
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, May 18, 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, Civil Service and Energy)

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

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dr. W. F. DUGUID, J.P., B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE, Ed.D., M.Ed., B.A., Dip.

Theology (Minister of Environment, Water Resources and Drainage)

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

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

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

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

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

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning Honourable Members, this 64th Sitting of this session of Parliament is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, May 04, 2010.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its Meeting of Tuesday, May 04, 2010, be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

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

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

House A64 Sequence 2

10.20 a.m.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let me take the opportunity to welcome among us today the members of the second forms of the St. Ursuline Secondary School, together with members of staff. I am sure I speak for all Honourable Members when I say we always welcome these visits and we wish today that your experience may be both interesting as well as rewarding.

PAPERS

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

1. Report on the Audit of the National Insurance Fund for the years ended December 31, 2001 and December 31, 2002;
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.) Order, 2010;
3. Duties, Taxes and Other Payment (Exemption) (Rocky Bluff Holding Ltd.) Order, 2010;
4. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Apes Hill Development SRL) Order, 2010.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

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

1. National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) (No.2) Bill, 2010.

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

STATEMENT BY MINISTERS

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, for many years, the planned development of the parish of St. Lucy was discussed by Government and private developers, with the major focus being on the development of Nestfield as a town centre and as a catalyst for other residential and industrial development in the area. Pickering Plantation land became available for sale in 2007 and this was viewed

as the opportune moment to initiate and develop plans for the area.

A group of entrepreneurs, business persons, consultants and experts from Barbados, the Caribbean and United States of America collaborated to capitalise on the opportunity and conceptualised the Pickering Project. This collaboration resulted in the incorporation of North Ridge Development Company in 2007, which sought to undertake the development in the same year. However, the ownership and control of these lands by three major parties presented some challenges and prevented the development from being more than just a concept. In order for the development to take place, one of the major owners initiated plans for the development of a portion of the land and this gave rise to the idea of the creation of a town centre and the direction in which the project is now progressing. A critical aspect of the progress to be mentioned is the fact that the project was introduced to the residents of the parish through planned meetings and a chirrup process; they were engaged and their ideas, where relevant and practical, were incorporated in the final project design.

It is worthy of note that the Physical Development Plan, amended in 2003, makes centres and mixed used corridors essential components of the land use structure. This strategy seeks to build on the groundwork of previous Physical Development Plans, as Nestfield, earmarked for the St. Lucy Town Development, has been identified for a local district centre in the Physical Development Plan, 1970, and in every Physical Development Plan since then. Its development was not envisaged to be carried out in isolation but was to be linked to long-term growth of Speightstown and the future industrial and agricultural development of the north of the island.

Mr. Speaker, the Physical Development Plan, amended in 2003, went even further and included local or community administrative service centres. Section 3.13.(3) (v) also makes adequate provision for the use of agricultural lands, where there are overriding social, environmental and economic benefits associated with the proposal. In this regard, this development which not only proposed housing solutions but also commercial, industrial, institutional and cultural facilities to support the existing and anticipated growth in population in the north, identifies with the policies contained in the Physical Development Plan. More specifically, the proposed development is in keeping with Section 3.1.(vi) of the Plan, which states that the main purpose in designing a network of local centres is to encourage the decentralisation pattern of centres within predominately

residential neighbourhoods, which would serve as focal points to community activities and amenities and create a more balanced community structure in

predominately residential areas, and secondly to reduce travel distances between residential neighbourhoods and shopping professional services and other community facilities, and encourage transit use, pedestrian and bicycle travel and other alternatives to private automobiles. The proposed development was approved by Cabinet and I now propose, in accordance with the said approval and Government stated policy in relation to major agricultural, residential or commercial subdivision, to inform the Honourable House as follows:

North Ridge Development Company Limited proposed to develop a mixed-used product which will be one of the largest residential projects to be undertaken in the island. The development scheduled to commence this year is envisage to span a period of nine years. The intention of the developers is to offer housing solutions in the vicinity of 1 161 wide-ranging residential units, a 200-unit hotel, a private daycare facility, a 350-student primary school, recreational amenities, heritage parks with supporting educational facilities, several parks and open spaces, greens, lakes, tree-lined boulevards, pedestrian walks, an open-air amphitheatre, a bus terminal and a sewerage treatment plant.

Mr. Speaker, some of the services and amenities will include doctors offices, a health clinic, a pharmacy, professional offices, beauty and barber shops, supermarket, outdoor markets, various convenience stores and a cinema. Central to the development are the green theme ambience, aesthetics and the creation of a holistic community which will provide a safe, comfortable and neighbourly environment where people can live, play, shop, commute and educate their children. The community design will allow easy access to the facilities and amenities, as these will be located within a five minute walking distance from the residences, thus integrating the town centre and the Pickering Development.

The development runs parallel to the Physical Development Plan, since envisaged within the project is the development of a town centre on 200 000 square feet of commercial space. Local centres are part of a hierarchy of settlements aimed at rationalising and ordering population growth across the island and comprise the basic commercial and institutional amenities such as a church, post office, police station and gas station. Provision will be made for affordable housing, for low and middle income earners and the size of these residential units will compare favourably with other residential units. In addition, the selling price per square foot has projected to be lower than the affordable middle income project ranges now being offered. This is as a result of low land cost, advanced building methods and of course the benefits of some concessions to be obtained from Government, which will be passed onto the purchasers.

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HON. D. J. H. THOMPSON: In addition, a light industrial facility will occupy 75 000 square feet of land. Mr. Speaker, included in the proposal is an agricultural component where 20 acres of total site will be utilised for intensive agriculture. Aquaculture is also to be introduced in order to lessen the negative impact of the significant loss of 180 acres of agricultural land where it had been proposed that an environmentally-sound land utilisation strategy will be implemented.

