not to tell you how to programme, because you need to set your benchmarks as to where your children need to go.

Sir, parents need to understand that in order for their children to achieve a lot of goals they set in life, that they have to play a very critical role.

Mr. Chairman, very often we have an approach among parents today which says that if the child is given to the teacher that the teacher can make something out of him. Sir, when you look at the problems you see in children today, generally, the genesis of those problems start within the homes in terms of the values and the attitudes, that are inculcated by the parents within the child at the same time. Sir, parents have to take responsibility for that.

We have to move from a society that says to the individual that he is not responsible for what, he has done, so parents produce a child and we say to the parent that he, or she, is not responsible for producing him that way, that the society made the child that way.

*H/A59A/4.10 p.m. Sequence 12*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Mr. J. D. PAUL: How is it, for instance, that the culture is still in Japan, alive and well. Sir, do you know what is the difference today in Japan? It has not undermined normal Japanese traditions.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: It does not undermine Japanese traditions. Even you have some cultures exposed to the same types of music and it has not undermined their traditions. Therefore, we need to be instructive on the difference of what they have and what we have differently to what we have done. In that respect I humbly suggest that, may be, their traditions are not undermined because their societies have a strong sense of family. It encourages a greater responsibility on the part of the parents of those children towards ensuring that the children, who they raise, are inculcated with appropriate values, so when they send them out to the institutions, they expect them to be shaped and moulded.

Sir, I thank you very much.

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

His Hon. K. St.C. BEST: Sir, I rise to support this Money Resolution in respect of the Barbados Youth Service. Sir, we need to ask, with all the money we are spending, are we really getting the true value for this money? That is an important question that needs to be answered.

Sir, we can talk about all these different programmes and all the other things, but we continue to hear about the deviant behaviour among the youth. Having said that, we have identified the problem. We need to find effective solutions, not busy persons, or organisations. We need to put all our heads together.

I am calling for a national consultation on the behaviour, or the solving of deviant behaviour of children in Barbados. We need to look at it in that light. We must forget the political divide.

Sir, it is okay to say you will do this, or you will do that to solve the problem, but then when politicians, for the sake of a vote, condone behaviour that affects the society at large, somebody has to stand up and say: "It is I who have to send a strong message." This penchant that you should condone bad behaviour, or something so, for a second term to qualify for a pension, you should stand up and tackle the problem head-on because, as a politician, you have decided to enter public life to make a difference. Whether that takes 5 or 10 years, make sure when you leave public life you can say, you have done something for the development of the youth of Barbados.

Sir, I will call for a rebranding of the Youth Service, a serious rebranding. It was introduced years ago and it continued on one course. The whole perception of persons entering the Youth Service, or the reason for entering the Youth Service, that is why I am calling for the rebranding. A perception that persons, only deviant children should go to the Youth Service, that is the perception. That is the general perception. Some people may say that is not true. If you are giving trouble at school and you are out of school, then let us get you into the Youth Service, or you end up before the Court, and one of the conditions of the Court is, that you should enroll in the Youth Service. That is the reality of what is happening in Barbados. That is why I am calling for a rebranding.

Sir, I am calling on the Youth Commissioners, who are the pioneers in the communities, to take the politics out of their work, go out there and serve Barbadians, the people of Barbados as a whole. You are paid from the taxpayers' money.

Barbados is a small society. Persons have a right to be affiliated to what political Party they choose, but when called upon and you are being paid by the taxpayers' money, you should ensure that when you leave, you have

left a mark in the community that says: "I have done a job and a very good job."

Sir, a drive through the community will show you what "Blocks" are springing up. I am saying that the Youth Commissioners have a role to play to remove those people from the "Block". I am also saying that the politicians have a role to play to get those people off the "Block."

Every person in society has a role to play. It affects the Primary School children because they have to walk past the "Blocks". It affects the Secondary School children because they have to walk past the "Blocks", and some of them stop there. So we have to understand that we have to send a strong message to those persons who want to encourage persons in those areas in illegal activity that that is not the way, because today we benefit and tomorrow we suffer. Sir, you might benefit in one night, but the whole society and community suffer as a result of your benefit.

We need strong leaders in communities who would say that there have been enough wrongs in these communities. We have to take up the mantle and go forward. You can spend all the money on football and cricket competition, and all sorts of competitions in the communities to encourage community spirit, but at the end of the day, we still hear about the deviant youths of the society.

I support the call, not now, every since. Everybody is hollering loud about the public service vehicles. I have said before, and I will continue to say, that some of the problems stem from the type of lyrics that are played on the vehicles. It is time legislation is passed to ban all music from those vehicles. If we start that way, then we will know, and it will be easy.

Sir, I heard talk about penalising the owners. I have said in here, and I have said it outside, that if you give some person your vehicle, they have no right to put any instrument in it. If they put in an instrument and you accede to that, then you should pay the penalty.

Sir, there is no secret. Before I came to politics, I invested in public service vehicles, but I also maintained that discipline must be on those vehicles. I am saying that the Minister of Transport and Works pays closer attention to what is really happening.

Sir, we have decided as a Government to allow the children of Barbadians to travel free on the Transport Board buses. Yet you are also hearing about deviant behaviour on the same Transport Board buses.

*H59A 4.20 p.m. Sequence 13*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*House A59A, Sequence 14, 4.20 p.m.*

His Hon. K. St.C. BEST: They all talk now, Sir, about the activities at schools' sports. These things just do not drop out of the sky. Sir, this is part and parcel of what is happening in society. What must we do? Must we keep talking? We have identified the problem over and over, and we talk over and over.

This is the solution. Let us have a national consultation to solve this problem, where you have all the persons, the youth, the adolescences, every person who is being affected in society by this serious problem, to solve it, Sir, because we can spend all the money in the Youth Service, we can have a fantastic Youth Service programme, but it is only geared, Sir, to a certain amount.

Sir, if not, we will have to extend the curricula of the schools, so that some of the values that are being sought at the Youth Service will be taught in schools. The same way that those children who enter the Youth Service say "no cellular phones," if we enforce that regulation in our schools, we would not have this problem of the things that happen at schools appearing on Facebook, because if the rule says no cellular phones at school, we as Law-abiding citizens and as Lawmakers should enforce the Law. Yes, technology is good, but there is a time and a place for that technology, Sir, so we need to act and act now.

The Estimates will be coming up and I am sure that nearly every Head will receive money that impacts on the society, so we do not want to hear kudos from This Side and we are being castigated on the Other Side, because the money that is being spent belongs to the taxpayers of this country.

Sir, while we spend this money, we must make sure that this money is being spent wisely, and that we have results at the end of the road because, Sir, it would be like a cow who gives a bucket of milk and the last thing it does is kick it down, and then you have to start all over again. We need to stop.

With those few words, Mr. Chairman, I support this Money Resolution.

*Asides.*

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I rise, Mr. Chairman, to lend my voice in support of this Supplementary before this Chamber this afternoon. Indeed, we all have said on numerous occasions that we have a good Youth Service and that the money spent over

the years on the Youth Programme has really tried to bring out the best in the young people that we know.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, however that we have been looking carefully at what is happening in our society, but really, it is a sign of the times. What is happening in Barbados is just a small part of what is happening in the world. It is just a microcosm: what is happening in Barbados, but the youth in Barbados is not different from what is happening in North America and Europe, not different in what is happening in the other Caribbean islands, not different to what is happening in the world at large. As I said, Mr. Chairman, it is a sign of the times.

Mr. Chairman, we are living in serious changing cultural times and things are not what they used to be. I heard Honourable Members talk about how they used to get on and what happened at school, in the Churches, growing up under the Union Jack, and growing up in a small free society. Sir, we have seen it all, growing up before the Independent Barbados, growing up after Independence.

Sir, what happened in our day and what is happening today is that there seems to be a change and shift in the cultural, values and mores of society.

I believe that we have a good Youth Service. We have spent a lot of money in providing the Barbados Youth Service. I have always made the point that the National Youth Service, as we know it, needs to be re-tuned and we need to look at its programmes.

Sir, every youngster between the age of 16 and 18 should attend the Barbados Youth Service, whether or not, he or she is a good student, bright student, from a good home, or a poor home, Sir, it should be part and parcel of the programme for the development of the person.

In fact, in some societies - and I have mentioned this over the years - there is a need for the whole school system and the Barbados Youth Programme to be incorporated, where before a child graduates from school, he, or she should at least spend a certain amount of years within the community, whether man hours, 100 hours over a period of three, or four years, so that on graduation, this child would have received some community help and involvement.

I believe that we need to look at what this programme is doing in other parts of the world. We have to re-define what we are doing in the Barbados Youth Service. I also believe that the youth are certainly under pressure. Teenagers are under tremendous pressure.

Sir, from the time you enter your teens, you are under severe pressure. We apparently have seen it all, but sometimes we do not remember the pressure that we were

under pressure from your parents, pressure from the school, pressure from the Church, pressure from the peer groups, and it goes on and on. Then, there is pressure to find a job, pressure to keep a job, pressure to wear clothes, pressure to be part of society. Sir, you have pressure after pressure.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the youth, from teenage into adulthood, seem to be one of pressure for those young people. There is pressure of identity as well, to belong to. They want to belong to some form of organisation, therefore, Mr. Chairman, the whole notion of belonging to something, or somebody is important. The youth, because they are fighting to find identity, because they are fighting to belong to somebody and somewhere, will then gravitate to that organisation that offers them - according to their own standards - some form of hope.

Sir, it is important that we in the society, spend some time with the youngsters. I saw a programme at the St. Jude's Anglican Church, St. George, that I like. Every first Sunday, they have a family service and it is a different type of service from the normal Anglican service, where the young people conduct the service and you can beat tambourines and so on. Sir, I find that family service should be conducted by all Churches and the community where they at least devote one day in every month for the youth.

*House A59A, Sequence 14, 4.30 p.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: It is a fact of life that women are not only the backbone of our society, but they play that strong role. I am not pulling down the men. It is the women who have really put this society into shape over time.

Sir, the book "My Mother Who Fathered Me" by Edith Clarke, to my mind, portrays what the Caribbean society is all about. I feel strongly that the Government must look carefully at sending a signal, that women with children under 10 years old should be compulsorily given at least one day off in every week from their workplace, to spend time with their children because we have to redefine society. We need to send a message in society that we need to get back out there and spend time with those children.

Mr. Chairman, I see what happened at the school sports. Mr. Chairman, whenever there is a sports meeting at the primary level, or the secondary level, we see parents turning up at the schools and it is a family gathering. The children like it, the parents like it and the schools like it. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that as we move forward, if this happens once per year...

I do not know how many Members of Parliament usually attend the sports meet of the schools in their

Constituency, but occasionally I attend the sports meets of some of the schools in my area and it is indeed a great occasion.

I also attend, not only the sports from my children's school, but past schools as well. I like the atmosphere. It sends that signal across the schools that this may be the one event that could really turn around a society, because everybody are there. The bad boys, the good boys and everybody is at the sports meet and when you are with the family, you see the difference.

When the families are together, I see a signal, Mr. Chairman, that even the bad boys tend to back off. It appears to me that when Honourable Members in this Chamber speak about the family, may be they were not fully ventilating what this whole family affair can do. I believe that it can do wonders if we put it to work. It does not call for a lot of money, or for a lot of freeness.

Mr. Chairman, the Government of the day spends a lot of time... I heard Honourable Members speak about it too. I know that Corporate Barbados should give. I know that the Government would want to spend their money on social programmes, but I want to remind the Government and us in this Honourable Chamber, that the money that we spend belongs to the people. We must teach our community that sometimes out of hard work, and sometimes out of thrift and so on, we could do a lot of work.

Mr. Chairman, I talked about programmes at the St. Jude's Church, which have nothing to do with Government, or with freeness. People bring out their programmes, their goods and foodstuff and share. Mr. Chairman, I think that this may be the way for our young people to go. We need to see that whole community spirit once again in our fair land.

Mr. Chairman, I heard Honourable Members talk about deviance in society, but what is causing this deviant behaviour? I wonder sometimes if the programmes in the schools are not in need of a change. I ask myself if the schools are really a place of learning.

*Asides.*

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: But learning what? Mr. Chairman, there needs to be a new programme throughout society in which the schools, the Churches and parents must be involved.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: That is why I have always believed that one element in a society cannot do it alone. There must be this cohesiveness between the schools, the

Churches, parents and all society. We must bring back these programmes in order to move society forward.

Mr. Chairman, whenever we talk about these programmes, it is these institutions that we focus on, but what about the media? I think that the media must also be involved. Sometimes we take it for granted, but programmes that are aired, viewed, or whatever by the media houses, must be important as well.

The media must send a signal that there needs to be a cultural shift. We “could talk to the cows come home”, as some Honourable Members said, but I believe that once persons see that programme on the television, or the radio, then they learn the lyrics, they learn what they see, and we have to look at it.

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Culture in conjunction with the Ministry of Sports and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, must be involved in this entire holistic programme in order to bring society back together. The programmes are all there.

As I have said before, Mr. Chairman, I have seen it, it is happening, but you must have this family outing more than once a year. That does not call for a lot of money from Government, it does not call for money from the private sector. It calls for people to understand that mothers with children should be given time off to be with their children at least once a week. Fathers should also spend more time with their children, especially with boys over the age of 10.

Mr. Chairman, I will be back to look at some other programmes.

I thank you.

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my colleagues for their interventions and for the lively discussions that we have had. I note that many persons have promised to be back, but I think that we have to wrap up this debate right now.

Mr. Chairman, a lot has been said on Both Sides of the House and a lot of notes has been taken. Indeed, I am glad that everyone has supported, not only this Supplementary, but also the crucial work that has to be done in youth development.

Everyone is cognisant of the fact that we cannot afford to let a generation slip away, that we really do have to invest in our young people. Indeed, it has been noted that we cannot afford not to invest in our young people.

There have been lots of discussion today on values, the inculcating of values and who help to pass on these values. Of course, we know that the family is crucial for that and of course, the work has to continue in encouraging and preparing families for being able to train up their children in the way they should go, and for being able to pass on the values to their children.

*House A59A Sequence 15*

4.40 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: We have all acknowledged that it is a community responsibility, that it takes a community to raise a child and that community is not just being your neighbour, but that it involves the schools, Churches, Government and other stakeholders.

Mr. Chairman, at Government's end, certainly in terms of parenting through the Division of Family in the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports, that parenting programme will continue. Sir, that parenting programme is going to be at the community level.

Presently, the second cohort of trainers are being trained to go into their communities. These trainers have come from community-based organisations, Churches and sporting organisations.