The unique northern Pickering estate, which served as the home of two National Heroes of Barbados, the Right Excellent Dr. Charles Duncan O'Neale, a prominent Barbadian physician and political figure, who paved the way for the social transformation of Barbados in the early 20th Century, and the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow who was the first Prime Minister of Barbados, will become the focus of a major heritage attraction, the Heritage Civic Centre, which will reflect the lives and times of these two National Heroes.

Mr. Speaker, the plantation house and ancillary building are to be restored and used for the purpose of a museum, an art gallery, a banquet and events hall, arts community centre, local shops and restaurants, located in the plantation yard of the civic centre and will occupy approximately 12.94 acres of the land and the visitor with an interest in the lives of the two National Heroes will be allowed the opportunity to visit and be informed through multimedia static display and live interpretation.

Mr. Speaker, the development of Pickering has the potential to provide the socio-economic base, which is required to ensure that the future development of St. Lucy is harmonious and sustainable. Six Roads, St. Philip, was also identified in the 1977 Development Plan as a district centre and this has subsequently progressed to a regional centre, although given the Speightstown Regional Centre, it is not intended for Nesfield or Pickering to be in this realm. It, however, has the potential of providing shopping, business and professional services to not only St. Lucy but the wider community as well.

The prospect of increased social benefits to the parish is evidenced by the projected increase in population, employment and market opportunities as well as through the enhancement and expansion of community and social services, the recreational ambience would be enhanced, especially, with the development of the Heritage Park.

I must emphasize that Government, the residents of St. Lucy and, of course, the greater Barbadian community stands to benefit from these new and varied opportunities

during and after the development phase. Government stands to realise increased revenue during and after the construction phase from payroll and property taxes, income tax, transport services and VAT. In addition, it is anticipated that 600 full time job opportunities will be created at peak construction periods and sustainable job opportunities will be provided for 300 persons to support the residential and business aspects of the development.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Standing Orders Nos. 6,8,16,18,20,42(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 with division.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before we go into Government Business, you may recall that on the last occasion we would have had the question of a matter of privilege raised by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. I had indicated then that I would also give the opportunity to the Honourable Member St. Philip West to say something in response, if he so desired, and he has indicated to His Honour that he is not so minded. I wish to say that having looked at the matter, I am of the view that a prima facie case has been made out and, therefore, I now direct that the matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

I also want to draw your attention to the fact that given the recent allocation in terms of seating of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, I believe that would have some implications for the composition of the Committee and I believe he would have been nominated as a Member of Her Majesty's Opposition at the time. Therefore, I am going to give Her Majesty's Opposition the opportunity to look at that appointment and I would expect that the Committee should be properly reconstituted by our next Sitting. The matter is, therefore, deferred subject to that matter being dealt with.

Government Business is now the order of the day.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 2 – INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2010

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Prime Minister.

HON. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with the House's lead, I would like to deal with the item, Order No. 2 and Order No. 3 in my introduction since they are closely related and, therefore, I would not have another introductory speech in respect of Order No. 3.

MR. SPEAKER: unless they are any objections to that course of action, then that is the one that would be adopted. The Honourable Member for St. John.

HON. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this legislation comes to the House pursuant to the budgetary proposals, which I made last and relates to the amendment to the Income Tax Act, Cap. 73, as well as the Charities Act, Cap. 243, the purpose of which is to make different provisions in respect of settlement made to charities and secondly, to make provision for foreign currency allowance to individuals in certain circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the amendment, essentially, are to make Barbados more attractive as a tax jurisdiction for non-domicile persons, who wish to be resident in Barbados for tax purposes and, therefore, to encourage more earnings of foreign exchange by Barbados and, secondly, to make it more attractive for persons to contribute to charitable organisations, especially those that are specifically declared "exempt charity". Sir, in that Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposal on May 18, 2009, I indicated that the Income Tax Act would be amended to provide for the following concession:

1. To reduce the effective rate of income tax that such individuals resident but not domiciled in Barbados would be required to pay on their foreign income.
2. To enable an individual who becomes domiciled here also to claim the foreign currency earnings credit in respect of his income derived from outside of Barbados.
3. Dividends derived by Barbadian resident companies including companies licensed to operate in the international business sector should be exempt from tax in Barbados on dividends derived from a substantial shareholding in an overseas company.
4. Exemption from withholding tax in respect of dividends paid by a resident company to a non-resident shareholder, out of foreign source income earned by that company will be granted.

Sir, that relates to the first amendment in relation to the Income Tax Act.

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Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: ...in relation to the Income Tax Act. As I said, the object is to make Barbados a more attractive tax restriction domicile persons who wish to be resident in Barbados for tax purposes.

I believe this is something that both Governments have agreed to. It is something that I have previously proffered by the then Minister of Finance, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, and finding a way to achieve this in our legislation was necessary. The officials were able to design it in such a way that in the 2009 Budget, I was able to point out how Barbados would proceed, and this legislation follows that model.

Sir, in relation to Charities, as we know, the rules for charities in Barbados were extremely inflexible, in my view, and did not lend to a situation where people would make large one-off contributions to charities, or where a person in a given income tax year wanted to make a contribution, but was not likely to make that contribution over three years. Sir, in our system you had to do a covenant and you had to covenant over three years. Sir, the object of that, I suppose, was to establish the bone fide of the giver more than the receiver. In our view, the legislation really should focus on the receiver and how to make it easier for the receiver, once we certify that the receiver of the charitable contribution is worthy to receive, we can do so in a simple and clearer way. Therefore, the three-year requirement will be removed.

The Covenant Rules, it is supposed by this amendment, would be abolished. In place of covenants, official donations and receipts would be allowed, which would be acceptable by the Inland Revenue Department. Section 85.1 of the Income Tax Act would be expanded to include other organisations or entities which can be included in a Schedule to the Act. What do we mean by this? It means that Government can determine what charities will benefit.