They are also teachers, guidance counsellors and others who have come on board to take advantage of this training, so that they can go back into their “neck of the woods” and be able to pass on this valuable information to our young people. We have some very excellent resource persons who are doing the training and I want to thank them for their contribution to the development of families and by extension, our society.

Mr. Chairman, the Constituency Councils that are on board have also taken up this responsibility. They are working with the youth and with families. Several of the Constituency Councils have expressed an interest in being integral in that community-based parenting programme.

When our trainers go back out into the communities to disseminate this information, if they do not have a Church, or area from which to operate, then the Constituency Councils are going to partner with us where they can, to be able to provide facilities to get these programmes going. Every community needs to have one of these going.

Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned the work that is ongoing in the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports, obviously there are other synergies and areas that are

overlapping the different divisions in that Ministry. What goes on in the Ministry of Family impacts on the Ministry of Youth, what goes on in the Division of Sports also is critical to our youth development. Sir, it is not only for that Ministry.

Mr. Chairman, let me again make the call to all my colleagues that youth development, engaging and preparing youth for the world, is not just for the Ministry of Youth Family and Sports, but that we need everybody, because our work is ultimately to make Barbados a better society, and so it does not help if we do not pay attention to our young people. Therefore, our Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Finance and the financing of our projects, should be with a mind to our young people.

Mr. Chairman, I think the time has also come for us to have a youth policy and also youth employment strategies. Of course, everything that we are doing in the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports, we know that one of our major partners in there is the Ministry of Education.

Sir, the Ministry of Education is mandated to help our young people in that early age and with education being compulsory, they have to have contact with our young people and so they are key in this process.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard talk about the National Youth Service, which is not to be confused with the Barbados Youth Service. The Barbados Youth Service is that programme I outlined with the three phases, starting with the residential phase. The National Youth Service was another project that was mooted and is being prepared in the Ministry. Sir, because the name is confusing for everyone, we refer to it as the National Service Programme for now.

Sir, different forms of that National Service Programme had been mentioned by Honourable Members this afternoon, where it sees all young people being involved in some kind of service, so that every young person is engaged, so that every young person develops that civic mindedness, and so that every young person has an opportunity to develop and to contribute to his, or her community.

Sir, I do not know if it will happen in the future, but we cannot have, at this point, a residential programme for all our school children. It is just not practical. What we are proposing with the Ministry of Education is to have a national service programme which would mandate, or encourage all students to be involved in service, through either a recognised community-based organisation, a school-based organisation, of which there are many, they are the Cadet Corp, the Scouts, Girls' Guides, Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, Peace Ambassadors. There are also Church-based groups. We have the Church Lads Brigade,

the Seventh Day Adventist Pathfinders, et cetera. There are several organisations out there that are doing good work in encouraging civic mindedness and responsibility in their young people.

Mr. Chairman, we are proposing to create incentives for all our students to serve through one of these organisations for a required period of time. This is not new. This has been done around the world. In fact, it has been done in Canada. In some parts of Canada there are some students who cannot graduate from high school unless they have put in the requisite number of hours of service.

I think that a programme such as that would be simpler to implement than the National Youth Service, in the form in which it was presented, which involves that residential-type programme with drills for everyone. That is not within the scope of our budget right now, but I think we can easily see our young people being involved in service programmes.

There may be a need to assist our service organisations with developing their capacities, but apart from that, I think it should be easy enough to have our young people involved in that kind of work.

Mr. Chairman, there has been considerable monies spent, and many of the programmes do work. Of course, no one programme within the Ministry, or within any other agency is going to change the face of our youth in Barbados at one go. Indeed, it will take a concerted effort and that is why we outlined that everybody, communities, Churches, et cetera, need to be involved.

Sir, this is why one of the key areas under the Ministry right now is the development of the National Youth Policy. That Youth Policy will ensure that programmes for youth development are not done in a vacuum, but that they are guided.

Sir, it is not just programmes in the Ministry, but programmes across Government that will be guided for the overall development of our young people.

Mr. Chairman, there has been a call by our young people that the education system needs to be reviewed. There needs to be a change in the system, or process of education to ensure that values and life skills are taught. That is an opportunity for all students to learn conflict resolution, family life skills and relationship skills. Our young people are calling for an even more technology-based approach and also a culture-based approach, so that the techniques for teaching and learning are more in sync with what our young people are into, so that we can reach them.

We cannot have young people who are light years ahead in terms of technology being asked to take in archaic systems, and I am not calling our system archaic. What I am trying to say is that the techniques need to be adapted to the needs of our young people.

Sir, there also needs to be a national human resource strategy, so that our young people are employable and that they can find employment. Indeed, our National Youth Policy, which is now in its formative stage, will speak to the development of healthy, well-rounded, civic-minded, responsible young people who are motivated, who are capable of making responsibility choices, who will exhibit positive values and of course young people who are self-actualised and contributing to society. That will involve a number of different programmes and strategies to see us coming to that end.

The National Youth Policy, as it speaks to youth development, will need to see a legal and governmental framework for implementing some of these things. It will speak to the education, recreation, sports and culture and their role in the development of young people. It also speaks to career development.

An important part of youth development is health care for the youth. It speaks to the specific concerns of health and healthy lifestyles. The legislation also speaks to our young people being able to access care.

4.50 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, one of the issues remains where young persons, especially young persons who are sexually active, cannot access reproductive health services.

Sir, youth development and the youth policy will, of course, speak to the cultural identity of our young people, and how do we restore that cultural identity and that sense of national pride.

Sir, speaking to our young people participating in our society, in politics and in Government, even now we have heard much of the discussion on the indiscipline in our society. There have been discussions about the culture, the media, about the ZR vans and all the other areas where this indiscipline tends to rear its head.

Sir, here Government is committed to having youth involvement and having the voice of the youth in our policy. Sir, the youth are an integral part of the development of the youth policy, but further to that, our young people have also been invited to have a youth consultation on the topic of indiscipline. Sir, that would be

the first of a series of youth consultations, because we want to engage our young people and we want to hear their voices on these issues.

Mr. Chairman, recently we had a series of programmes coming out of the Ministry called "Building Bridges". You would have heard the voices of young people as they spoke to family, parenting and some of their concerns in the family, and it created quite a stir.

The young people expressed their views and they expressed their particular challenges and some of the issues they had in relating to parents. It was an eye-opener and, indeed, an ear-opener to some parents who were not aware that this was what their children needed, that their children wanted to communicate, but needed to have that generational bridge, so that was how the programme "Building Bridges" came about.

Mr. Chairman, if I may just continue on the youth policy, Sir, our youth policy will also speak to family life education and also speak to what happens within the family that these children are reared in. Of course, any youth policy would have to speak to peace, security and equality for our young people and good governance, an issue that our young people have identified as being important.

Sir, our young people spoke out already and said they want to see transparency in Government. They want to see accountability and good governance. It is just not the buzz words of politicians. Our young people have been demanding accountability. Our young people are constantly demanding from the Ministry of Youth and from the Minister, accountability: where are we with these programmes, where are we on this area and that area?

They want to be sure that we are keeping the promise that we made to them, first of all, through our contract with them in the Manifesto and through our other programmes and now, of course, through the emerging youth policy.

Mr. Chairman, the youth policy will see the Ministry and the Government supporting all those agencies responsible for youth development, youth security and youth protection involved, like the family, the community, the faith-based organisations and schools. It must include the social sector in the care and protection of the at-risk youth and/or youth offenders.