Sir, if we say that, for example, that the hospital is setting up a Foundation to receive charitable contributions, or that a Trust is being established to promote entrepreneurship in Barbados for young people, and contributions to these entities, of any size, should be tax deductible, then we would place that entity or that project in the Schedule. Now, that would mean that large one-off contributions would be acceptable. Whereas otherwise the limit of what you can claim would be established by the legislation.

So where the contribution is made and practically not just theoretically, it means that Government does not then have to look for those resources. For example, the expansion, refurbishment, even the building of a new hospital. As I listed some of the other areas, entrepreneurship, Constituency Council, Constituency Council project and other worthy projects, persons would be able to receive the benefit where they make large one-off contributions.

Sir, small organisations will no longer be required to prepare and file legal documents with typos in order to be a benevolent organisation. A letter from the appropriate ministry that the organisation is an approved organisation would be sufficient. So that the process which now requires small entities, charities and unincorporated associations. You may have sporting organisations or clubs, cultural organisations in communities, entities that have had a longstanding association with community projects island wide would now benefit without having to go through a long and administrative process to establish their bone fides.

Sir, both cash donations and properties would be allowed for tax purposes. So if you want to make a donation of property instead of cash, that can also be set off for tax purposes. Large donations of over a million dollars can be carried forward for five years, and there should be a restriction on the amount that can be claimed each year. So even though we will allow for the large contributions, the Inland Revenue Department will determine how over five years those contributions can be claimed by the donor.

However, the larger one-off contributions to specially scheduled charities with a major purpose like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital project or the Constituency Council's Project can be written off in one year. Since such donations would mean that Government does not now have to look for that money, because a private citizen is making the contribution.

Subsequent to my announcement of the policy, the Commissioner of the Inland Revenue Department reviewed the proposal with respect to the foreign currency credit, and advised that this incentive should not be extended to individuals who eventually become domiciled as well, as those who are already domiciled in Barbados. In view of the fact that it would likely have the effect of reducing income tax revenue rather than increasing them.

In addition to that, the Commissioner indicated that the proposal may also give rise to a situation, where Barbados may be seen as creating two classes of individuals for tax purposes, which is what we do not want. Therefore, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue also noted that the proposals relating to this exemption from tax and dividends derived from substantial shareholding and

overseas companies as well as the exemption from withholding tax on dividends paid to residents from foreign income, had previously been included in the Income Tax Act under Sections 91.1(E) and 65.4(E) respectively.

Sir, I therefore agreed to that and the amendments have therefore been proposed.

Clause 2 of the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill provides for an amendment to Section 4 of the Principle Act to include reference to a charity.

Clause 3 makes provision for the inclusion of a new Section, 12 (I), to allow individuals who are residents but not domicile to benefit from a tax credit in respect of earned income from sources outside of Barbados.

Clause 5 of the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, amends 24B of the Principle Act to:

1. Allow individuals or companies making

donations to an exempted charity to claim the total amount of the payment, or where the donation involves the transfer of property, the market value of the property.

2. To make provisions in situations where donations made to a registered non exempt charity and the amount donated is \$1 million or less, for an individual or a company to deduct no more than 10 per cent of its assessable income.

3. Where the amount donated to a registered non exempt charity exceeds \$1 million, the individual or company may deduct the amount over five years, but so that the deduction in any one year is no more than 50 per cent of the assessable income of the donor in that year.

Clause 7 amends Section 85 of the Income Tax Act by the definition of Benevolent Organisation, and inserting a definition of Exempt Charity.

Clause 8 of the Bill provides for the insertion of a Sixth Schedule in the Act to provide for the calculation of the foreign currency earnings allowance in respect of Section 12 (I).

Clause 2 of the Charities (Amendment) Bill 2010 provides for the amendment to the First Schedule to the Charities Act by inserting a definition of Charity as well as including a listing of established Charities.

Therefore, the Act in its Schedule would already make provision and the Schedule can therefore be amended over time to include other entities which Government from time to time believes should be included in that list.

Sir, with those words I beg to move the second reading of the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2010.

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House A64, Sequence 06, 10.50 a.m.

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: With those words, Sir, I beg to move that the second reading of the Income Tax Amendment Bill, 2010.

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

Asides.

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

Dr. W.F. DUGUID: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would not detain the House very long on this matter, apart from to say that we would obviously agree that it is certainly an important step for charities to be able to access philanthropic donations and to make that process a lot simpler.

There are many nongovernmental organisations in this country that have done tremendous work, both not only to improve the communities in which they are located, but also to improve Government as a whole. One immediately thinks of the Diabetic Association, the Heart Foundation, the Red Cross and those national organisations which now have an opportunity to benefit from philanthropic donations by wealthy and other people, by making it so much simpler for them to be able to make donations to these organisations and then the donor getting an opportunity for that to be effected in an appropriate way on their Income Tax. I think is laudable and it is something that both Governments have always strive for and it is something that we would certainly support.

What concern I do have, however, Mr. Speaker, has to do with whether this new Legislation can be used in an inappropriate way to be able to give political donations to political parties and operatives. Let me see if I can expand on it a little. The Honourable Member for St. John mentioned the Constituency Councils, and the ability for a Constituency Council to receive a donation. Obviously, the Honourable Members on this side would be very concerned about that because it was clear that we saw Constituency Councils as nothing more than a political vehicle.

Sir, if now we have philanthropic people or organisations that are able to give unrestricted donations to

Constituency Councils which could be used for nothing more than party, political operations, I would have a significant difficulty with that because all of a sudden now, we have Legislation which can be used to circumvent the Act which gives people an opportunity to contribute, by extension to Constituency Councils and therefore by extension to political parties.

Asides.

Dr. W.F. DUGUID: I think this is something that has to be given further consideration. It cannot be that we can institute Legislation in this country that gives people a free hand to contribute large sums of money for political purposes and on top of it have those people then benefit from tax relief for those large contributions. I have a major concern about it because what is then to stop a political party for argument sake for registering an arm or a new aspect of its operations as a charity, and then accept large contributions, \$1 million or more, or \$2 million or \$3 million or whatever it may be for the sole purpose of gaining a political advantage in this country. That then, Mr. Speaker, opens us up to a concept of Government for sale and I am very concerned about it.

What in this Legislation and I am asking the Minister of Finance to explain to this House what in this Legislation will stop that kind of activity, where an organisation - I do not know, it could be an insurance organisation for argument sake - might decide to give \$15 million to an association or a charity, write it off on their Income Tax, and then an organisation use that money for political advantage. Sir, that is my concern because it is clear that this Bill will now open up that opportunity. It will open up an opportunity for individuals to make large donations to Constituency Councils. Those Constituency Councils ran and operated by operatives of political parties, so chosen, and use that money to gain political advantage for one political party over another.

I understand the concept. I like the concept of people being given an opportunity to contribute to known non partisan organisations, the Red Cross, the Heart Foundation, the Diabetic Association, the Salvation Army, those kinds of things. Things that provide a national image and a nongovernmental organisation, which contribute significantly to the development of this nation.

What I have significant reservation about, Mr. Speaker, is a Constituency Council taking a donation of large sums of money and then using it for political advantage and on top of it, the donor themselves getting a tax relief. I am very concerned about it and there must be some sorts of safeguards in the Legislation to stop that kind of activity. It cannot be that an individual or an organisation gives, for example, to some other entity for the concept of giving a benefit to the whole society and

instead that money is used for political advantage. Sir, that is my major concern.

Apart from that, Mr. Speaker, the concept is good. It is certainly workable but it is open for abuse. I would hate to think that we would pass Legislation in this Honourable House today that would be subject to abuse later and then we have to come and have real problems with it, and real problems with it affecting how this community and how this society moves and evolves. This is my concern and I would ask that the Honourable Member expands on it in his windup.

The other matter with respect to the Withholding Tax, I think is forthcoming and it is something that gives people an opportunity to improve. At the end of the day, any reduction in Tax is welcome so that people have more disposable income to invest. I would welcome the Honourable Members to discuss it.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

His Ex. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is a good thing that sometimes you are in this Parliament for a long time and I am sure, Sir, that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was in here, Sir, when the jetty was built in Speightstown, where a Quid Pro Quo was worked out between the builder of the jetty and the company that built the jetty and the Government. Now, you have expanded this, Sir, following the policy of the Barbados Labour Party, you are now hearing the Honourable Member for Christ Church West making the point that he does not agree.

I do not, Sir, accept this because any objection on a matter like this should be done when the jetty was built in Speightstown and not today. The evidence is still there where the company was able to get the writeoff for building the jetty and it was accepted. Sir, we as an Opposition went along with the Government because we understood what they were doing. Now a couple years after, Sir, which is still fresh in our memory, we are hearing the Honourable Members who were in Government at the time, now objecting to something like this and I am saying it is deplorable. It is as if what the Honourable Members are saying, that it is good for them to do something but it is a crime for the Democratic Labour Party to continue policy. I am saying that is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I have always said in this House that it is not about revenue. It is about foreign exchange. I am happy to see, Sir, that we are now at a stage

that we have now raised the level where we now understand, as a Government, that in order to run this country, we must have foreign exchange. I congratulate the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister on this issue because it is one thing to talk about us doing it but if we do not have foreign exchange to pay for the goods and services, Sir, we will not be able to achieve what we want for Barbadians.

Sir, a country like Barbados cannot get its foreign exchange only by borrowing because if you are not increasing a productive capacity, and you continue to borrow, all you are doing is creating debt for a country.

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His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I am saying that we have to find productive ways of earning foreign exchange or we have to find ways to have inflows of foreign exchange, which will not see a greater outflow of foreign exchange. Sir, I want to commend the Government for recognising this.

Sir, this is nothing new to the Democratic Labour Party. In 1994 when we left the Government, we had policies in place for returning nationals to bring in new capital without a cost to this country.

Sir, I have always said to my comrades that any time we have a good policy not to leave it for the Barbados Labour Party to mash up. Sir, that is exactly what happened. We left it and they mash it up.

Sir, whereas before people were able to bring two cars into the country and there was no foreign exchange outflow from the country, that policy was cut in half and the people were only able to bring in one car and then they had to look for foreign exchange to buy the other car.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Barbados have to ensure that the Democratic Labour Party creates foreign exchange for this country in a creative way especially in this year when all over the world we are seeing difficulties and ensure that we do not have an outflow of foreign exchange to service that inflow.

Sir, I have always said that the returning nationals have allowed us the opportunity to get this foreign exchange without worrying too much about the outflow.

Sir, every time we go to borrow, we not only have to service the loan that was borrowed but we have to service the interest, which means that we have to look for more foreign exchange than what we receive to service that loan.

Sir, what is even worst is that when you go and borrow that money, especially for a thing like a prison that does not generate foreign exchange, it means that the money you earned from tourism and your other productive sectors would have to be used to service that loan or you would have to go and borrow more money to service that loan.

Sir, I am saying today that this legislation is a step in the right direction. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to see that the Democratic Labour Party has acknowledged that for years there have been many people giving large sums of money under the carpet but the public always expects us not to deal under the carpet. Today, Sir, we are demonstrating to the public that this is the Democratic Labour Party not the Barbados Labour Party and we have brought it to the surface. If you want to give, you have to identify yourself. We need to know who is giving. This legislation is about ensuring that those persons who are giving are on top of the surface and not under it. We are not dealing with deads, we are dealing with people who are alive. It now means that if someone wants to give, let us say, \$1 million to a Constituency Council, we would know who that person is and we would know where to look to see where they can get the benefits. There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr. Speaker, I will swear that if you were to go to the public of Barbados, all of them would like to know who are the people giving because they like to know who are the ones giving. Sir, if someone has \$200 000 to give away, we want to know why they are giving away that \$200 000 and what they are going to get for it. There is nothing wrong with that.