Of course, it will provide incentives to encourage corporate Barbados to invest in the youth and take advantage of some of the incentives that are coming up, like the Charities Act and so on, are to encourage corporate Barbados to invest in our young people. It is an investment that will redound to the benefit of all of us.

Mr. Chairman, we have had all the contributions from Members on youth development, on the needs of our youth and their support from what is going on at the Barbados Youth Service. Sir, we will continue to strengthen the programme and decentralise it into communities.

Mr. Chairman, with that, I would move that Head 19 stand part.

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

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

Head 64 - YOUTH FAMILY AND SPORTS - \$940 792.

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Head 64 speaks to monies also for the Barbados Youth Service, among other things. Sir, as I have mentioned, we had an overwhelming intake this past year of 92 students and so, Head 64, speaks to monies for the meals for trainees, monies for staff payments at the Barbados Youth Service, including tutors, counsellors and other staff at the Barbados Youth Service to carry out that programme.

Mr. Chairman, additionally under Head 64 is monies for the National Sports Council which is required to complete the construction of two pavilions at Greens in St. George and Gall Hill in St. John. Sir, that amount is for \$737,849 - these two pavilions were started in 2009/2010 financial year. The pavilion at Greens is now completed. There is just a water tank that is being installed, but it is completed and is being used by the very densely populated community.

This morning I was informed that the pavilion at Gall Hill, St. John is 80 per cent completed. There have been some challenges with the roof, but that pavilion is expected to be completed in the month of April and, so we need these monies to pay the contractor and for other professional services for the completion of these facilities.

Mr. Chairman, as we do that, the National Sports Council is completing its strategic plan, having done a facility's audit which would have accessed various sporting facilities like the hard Court, the football fields, the pavilions and so on, to see what kind of activity can be entertained at those, what level of activity, be it local competition, more regional competition, just community level competition and so on as we move to be able to enlist

all our facilities and ensure that they are all maximally used. We want to see all Barbadians engaged in sports.

Mr. Chairman, we spoke of the youth development and we would encourage sports for the development of the youth. Indeed, in the Ministry of Youth, the National Sports Training programme has just been increased from 40 hours in this financial year and we are looking to increase it in the next financial year to 100 contact hours where youth in the community take part in various sports with coaches who come on to the programme.

Mr. Chairman, an important part of youth development and of community development is getting our young people engaged in positive activity and getting them away from negative activities. There have been testimonials of persons, whose lives were changed and who got on to the right track by being involved in these sporting programmes. Sir, as I have said, we are moving towards sports for all, and we want to ensure that no facility is under-utilised.

Mr. Chairman, recently, we moved to ensure that all our pavilions are accessible in all communities not during 8:00 o'clock to 4:00 o'clock, but all our pavilions will be accessible after hours and on weekends. The necessary arrangements will be in place so that every community can have access, not that when the caretaker has gone home, that is it for the evening.

Mr. Chairman, negotiations are being had to improve the lighting in all our facilities. Sir, lighting has been an expensive proposition at the Sports Council at playing fields, but we are looking to see how we can use solar light and do projects for solar lighting, so it is not a case of who is going to turn on the lights, but to have solar lighting, so that more communities are encouraged to come out after hours.

Mr. Chairman, when the area is lit, there is less opportunity for those activities that occur in the dark.

Mr. Chairman, we encourage our young people, we will encourage our communities to come out, to keep active and to keep fit. Of course, we know that this weekend there is also the launch of the project that is being spearheaded by the wife of the Prime Minister to get all Barbadians up and moving.

The Ministry of Sports, through the National Sports Council has embraced the concept of sports for all. The development of pavilions, the auditing of our facilities and the opening up of all our facilities maximally, for our communities is an important part for the health and the well-being of our young people and, indeed for all Barbadians, as we combat the chronic non-communicable diseases.

H/A59/5.00 p.m. Sequence 17

Tuesday, March 9, 2010

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, under Head 64, we are looking for money for the Barbados Youth Service as well as the National Sports Council to tidy up all these affairs.

Sir, I beg to move that Head 64 stand part.

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

*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 OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 5.15 p.m.

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

*The question that the Sitting be now suspended until 5.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.*

H59A 5.10 p.m. Sequence 18

Tuesday, March 09, 2010

House A59A, Sequence 19, 5.16 p.m.

#### RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

When the Suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that we will now revert.

*Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. S.A. LASHLEY in the Chair.*

#### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Resumed)

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, this particular Head attracts the Opposition, because we have some concerns.

Mr. Chairman, when we demitted office in January of 2008, there were four pavilions across this island that had been commenced, and that had reached an advance state of construction. One of those pavilions, Sir, was at St. Martin's, another was at the Glebe, yet another, Sir, was at Silver Sands and the fourth was at Proute. Sir, the last one is in my Constituency.

I have not travelled to Glebe, or any of the others to see those particular structures, but those structures, especially the one in Proute, had reached an advanced state of construction. In fact, the pavilion in Proute, which was to be a building with a concrete base and the body of the building was to be in wood, was contracted for construction at a figure of just over BDS\$150 000.

Sir, at Election Day 2008, that pavilion stood to be completed, but only required the wooden elements, the top part to be finished. This Administration took the position that because the entity that had been contracted to build them was an entity called Hardwood Housing Factory that they would not be finishing these pavilions.

House A59A, Sequence 19, 5.20 p.m.

Tuesday, March 09, 2010

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, it is entirely open to this Administration to terminate any contracts it chooses.

*Asides.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would like to hear the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, this Administration has terminated employment contracts and it has terminated contracts for the highway on the Floor of this Chamber. Mr. Chairman, the issue is this: in a situation where you have four partially built pavilions...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is a point of order. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House, because the reference to a pavilion at an advance D stage in Silver Sands is not the case. A little bit of trenching was done, but there is no structure of any sort, so I just wanted to make that point.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: I thank the Honourable Member for the correction, but I also thank him for the confession that the work had started, so that is admitted on the Other Side.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. My colleague, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, made the point that there was no pavilion works at Silver Sands and there still is not any. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has stated that he only went to Proute, so why is he in here trying to give the impression that mass pavilions were being constructed all over Barbados?

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I heard the Minister say that there was trenching work at Silver Sands, therefore it has been started.

The point is that these pavilions were not being built for the Barbados Labour Party. These pavilions were being built for the citizenry of this country. The work has been unceremoniously abandoned without so much as a Courteous explanation to any of the residents of these communities, yet still a pavilion has been started and finished in Greens, St. George and a pavilion at Gall Hill has been extended, because the Gall Hill pavilion was there before.

Sir, this Administration sees it fit to abandon works that were being done for all of the noble purposes that the Honourable Minister who introduced this particular Head mentioned, but somehow the people in Proute, Silver Sands, the Glebe and St. Martin's are not entitled to benefit from those things. How does this Administration...

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is really misleading the House. To give the impression that this Administration has come in and lock, stock and barrel stopped these projects that are beneficial to the community, is not the case. I believe that any Administration has a right to reassess what is before them, to re-prioritise and to look at the finances to determine how to go forward.

Mr. Chairman, let me remind the Honourable Member, in correcting his misleading statements, that we had the St. John Polyclinic that was stopped for 14 years, Sherbourne Conference Centre that was stopped for years, and Country Park Towers that was stopped for years. These are national projects that would benefit all in this country, not just a select community, and he talks about us not accommodating people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, it is one of those things that is so trite. You should compare like with like. I am speaking about a Government determining that it would stop building four pavilions across this country and instead, build a pavilion at Greens and extend a pavilion at Gall Hill without so much as by your leave.

If a Government decides not to continue with the St. John Polyclinic and build another polyclinic instead, may be the Honourable Member might have a point. If a Government decides to stop building Sherbourne Centre and build another conference centre, then the Honourable Member might have a point.

I am saying that there is a community called Proute in the Constituency of St. Joseph that does not today have a pavilion, but instead, over \$2 million could be spent on building one more pavilion and extending a second.

*Asides.*

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, in the Estimates for this year, the amount budgetted for the construction of a new pavilion at Greens and an extension of a pavilion at Gall Hill was \$1.3 million, but today we come for another \$737 000. I am only interested in seeing things done for the benefit of the people, but what is happening here? There were four pavilions contracted for \$500 000 and instead, we have a pavilion at Greens that together with extension works at Gall Hill, soaked up over \$2 million.

Mr. Chairman, I did not hear any explanation why we were coming for this Supplementary. The Minister has not stated why we need a Supplementary for \$737 000. Sir, the Explanatory Note says that the sum is required to meet the shortfall in funds, \$737 000 in shortfall. Sir, does it mean that the property was improperly costed when the amounts were put into the Estimates? Do you mean that there have been cost overruns?

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House a little bit wrong, because no document coming into this Chamber requesting a Supplementary can come without an Explanatory Note, so clearly there is an Explanatory Note. If the Honourable Member does not believe it satisfies him, that is a different matter. Mr. Chairman, let us, as we talk about why this shortfall, reflect on the highway contract with 3S (Barbados) Limited, the Prisons and all of those cost overruns which ran into millions of US dollars, not \$730 000.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: I reiterate, Sir, that it is incumbent on the Honourable Minister, Explanatory Note or not, to say to Parliament where has the shortfall arisen and what are the circumstances in which the shortfall has arisen.

Sir, in every element of commercial life, when a manager comes and says Chief, we need more money to do this, an explanation is offered, because we did this and we did that. All we are being told is that the pavilion at Greens is almost finished, it just needs a little something doing to it, but \$737 000?

Mr. Chairman, when the Minister speaks, I would like to ask the Minister to tell the people of Proute what is to happen with their pavilion, to tell the people of St. Martin's what is to happen to theirs, and the same for the people of the Glebe and Silver Sands. If the Honourable Member who represents Silver Sands is not interested in seeing that trench go beyond the trench, that is a matter for him, his constituents would pass a judgment on that.

Hon. F. J. STUART: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is obviously misleading the House. As far as I am aware, the present Government of Barbados was elected for five years, it was not elected for two years and a month or two. The Government has five years to carry out its programmes and has the right to arrange its priorities as best seem consistent with the programmes it wants to carry out. To suggest that because we have not finished a pavilion at Proute two years after we have been in office amounts to abandonment, is really to exaggerate and to create alarm and confusion where none be entertained.

*House A59A Sequence 20*

5.30 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has the opportunity, when she comes, to say to the people on whose behalf I have just spoken in my Constituency, and on whose behalf my colleagues will speak, to say to those constituents that their pavilions will be completed in short order.

Sir, what I am railing against is the principle where pavilions had been contracted for, the contracts have been terminated, but nothing further has happened. That is an injustice and it is an injustice against which I have a solemn obligation to speak.

Sir, there are two pavilions at \$2 million versus four pavilions at \$500 000, and all that can be offered is that the Government has the right to reposition and reprioritize. Sir,

of course, they do, but please give the people of this country some assurance.

*Asides.*

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister to give an explanation to these constituents of mine and constituents of other Honourable Members, what is going to be happening at Proute and when would it be happening. It is not only a waste of resources to have a half-built facility there, it also flies in the face of all the decent and high things of which the Minister has spoken, for example, uplifting our communities and so on. All of that is happening, but it is not happening in my Constituency, nor is it happening in the Glebe.

Mr. Chairman, if this Government is about social justice, about social practitioning and all those things, Government must come and finish the four pavilions before it lavishes \$2 million on two pavilions and talk about a shortfall. This is not a shortfall. \$737 000 is not a shortfall. There is nothing short about that fall.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to speak on this matter as well. Sir, my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, has highlighted the fact that the pavilion at Proute was started some time in 2007, and that the one at Glebe was started some time in 2007. Sir, the reason they were started was that we recognised that not only was there a need for the one at Glebe...

Mr. Chairman, it was agreed at the time that any pavilion in Barbados should not cost a Government in excess of \$300 000. Sir, I am now being told that the pavilions at the Glebe and Gall Hill are being constructed for more than \$1 million each. Sir, I personally believe that there must be some explanation to this Honourable House why a small pavilion that has been constructed, using the same design as the one at Lears, the same design as the one to be constructed at the Glebe and Proute, and the one already constructed at Silver Sands, is being constructed at a cost in excess of \$1 million. What is going to happen at those pavilions?

Mr. Chairman, I am of the view that there is need for a pavilion at Gall Hill. I believe there was need for an expansion of the pavilion at Gall Hill. Sir, I have travelled through St. John, I believe that community is large and that there is need for an expansion of the pavilion at Gall Hill. In fact, I believe that it was never properly constructed, but that to construct an extension for \$1 million is really too excessive.

Mr. Chairman, there is need for the one at Greens, because that is serving the areas of Drax Hall, Fair View and Greens areas, among others. Therefore, I am not of the view that it is a waste of time. I also believe it is going to be beneficial to the people in upper St. George. Sir, I am saying that to stop the pavilion at the Glebe, which is in the centre of St. George, is an injustice to the people of St. George.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is continuing this order about four pavilions for \$500 000. An allocation in the Estimates is not about the total cost of the pavilion. Nobody could build four pavilions for \$500 000 and the Honourable Member knows that. Therefore, to give that impression is to mislead this Honourable Chamber and by extension, all of Barbados. Sir, by the way, when we came to Government, the company they referred to, Hardwood Housing, was already closed down.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, what I am saying is that there is need for a pavilion at Greens and Gall Hill, St. John, but that to stop the construction of a pavilion in the heart and soul of St. George.

Sir, the Glebe is in the heart of St. George. It is the most popular ground in St. George. It is the best laid out ground in St. George and it compliments the entire area. Therefore, to stop that pavilion, to grow only wild bush Sir, that is one of the reasons it was burnt a few weeks ago, to clear off that entire area where you now see some visibility there.

Sir, there is need for the Ministry of Sports to come and level off the playingfield, the mould has been excavated and there is no a mould hill, which is only causing lots of rodents to be in the heart of St. George. We need the Ministry of Sports to do something about that area.

Mr. Chairman, the pavilion at the Glebe was to be constructed of concrete base and a wooden upper frame. Sir, the cost in no way was to exceed \$300 000. Sir, I felt that \$300 000 was justifiable and so to spend more than \$500 000 on a pavilion would be a waste of money.

Sir, we do not need a big pavilion at the Glebe. You have to understand that the pavilion serves not only the George Park Cricket Club, it serves the children at St. George Primary School. There are also a number of social clubs that are now using that entire area. Every night there is some activity going on at the Glebe.

Mr. Chairman, there are no changing rooms at that pavilion and so persons have to urinate under the trees. They must also change under the trees, or use my

Constituency office. Whenever the school has activities there, they must use the Constituency office, or the church.