I am saying today, Sir, that those persons who meet at the 'big table' would now know that when the money is received that they do not have to hide it at the 'big table'. The money would be there and it can be claimed by the persons giving. We have to know who are those generous persons in Barbados who have been giving away millions and millions of dollars. I believe that anybody who is generous and want to give away this money must be prepared to let people know who they are. Sir, not only that. If it is for the benefit of Barbados, then it means that they should get back something in return.

Mr. Speaker, I am not a believer of someone giving and not getting something back in return because then there is no contract. I have always said that it is better to give than to receive. I have always said in my constituency that if a man comes to borrow \$2 000 from you, it is always better to give the man \$200 and let him go along with that without having to worry about that debt and save the friendship because if you lend him the \$2 000 you might not get back the \$2 000 and then you receive nothing.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, no, we do not buy votes. You would understand the process of buying votes but in the North we treat everybody as equal citizens and we deal with them like that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was just wondering if you are still addressing the Chair.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Of course, Sir, but that remark is not for you because I know that you do not buy votes. As a good Democratic Labour Party candidate I know that you believe in respecting the constituents in your constituency.

What I am saying is that we have to understand that there is a cost to foreign exchange. For too long in this country people believe that foreign exchange is something that you do not have to pay a cost for. I am saying it is wrong to believe that foreign exchange is not paid for. When we go to the international agencies and borrow money we pay for that foreign exchange by putting out more foreign exchange than what we receive. Sir, if a person is returning to Barbados and they are bringing large sums of foreign exchange into this country and they are only asking us for local dollars, because once they are living here they are spending the money here, we can service it with the money that we have here in the country. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West would understand exactly what I speak about. We do not have to look for foreign exchange to service that money but with a foreign loan, you have to do so.

Sir, we sometimes have to recognise that in everything we do, we have to find the opportunity cost of what we are doing. Sir, that is the error we make in this country. We do not match what we are doing to the other things so we do not find any crime in forking out large sums of money to service a foreign loan but if a returning national brings in the same amount of money and he or she asked for a break, we see a crime in that not recognising that the returning national is bringing new money into the economy and he or she is not expecting to take back out any of that foreign currency from the economy. Sir, we are now having new money to create or repay our loans without having to service it using foreign exchange. Mr. Speaker, we ignore that and we accept that as if it is a gift to us and we need not to pay anything for it.

I am saying, Sir, that is wrong and we have to find a new way to service debt without looking to borrow another loan to service the debt. We either have to do it through productive means or we are going to have to attract persons who have money who want to remain in Barbados without having to take back out that money. Sir, that is the cheapest way to service that debt.

Not only that, Sir, we also have to be very careful in this country how we look at our industries. As you know, Sir, we have the sugar industry, the manufacturing industry, the tourism industry and the insurance industry and sometimes we behave as if we have a right to treat one industry in a particular way but then another person does not have a right to treat another industry that is providing the impetus for the economy and protecting the economy from depreciating.

Sir, in the 60s and 70s, we understood the importance of protecting the sugar industry and the manufacturing industry.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, we did that by ensuring that we form a company called the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation or the Agricultural Development Corporation. We then set up the Barbados Development Bank to ensure that both the manufacturing sector and the tourism industry would get off on a good footing. Sir, we then ensured that when the hotel industry looked as though it was going to be in trouble, we created something called GEMS of Barbados to ensure that the hotel plant did not decrease in this country. Sir, we did those things because we understood the importance of keeping capacity within the economy. Sir, if we could have understood it for the agricultural, manufacturing and tourism industries, we then have to understand the importance of the insurance industry to the development of Barbados and the effect it would have on Barbados, if we allow a large chunk to drop out of the bottom of this economy.

Mr. Speaker, we have to learn the philosophy of the development of Barbados, we cannot believe that because we have done something that it is right and that what somebody else has done is wrong. What might be wrong might be how people manage the process. Sir, we have to understand that at the end of the day, it is the development of Barbados that is important, especially at a time when a country is in a crisis. Sir, we have to be very careful how we allow large sections of the economy to drop out. Sir, in the same way when a country faces a crisis we cannot reduce certain aspects... It is alright for people to talk about reducing cost of living but if you allow imported goods to come in, then there would be no Barbados Agricultural Society, no manufacturing nor agricultural industry, all we would be doing would be exporting jobs outside of Barbados. Sir, we have to understand exactly what we are saying.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I am saying that we have a wonderful opportunity to educate the Barbadian public that whenever they purchase a good that is not made in Barbados, that there is a foreign exchange cost to it and that foreign exchange must be found somewhere. Sir, what we are discussing today is to increase capacity to ensure that we have the foreign exchange to service those goods that Barbadians love. If they are saying that the manufacturing sector is not performing, if they are saying the agricultural sector is not performing, if they are saying that the insurance industry is not performing, if they are still saying that the tourism industry is not performing, it means that this country still has to find a way to get foreign exchange to service the debt and to ensure that Barbadians can eat food. This is what it is all about, that in a crisis time you would hear people talking all sorts of nonsense - not in here of course because you would not allow it - but one thing people have to understand is that in a crisis situation you have to keep the people happy, especially the workers of Barbados.