Sir, there is a lot of activity going on in St. George and outside of the central St. Michael areas, there are no other areas in Barbados that are being used more than the Glebe, St. George. Sir, we definitely need a changing facility at the Glebe.

Mr. Chairman, I had to fight hard for that pavilion. Over the years, it was felt that we in St. George were getting too much.

I made a plea from 1994, that there was a need for the Glebe pavilion. At first, we had to decide on its location. It was finally decided by the Town Planning Department that we would construct a pavilion at the eastern end. Sir, I am very upset that this pavilion was abandoned after the last General Election.

Hon. F. J. STUART: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Chamber. I have already indicated that the project has not been abandoned. There is no evidence of that. The Honourable Member has made it clear that he was fighting for the pavilion since 1994, that it only got started in 2007, that the Glebe was always central to St. George and, that it took 13 years for him to get trenches dug. Sir, the Honourable Member is now criticising a Government for not finishing it in the last two years.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I am not criticising the Government for not finishing it on time. I want to find out from the Honourable Member when this pavilion would be completed because it is an eyesore in St. George and it was stopped the last Election.

5.40 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I know for a fact that the wooden frames were in the factory only waiting to be brought on the site, and in another two months, or three months, the pavilion would have been completed, but to date, two years have passed. Sir, I am saying that we need to ask the Government when will this pavilion be completed?

If the Government has no intention of completing it, they should let us know. If the Government is saying that they will not complete it in time, I will ask the private sector and the community of St. George to finish it because we have enough craftsmen like carpenters, masons and artisans in St. George and we will finish it, but the Government needs to declare its hands. I must tell the

members that it will not be like what they said that we have left undone, not in the heart of St. George, we will finish it.

It will not be in the heart of St. George left unfinished because we will finish it, so Government needs to tell us what is happening at the Glebe. We need to know when it will be completed and if Government has no intentions of completing it, we will finish it ourselves.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. He does not have to wait on the Government to finish it, or not. If he is willing to do a community project and build the pavilion, he needs to go ahead as a good Member of Parliament and work with the community and build the pavilion. I am sure the Ministry would be happy to partner with him and complete the project.

Sir, he has to put his money where his mouth is and stop coming to this Parliament and saying a lot of things that have no bearing on the reality. He has to build the pavilion for the people of the Glebe.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, this is the property of the Government and the Honourable Member knows full well that Government's property is Government's property and that nobody can go and build on the property of the Government.

The only place that has been done is in St. Lucy, where the community asked Government for a partnership and Government, at the time, provided the material and the society provided the labour. Sir, you can look at it, but I need to find out from the Government what the Government is doing about the Glebe. What time-frame can they tell us the pavilion will be completed and if it is going to be completed.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that it will not be left there for any length of time and that we will have to complete it and that if the Government cannot complete it, we will be able to complete it in St. George.

*Asides.*

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: You stopped the flyover and that is the cause of the backup on the highway. It was the worst traffic management in Barbados and that is why the highway is not finished. This is why you have problems on the highway because the Government refused to complete the flyovers.

Mr. Chairman, Government needs to look at these projects. They were not my projects. They are projects for the people of Barbados and the Government needs to complete them.

Thank you, Sir.

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

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

I rise to support this Supplementary as brought by the Honourable Minister of Youth, Family and Sports.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before you proceed, Honourable Member, we are going to be wrapping up this debate within 15 minutes, so I am able to give you at least six minutes to make your contribution. Please proceed.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I just want to support this Supplementary and really pay tribute to the BCL Cricket League, Mr. Owen "Nobby" Estwick because there was a time in Barbados when the BCL Cricket League played a very important community role and many clubs emanated from the community like West Ham, Springfield, et cetera.

Sir, I am just working on one field at Mapp Hill which is now being regraded, but I would also like to see that we have some lights placed on that big, wonderful field at Mapp Hill. Perhaps, at the same time I would want to mention the works of Mr. Patrick Trotman, Mr. Alfred Bolden, Robert Browne and Bentley Trotman.

Mr. Chairman, I will come back at a later date to discuss with this Honourable Chamber the whole precept and concept of putting these BCL cricketers, the founders and the current survivors into the Community Hall of Fame. Sir, in the limited time, I just want to introduce it and I will come back later in another debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West. I am able to give you exactly three minutes Honourable Member.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: It will take no longer than three minutes because the Honourable Member for St. George North has made a very interesting revelation about certain matters.

As you will know, a forensic audit was ordered into the former Hardwood Housing Factory. In fact, the forensic auditor reported that when they visited the factory, the materials, computers, papers and other matters were gone. Therefore, if the Honourable Member for St. George North knows that the frames for the pavilion for the Glebe were in the factory, we are asking him to cooperate with the Royal Barbados Police Force and tell them where they are.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, we have never seen an audit.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Hold one moment, Honourable Member. I have to give you the indication to speak first. I just want to bring some quiet back to the Chamber before you can proceed so I can hear you. You may proceed. Are you on a point of order?

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I am not aware of the audit, or when the audit was conducted. If there was an audit at all, we need to see the audit here before us.

Mr. Chairman, I was told before the last Elections that the frames were already constructed and in the factory.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: The Honourable Member said he knew for a fact that the frames were there in the factory. If the Honourable Member knows that for a fact, I am calling on the Honourable Member, as a legislator of the Law to co-operate with the relevant authorities to tell them where the frames have gone to. Sir, that is what I am asking.

Mr. Chairman, I want the Honourable Member to do another thing for me in this House of Assembly tonight. I want the Honourable Member to say to the people of St. John, in full-facedness, when the St. John Polyclinic is going to be finished.

Sir, the Honourable Member spoke about a pavilion, when thousands of persons in St. George and St. John, even in his Constituency who rely on the St. John Polyclinic, could not get a polyclinic for 14 years and the Honourable Member comes in here crying crocodile tears for a pavilion.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. I want to say that the polyclinic of St. John was left abandoned by the Democratic Labour Party, not by us. I also want to say further that the pavilion at the Glebe will not be neglected like the one at Gall Hill. I want to make that point abundantly clear too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have one more minute, Honourable Member.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I know that the Honourable Member is a little agitated this evening. There is no point of order on this matter. Sir, it is worse yet, when you hear the political sanctimoniousness of it, that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was the

Attorney-General when all of this was ongoing, but there was not a word when public taxpayers' monies were wasted in this country, millions of dollars were wasted in Hardwood Housing Factory and up to now the former Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, who had the seat, which I now occupy could not even get a pavilion in St. Michael North West, but the Honourable Member is talking about a pavilion in Proute.

*H/A59A/5.50 p.m. Sequence 22*

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, I will wind up. Sir, \$750 million in cost overruns that had to be brought to budget that got this country in a mess, and you come in to lecture the Democratic Labour Party on two Pavilions that were neglected by the Barbados Labour Party and now being put right by this Government. We will not accept it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Member for St. George South. You have exactly seven minutes in which to wind up the debate.

Honourable Member, before you proceed, I would like the other Honourable Members in the House to pay some attention to what I am saying, rather than what we are saying to each other.

Honourable Member for St. George South please proceed.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Chairman, first of all let me thank Honourable Members for their contribution, but I find it a little bit surprising that any Honourable Member from That Side would have a problem with the development in Greens. Sir, as a resident of St. George South, I can tell you that on every Election under the Barbados Labour Party, when they were in office, facility and facilities were promised at Greens. So much so that every Election they would bring equipment, start to clear off a little bit of grass, and the day after the equipment is removed.

*Asides.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading this Chamber. First of all, the land at Greens was bought after 2003. The land was bought when I was Minister of Housing, in 2002. Furthermore nobody on This Side objected to the facility at Greens.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. George North, I do not tolerate that kind of feistiness. When I am addressing you, you have to listen. Do not ever do it again. I am serious. You have to accord respect to the Chair and I am going to end your point of order because you are making a speech. Honourable Member for St. George South please continue.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, the residents of St. George South did not know when land was acquired. All we knew was that every Election...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, I cannot hear the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Every Election they were promised a facility in that area and equipment would be parked there, move a couple of square feet of soil and immediately after the Elections, it would be gone. This has happened repeatedly, not just in the last election. Sir, no Honourable Member on That Side complained about the facility at Greens.

Added to that, the facility at Greens is just not a pavilion. That facility, as the Honourable Member for St. George North started to mention, will serve the residents at Greens, Drax Hall Hope, Prerogative, Beards Village, Woodland, Harmony Cottage, and even St. Judes. It serves a large catchment area.

Sir, the decision was taken that rather than just develop a pavilion, there is no Resource Centre in the area and none that is easily accessible by persons in that area. Sir, the design was tweet to accommodate, not just a pavilion, but a Resource Centre from which the community and Constituency can operate. Computers will be housed there as a Resource Centre for activity, and the Constituency Council can operate from there. It has already started to be used by the community. It is much needed, and no Honourable Member on That Side has any moral authority to question the neglect that St. George South had received, under their Administration, for many years.

Sir, we even heard the Honourable Member for St. George North say there was an impression that things were happening in St. George North, and he was right. There was that impression. Sir, the constituents can tell you that nothing has happened. Anything that happened, happened just before Elections, days before Elections. They were treated like outside children.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are allowed.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. St. George South was never neglected by the Barbados Labour Party.

In fact the land in Greens was bought under the Barbados Labour Party Government to provide housing for recreation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, that is not a point of order.

*Asides.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, Honourable Members.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: I am not going to debate what was done and what was not done. The constituents and the former Member of Parliament would agree that they were treated like outside children.

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, I am not hearing from the Honourable Member for St. George North for the first time. I must confess that he and I had discussed this and he had discussed the options. I even toured with him in the Constituency. The Honourable Member should not say in here that it was neglected just to mislead this House.

*Asides.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Honourable Member I am not tolerating any further points of order from you. We are about to wind up the debate and we have exactly a minute-and-a-half. No further points of order.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, we toured that Constituency and other facilities to see what can be done in the Constituency.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph should not stand in this Honourable House and try to mislead his constituents that he has ever tried to get any explanation, or anything at Proute, or he has ever tried to meet with me, or tour with me, to even show me what is happening. This is the first day he has attempted. This is the first time that he has attempted to represent his Constituency at that facility at Proute.

*Asides.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Hold on Honourable Member because I cannot hear you. The Rules provide for the Chair to exercise certain powers if you cannot hear Honourable Members, and the Rules I am abiding by. The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, those four facilities were stopped because of the audit and the investigation of the company responsible for the construction. As was said before, the Government has the right to re-order its priorities. While those were under investigation, they were not completed. They were left there.

I have heard from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and we have discussed the Pavilion at Silver Sands. As I said, I never had any discussion with the Honourable Member for St. Joseph to represent the people of Proute, or St. Joseph in that facility.

The facility at Gall Hill, St. John, there were some challenges with the roof because that was not a brand new facility. In fact that is a very old facility that was being remodelled to meet the needs of the community. They started the job and had to make some changes. There were also some variations that were required to meet the regulations, so that things like water tanks at both facilities and some repairs required at Gall Hill would not have been included in the original budget.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wind up.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, we will continue to provide recreational facilities for the people of Barbados, all across the board. We have the prerogative to determine in what order we will provide them. The facility audit is completed. The strategic plan is ongoing and that will guide how we proceed in developing these facilities.

The Honourable Members are free to make representation on behalf of their constituents, as all the Honourable Members on This Side have done. Sir, you have made representation for your constituents. I would invite the Honourable Members on the Other Side to feel free to do just that, if they want to have representation for their constituents.

Sir, with that I beg to move that Head 64 stand part.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

*H59A 6.00 p.m. Sequence 23*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*House A59A, Sequence 24, 5.50 p.m.*

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

Head 6(a) was passed.

6.(b)

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$1 168 871 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. 13, 2009-2010, WHICH FORM

THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION

HEAD 32 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND

FOREIGN TRADE - \$140 000

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

This is a fairly simple matter. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is requesting a Supplementary under Head 32, Programme 330 for the overseas missions in the Sub-Programme 0086, in the amount of BDS\$140 000. This is in addition to the Approved Estimates of 2009-2010, and it is to supplement the rental of the premises and accommodation at the Consulate General in Miami.

As the Honourable Members might be aware and for those who are not, the lease Agreement expired on the premises and the period between the lease expiring in January 2010. Now that we are negotiating for new premises which is causing some difficulties because the new landlord has some issues relating to some of the clauses in the agreement, we still have to finalise those negotiations in relation to the diplomatic immunity and status given to employees working within the building.

This has delayed the move from the old premises to the new premises and as such, there is going to be a carryover between January and the end of the financial year, March 31, 2010, which would require an additional \$140 000. Indeed, the existing landlord is applying a penalty clause within the agreement that will see an increase of 20 per cent on the original rental price.

The Approved Estimates for 2009-2010, stood at BDS\$717 000. The expenditure at January 2010 was BDS\$673 210. The projected expenditure to April 2009, to March 2010, would be BDS\$857 000 and, therefore, the Supplementary required is for BDS\$140 000. Sir, we are

requesting that this amount be made available to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to effect that payment.

I, therefore, ask that Head 32 stand part.

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

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

#### HEAD 62 -

#### MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY - \$1 028 871

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, these sums are required by the Ministry of Finance, Investment, Telecommunications and Energy to cover a number of shortfalls up to the end of the financial year.

Under Account Code 103: Employers' Contributions, the sum of \$57 195 had been provided in the 2009-2010 Estimates of Expenditure to meet National Insurance contributions.

Sir, since then, the maximum insurable earnings have increased from \$3 720 to \$3 900 per month and this has required an adjustment in the amount of contribution employers have to pay. In addition, of course, there were some acting appointments in the Ministry, which resulted in expenditure over and above what had been provided in the Estimates.

The amount payable in respect of these acting allowances had been under provided for, so the employers' contributions are facing a shortfall of BDS\$4 096 and that sum is being requested of this Honourable House in Committee to meet this shortfall.

Sir, under Account Code 208: Rental of Property, the sum of \$130 739 is being sought because initially, it was envisaged that the Division of Telecommunications and Energy would have been located to a new building at Country Road, St. Michael by June 30, 2009. This did not materialise and a Supplementary provision in the amount of \$130 739 will, therefore, be required under the heading, "Rental of Property" to cover projected expenditure to the end of the Financial Year 2009-2010. The Division of Energy, of course, is occupying offices at the National Petroleum Corporation.

The other item Account Code 212: Operating Expenses, has to do with the sum of \$894 036 being

required to meet royalty payments due and owing by the Barbados National Oil Company.

As generally known, the Barbados National Oil Company in its drilling activities, conducts the majority of those drilling activities on properties owned by private individuals in Barbados and those individuals are entitled to royalty payments, depending on how the drilling goes.