Sir, I want to congratulate the Government for spending money on those projects that have kept Barbadians happy, while other countries have ignored that fact. Sir, people have ignored things like free bus fare for school children but that means something to poor people, that means more disposable income in people's pockets. There are also Constituency Councils that are doing work within the communities, while enhancing the lives of Barbadians. This also means that things that Barbadians had to do for themselves, that the Constituency Councils are now able to do. This means it is keeping more disposable income in people's pockets. It also enhances people lives to progress. Mr. Speaker, this morning I am proud to support this measure because I well understand what it means. It is not revenue, it is foreign exchange. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I would want to give my support to this Bill. However, I would want to make a few observations at this time. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy has made the point that we are in a crisis and I do not understand why the Honourable Member would make that point. Sir, I thought that things were going pretty well and so I would want the Honourable Member to explain that to Barbadians.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by giving the impression that when I said we, I meant both parties. Sir, I meant the world, we live in a world.

MR. SPEAKER: Fine, that point is now clarified. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be very critical this morning, I understand what this Government is trying to do. Sir, I want to sympathise with this Government because they have come full-circle around. Sir, by the amendment to the Income Tax Act, the Government is trying to attract people who have money. It has been done in 1985, in the United States of America, under President Reagan where, in his most conservative view, he wanted to attract the wealthy against the poor. This Government, in this exercise, is trying to attract lots of foreign exchange; it is trying to attract persons who have money to donate to worthy charitable and non-charitable organisations. It seems to me as though Government is trying to attract funds to be given to all and sundry.

Mr. Speaker, years ago when persons gave to charitable organisations, some gave under a covenant, some gave to a trust; they also gave mainly to schools, churches and the like. Today we are seeing that Government is saying it is okay for domicile persons, who would get large tax breaks and non-domicile persons to give. Sir, that is why I say this is likened to the Ronald Reagan programme in the United States of America during the 1980s, when he announced that the rich and famous would get large tax breaks if they gave to charitable organisations and to political parties.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am very loathed to interrupt the Honourable Member. In my introduction, I said we are dealing with two different pieces of legislation. Sir, even though I dealt with them together there is really no connection between the two. MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, is this an explanation or is it a point of order?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by giving the impression that we are trying to attract high network of individuals for the purpose of having them give charitable contributions, that is not what we are doing. Sir, the high network individual legislation arises out of a 2005 Budget, which the Honourable Member's Minister of Finance introduced in Parliament. The philanthropic contribution arose out of Government's initiatives pursuant to its Manifesto and about what it said in the Budget about attracting contributions. Sir, foreign persons coming to Barbados, unless they pay income tax in Barbados, will not benefit from any deductions, the people who will benefit are Barbadians who make contributions and persons living here, who can be taxed under our legislation. Sir, if you cannot be taxed under our legislation, then you cannot have a deduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, we will take that as an explanation. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Honourable Prime Minister because the Honourable Member made a point that persons who are domicile, who pay income tax, who make a contribution, will receive benefits. Sir, those are the persons who live here but those persons who do not live here are also able to give donations. Sir, I am wondering who are those persons who would be able to give donations. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that in today's society, it is not the poor who can give donations.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: In fact, Mr. Speaker, we just came out of the 20/20 Cricket Competition and Barbados could not attract one company to advertise at Kensington. Sir, people in Barbados do not have that money to give political parties. Sir, I am saying that it through the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, that Government is attracting those high network persons, those persons with funds. Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said, we did it to some extent when we were in Government in the last term when persons were able to give donations to build the jetty at Speightstown, where persons were able to give to schools and use some of it in their income tax as a deduction. Sir, that has always been used but when it is now easier...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, the Government has made it easier. I do not know how easy it is because I was never in a position to give large sums of money to any organisation. Sir, one would see that it is the rich and famous who will get large deductions. Sir, Barbadians just have to look at what this Government is doing. Sir, they are attracting persons with money, so that it is the Williams, the Challenors and the Piles at Buckeley that this Government is attracting once again. Sir, these are the people, that I spoke about, that the Conservatives of the United States of America did in the 1980s. Sir, when the Honourable Member for St. Lucy tells me that it is creative, what is creative about this?

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing creative about this. The Government is using the Income Tax Act to attract persons with money. Sir, that is what they are doing and we have supported it. The only thing we believe is that the way it is being done, it is much easier now because years ago, it was hard for persons to give. We understand that they were persons who wanted to give to help with the community, for example, I wanted to attract some funds to build a pavilion at the Glebe and I was told by business people that we could not attract any funds because they were not going to get any deductions. Sir, I find that this Bill could help those persons who want to give to community-based

programmes like a club house. I have seen the Honourable Member for St. John talking about this over the years because we know what it is to attract funds for persons playing netball and for sporting organisation. Sir, we have spoken about this at length in this House and I think that the idea of giving to the community and giving to organisations is very important.

Mr. Speaker, we need to look at how these people give to political organisations and how they give to Constituency Councils. Sir, I think the time is ripe for us to look again at the composition and the organisation of the Constituency Councils if the Government is now so minded to open up the flood gates to allow Constituency Councils now to benefit from this type of large donation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that we have to look carefully at attracting foreign exchange. I do not know how much it would attract but I hope that the Government could come every year to tell this Parliament how much money in deductions these people will get, how much they have got and so on. This needs to be exposed to all and sundry so that we will know exactly what is happening, what these people are giving and for what purposes.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I spoken enough. I know that the Minister of Finance is trying to attract finance for the country, which is a good thing but to say that it is creative, it is not creative, it was used already by foreign Governments. I noticed that even one Caribbean country went as far as having economic citizenship in order to attractive foreign exchange. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is trying his best to say that we must attract foreign exchange at all cost. I am not sure if that is good because Barbados is still looked upon as one of the best managed and run countries in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I was at cricket only this weekend and persons echoed the fact that Barbados is still a good country and we want to make sure it remains so. I hope that those persons that would want to give, that we look carefully at who they are.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

(11:26) HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not imagine that when this Bill was introduced that I would have had to entire this debate because I certainly would have thought from what would have transpired under the previous administration that both political Parties would have been on all fours, and singing from the same hymn sheet in relation to this matter. Clearly though, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the two members who have spoken from the Opposition even though saying, upfront, that they support

the Bill and have always believed in contributions being made, have sought to manufacture some level of opposition, through cynicism and sinisterness, in relation to this piece of legislation which is rather quite simple. Therefore, it really befalls me into a state of incomprehension how the Honourable Member for St. George North was unable to connect with this very simple piece of legislation just as he was unable to connect with the Barbados Labour Party's Government policy. In fact, we were lectured continuously on the virtues of getting more and more foreign direct investment in Barbados. Indeed, as recently as the Estimates, we heard an extensive lamentation from members of the Opposition about how much the foreign direct investment into Barbados was declining. They said we needed to get more foreign direct investment and that it has gone from \$1 billion down to \$63 million.