Sir, current production by the Barbados National Oil Company indicates that royalties due to landowners for the remainder of the financial year would be approximately \$894 036. This sum, therefore, is being required to meet those payments for the period August 2009 to March 2010.

Mr. Chairman, against that background, I beg to move that Head 62 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 two Money Resolutions in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.*

*House A59A, Sequence 24, 6.10 p.m.*

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

*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.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government Business for the day, I therefore beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Monday, March 15, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

On that particular day, Sir, we shall commence debate on the Appropriation Bill, 2010, so I want all Honourable Members to take note of this.

Mr. Speaker, since I am on my feet, I think I should add to that, even though it is not directly connected to that particular statement, that Your Honour is celebrating your birthday today as well as the Deputy Clerk, brother Nigel Jones, and one of our workers downstairs, Mrs. Linton, so we have a triple celebration, two gentlemen and one lady. I am sure that this Honourable House would want to wish all of you many more great years and hope that the creeping tides of time do not treat you all harshly, but that you all

would continue to benefit from all that life can offer and that you too would share those benefits.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the Opposition would of course wish to associate itself with those congratulatory comments. Of course, I have perhaps a bit better connection to the Honourable Speaker than through this Chamber and it worries me because with his ageing, it reminds me that I am also ageing, and therefore when I wish for him another 40 anniversaries of this occasion, I am wishing the same for myself. I want to have another 40 anniversaries of whatever birthday it is. We would certainly like, Sir, to congratulate you on this occasion and wish you many more.

To the Deputy Clerk of Parliament and the other member of staff who also have the opportunity to share this delightful day with you, we also extend our fondest wishes and congratulations.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, on behalf of myself, the Deputy Clerk and the other member of staff, I thank you for your well wishes and to let you know that we are still accepting gifts.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Monday, March 15, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

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

*The question that the House do now adjourn until Monday, March 15, 2010 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.*

*House A59A Sequence 25*

6.16 p.m.

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**EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT**


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*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. Order No. 6(a), Resolution.** The Resolution is headed ‘RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$12 586 964 000’; the three Heads considered (13, 19 and 64) add to \$12 586 964. Under Head 13 the heading gives ‘\$11 599 059’, while Hon. F. J. Stuart says that ‘the sum of \$11 551 269 is required’. Printed as in the source.

**Q3. Order No. 6(a), Head 19.** Head 19 is headed ‘TREASURY’, but the sum of \$47 113 under it is explained and debated as a vehicle for the Barbados Youth Service. Printed as in the source.

**Q4. Take-slips.** A take-slip early in the Minister’s speech reads ‘H59 11.40 a.m. Sequence 4’, between slips at 10.30 a.m. and 11.10 a.m.; one afternoon slip reads ‘S59A’; and near the end of Head 64 a slip at ‘6.00 p.m. Sequence 23’ is followed by ‘Sequence 24, 5.50 p.m.’. Printed as in the source.

**Q5. After Order No. 2.** Two headings read ‘RECOMMITAL -’ before Papers and Government Notices, although no Bill is recommitted. Printed as in the source.

**Q6. Suspension, 1.45 p.m..** The Sitting resumed at 1.45 p.m. and was at once suspended again until 2.10 p.m.; Hon. P. M. T. Todd then said he was not sure that what he said ‘before the technical break was captured’. Printed as in the source.

**DEBATE SUMMARY**

*(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)*

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 9th March, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair. The Minutes of Tuesday, 2nd March, 2010 were confirmed, and Mr. Speaker announced receipt of the Accountant General’s Accounts and Statements for August and September 2009. The Prime Minister, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, laid the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, 2010-2011, the Schedules of Personal Emoluments and the Actual Revenue and Expenditure (Dead Heads) 2008-2009; Hon. R. D. Jones gave notice of the Appropriation Bill, 2010; and the

Environmental Levy Bill, the Charities (Amendment) Bill, the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill and the Appropriation Bill, 2010 were read a first time.

In a Ministerial Statement, Hon. S. D. Blackett announced a cultural industries development policy, fourteen years in planning since the first National Consultation in 1996, with a package of Customs duty and income tax incentives for approved cultural projects in the arts, design and media. Standing Orders were then suspended.

Under Order No. 2, Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick, Member for St. Philip West, moved the second reading of the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010, which allows employers to defer National Insurance contributions from 1st July, 2009 to 30th June, 2010 if they meet conditions set out in the Bill. He described the crisis as the worst since 1929, compared unemployment of 9.2 per cent with 27 per cent in the 1990s, said the fiscal deficit was 5.1 per cent when the Government took office, and listed stabilisation measures including new airline services, a widened Small Business Credit Guarantee Scheme and 138 grants to micro businesses; Mr. Speaker warned him that he was close to being unparliamentary. Mr. R. C. Eastmond asked how many businesses had applied and was questioned by Mr. Speaker on relevance; Dr. Estwick rose on a point of order over the Export Credit Guarantee Fund. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman criticised the unemployment scheme, and Mr. D. Marshall, Member for St. Joseph, said only two businesses had applied in a year and that requiring arrears to be brought up to date first was a barrier, though the Opposition did not oppose the Bill.

After the luncheon suspension and a further break, Hon. P. M. T. Todd replied to Mr. Marshall on the summer camps programme, drawing a point of order on relevance. Dr. Estwick wound up, and the Bill passed through Committee, with Mr. S. A. Lashley in the Chair, and was read a third time. Dr. Estwick laid the Medium Term Development Strategy and the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy of Barbados 2010-2014, and Hon. R. D. Jones gave notice of a Resolution to grant \$1 168 871 under Supplementary Estimates No. 13.

Under Order No. 6, the House went into Committee of Supply on Supplementary Estimates No. 12. Hon. F. J. Stuart explained that Head 13 would meet pensions due to former members of the Barbados Defence Force. Under Head 19, Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo sought \$47 113 for a vehicle for the Barbados Youth Service, whose previous vehicle had been written off in 2008, and a wide debate on youth and values followed, with Miss C. Y.

Forde, Hon. R. D. Jones, Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe, Mr. H. F. Lashley, Mr. J. D. Paul, His Honour K. St.C. Best, who called for a national consultation on deviant behaviour, and Mr. G. A. Clarke. Under Head 64, \$940 792 for the Youth Service and the National Sports Council, the Minister said \$737 849 was needed to complete pavilions at Greens and Gall Hill, the latter 80 per cent complete.

After a suspension until 5.15 p.m., Mr. Marshall questioned why four pavilions begun by the previous Government, including one at Proute, had been left unfinished, drawing points of order from Hon. D. O’N. Inniss and Mr. Stuart, and Mr. Clarke supported him; Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, Mr. H. F. Lashley and Hon. C. P. Sinckler

spoke for the Government. Replying amid repeated points of order from Mr. Clarke, which the Chairman refused, the Minister said the four facilities were stopped because of the audit and investigation of the contractor. Head 64 passed. On Supplementary Estimates No. 13, Mr. Sinckler explained \$140 000 under Head 32 for rent at an overseas mission, and Mr. Stuart \$1 028 871 under Head 62, mainly \$894 036 in royalties owed by the Barbados National Oil Company. Both Resolutions were agreed to. Mr. Jones and Mr. Marshall congratulated Mr. Speaker on his birthday, and the House was adjourned until Monday, 15th March, 2010 at 10.00 a.m., when the Appropriation Bill debate would begin.