Sir, indeed, the last administration tried their level best at every turn through fiscal measures and other measures to attract foreign direct investment, predated and entire economic model in Barbados on attracting high end investors into Barbados. Sir, I am not going to go the very contentious route about selling off parts of the country. I am not going to go there, that is there for Barbadians to take their cue from...

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of that is there. We are now trying to diversify the methods by which we can do two things. In the first Bill, obviously, to ensure that those persons who living here, or domiciled here, who have made contributions or want to make contributions to development of our communities can do so and, at least, for some part of that social investment - because this is direct social investment in the country - as good corporate citizens, have a tax credit at the end of the year when the filing period arises.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with that, and this is where the disconnection that the Honourable Member for St. George North did not see. There are a lot of organisations and businesses in Barbados over the years who have made contributions to many worthwhile causes. Sir, not through charities but they felt that either as individuals or as organisations that they should make a contribution to the development of the society. We are saying to them that we have recognised what they had done in the past and we are going to make it slightly less complicated and difficult for you to make those contributions.

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Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: ...and we are going to make it slightly less complicated and difficult for you to make those contributions on that supply side, and on the demand side, in terms of the Charities Bill, we are going to try to ensure that we do not wrap those small organisations up in a whole lot of bureaucratic red tape, in order for them to receive the benefit. How can you oppose that, I would never begin to understand.

We all know of the Barbados Labour Party's Opposition on Constituency Councils. We had the debate in here. They have said they do not support them. They viewed them with some level of cynicism, even though there are ordinary Barbadians who are participating in the exercise.

Indeed, one Honourable Member of the House joined the debate made the very interesting comment at the closing of his speech when he said that he was so opposed to the Constituency Councils that he believed that Barbadians should take to arms against the Constituency Councils. Therefore, we know they are in opposition to it, but to now come and try to give the impression, even in spite of the legislation that has been passed, properly articulated, put in place and passed by this Parliament governing the Councils that we are going to use this measure, this piece of legislation, as some sinister backhanded way to get money - I listened very carefully to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West - into the Constituency Councils, which can then up into political Parties. To give the impression that there is some connection between the Constituency Councils and a political or political Parties.

I think that is irresponsible, uncalled for and unnecessary in the context of what we understand and know had been the structure, and is the governing legislation for the Constituency Councils. You can oppose them, but to give that impression that the Government is trying through some very sinister measures to secrete money into a political Party through the Constituency Council...

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for

St. Michael North West were ordered expunged from The records by Mr. SPEAKER.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, I can make the point that under the Constituency Councils any donation which is received, because the Constituency Councils are part of the Constituency Council Empowerment Department, which are part of the Minister of Social Care Constituency Urban Rural Development, which is part of the Government. Therefore, any such donations, any such injection of

revenue has to be accounted for, and the legislation says it, by the relevant authorities.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: You did not read the legislation, just as you did not read this one. The Honourable Member needs to read the legislation. It is there. I think we can pass that and not try at every opportunity to wrap the Constituency Councils into this thing that you believe you must oppose for opposing sake. If we as Parliamentarians and as policy makers believe, and that is not the case for Honourable Members on this side, that we cannot trust ordinary Barbadians to execute their own business, well then, you said that, you believe so, in relation to managing their communities, well that is the policy of the Barbados Labour Party.

Sir, I want to make two other points before I close.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you move on, I was just distracted to something else when it was relayed. I am not comfortable with the statement that something is a little bit irresponsible, even for the Honourable Member from Christ Church West. I want you to withdraw and have it struck from the record.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, the other two points I want to make in relation to this matter relate to the necessity, I believe, for a Charities Commission in Barbados. I think we have come to a stage as a country as we see increased social investment both coming from outside but internally generated as well, that we have a responsibility as a Government to ensure that even our charitable sector, or NGO sector - I know when I was Director of the Caribbean Policy Development Centre we met with the previous Government. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East was Minister at the time, Minister of Social Transformation, in which we presented to him proposed drafted legislation for an NGO Act in Barbados to govern how Non Governmental Organisations function, how they receive money, how that money was to be spent and the accounting for that money. We also wanted to put that in place to ensure that when agencies such as State agencies were dispensing resources to those organisations, there was a level of transparency governing how that was done, and it just could not be at the whim and fancy of a public servant or even a minister in his capacity as the person politically leading the particular ministry.

One of the things that we wanted to see in that particular legislation was the creation of a Charities Commission to determine guidelines along which social organisations, social development and service-base organisations could function within the country, how they would relate to Government, how they would relate to the

private sector and private givers, and how in executing their work they could receive that level of assistance.

I believe that the amendments which have been made here begin to take us in that particular direction. Mr. Speaker, I can say to you and the Honourable House, the Ministry which I have the privilege to lead is in this financial year is going to undertake, and has been provided for in the Estimate through a consultancy on the idea of a Charities Commission for Barbados in the hope that we can get to that level.

Finally, in relation to this matter, this is where I thought the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was going, and I want to give this assurance... I am sure the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister will also do so, in relation to this, as you know, because of the new international rules governing terrorism and the movement of resources, to give the assurance that under this particular legislation, every effort would be made to ensure that donations coming from outside into the country through philanthropic exercises do not go in breach of the very strong rules which we have had to put in place since the events of 9/11, because this is a matter that will raise concerns in other jurisdictions. We have been looking at that and studying it, and our officials feel relatively comfortable that we have the level of coverage necessary for that particular eventuality if it arises.

Sir, with those few words, I want to commend this Bill to the Honourable House. I believe it should receive the utmost support from both Government and Opposition.

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

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair to say that in principle the amendments which are before the House enjoy the broad support of the Opposition, and that it is clear there needs to have been a streamlining of the processes by which people can make charitable donations. One of the hallmarks of becoming a developed country is that it is not only in respect of what a Government does, but there is a body of wealth that is created among private individuals, who with a social conscience will remember what is their responsibility to help take care of each other. Therefore, there will be an increase in the number of donations that people would wish to make to institutions and organisations of their choosing.

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House A64, Sequence 11, 11.40 a.m.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: The truth is that as you have an expanding middle class that becomes more secure that is likely to happen. Now we have seen it traditionally in Barbados more in relation to religious organisations. The Methodist Church in particular has benefitted from middle class persons over the course of the last 50 to 60 years, perhaps longer, making covenants to the Church. The Salvation Army has benefitted but the truth is that we recognise that there is a wider group of deserving causes that sometimes ought to be the subject of private donations, and not simply Government expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, it is also clear that there must be supporting Legislation to ensure transparency and accountability on the part of the charities. Government is agreeing to forego taxation, in respect of donations which are to be made for causes on the surface, which appear to be just fair and in consonance without the notion as to what social justice ought to be about or the alleviation of poverty or the improvement of our spiritual welfare, et cetera.

Sir, behind that if Government is to be affective there has also to be a commitment to ensure that those entities that are holding out for donations that are capable of attracting donations at the expense of the taxpayers who continue to have to pay, that there must be a mechanism that allows for that and assures that transparency and accountability.

The last Honourable Member who spoke started to go in that direction, with the call for a Charities Commission. I am aware that there is a draft Bill as well that is in the Attorney General's office, I believe, that would have come out also from the Ministry of social Transformation, if my memory serves me correctly, that spoke to the issue of the transparency and accountability of non governmental organisations. By extension, it ought equally to apply to charities because people who give, must be assured that the money which they give is being utilised for the purposes for which it is given firstly but secondly that the accountability must be anchored by transparency.

Mr. Speaker, very often, there are entities that do not adhere to the best precepts of ensuring that one, there may be appropriate transparent elections, if that is what they constitution requires or if it is a Trust Deed that they are adhering to the structure that is required in terms of the appointment of Trustees, et cetera, and the purposes for the Trust. Sir, I think it must be put on the front burner for us to have what I consider the companion piece of Legislation that ensures that the same transparency and accountability that we are holding Government as the largest public entity to, is equally applicable to those entities who though now not in the governmental sphere are benefitting as a result of the decisions of Government to allow for the tax writeoffs that will take place from persons making donations.

I think that if we recognise that, then we will strengthen what it is we are trying to achieve today, such that persons are not in a position to abuse what is otherwise a noble purpose in terms of allowing society to be able to support itself, outside of the ambit of Government.

Secondly, I think the issue as it relates to Constituency Councils has better to be understood in that the concern of the Barbados Labour Party has more to do with the manner of appointment and has less to do with, as the Honourable Member who just sat would want to suggest that ordinary Barbadians cannot manage themselves. That is nonsense and I would not even jump up and seek to correct him when he was speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you know you cannot say that.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: I will rephrase it, Sir. The notion that we object to ordinary Barbadians managing their own affairs is nonsensical. The reality, Sir, that could never be the case, is not the case and it relates more to the fact, Sir, we have from the beginning said, that we believe that persons serving on the Councils should be elected and not appointed, the opportunity for abuse in the Councils comes from the close circle from which appointments can be made, as opposed to a notion of a transparent framework where people put themselves up for election, and the very people who live in the constituencies. We prefer community councils and we have said that from the beginning but the very people who live in the communities or the constituencies are the ones that then determine who will serve.

Now, I make that point to say that simplicita, on the face of it, nothing can be wrong with wanting to support projects at the community level but where the problem comes, is in the manner of appointment of the Councils, such that a limited group of people may determine, according to their own priorities, be they political or otherwise, those things which they believe to be deserving of our support.

Now, every Member of Parliament in here did not come in here by the whim and fancy. They came in here as a result of a transparent election. Even though you came in here, you have still to respond in a transparent and accountable framework for the things that you do and we accept that. When you have persons who are appointed in circumstances where the aims and intentions of that group of persons may not be well known or may not be accepted to the rest of the community, you are going to run into problems.

There is a very thin line between what is community work and what may be considered as political work. All of us in here know it. So that our view has always been that if

we want to preserve the integrity of the community work without it being infiltrated with a political bias, that the manner of doing so is to ensure the appropriate election of those persons, as opposed to appointment.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me tangentially to the wider issue that must of necessity flow from this debate and that is the issue of the financing of political parties and elections. This is not the debate per se for it, for we have not put arrangements in place, but it is the occasion on which I make the call for an All Party Committee of Parliament to look at the issue, a Joint Select Committee of Both Houses of Parliament, to look at the issue of campaign financing as well as the financing of political parties. We have been speaking about it. I suspect that most institutions, including both political parties, are far closer on the issue than we are apart, but I do believe that the time is upon us where we must put systems in place, if we are to preserve the character of our democracy.

The truth is that we have a situation, in almost every small state, and Barbados is not unique in this respect, but we also see it in large countries, as we follow the debates in the United States of America, the Supreme Court decision that has removed and opened back up the Flood Gates in the United States of America again, in relation to donations, that we have to settle a definitive framework.

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Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I do not believe that you can enjoy a democracy for free. There is a cost to that democracy and it is the State that should carry the cost if we are not to be beholden to any one, two, three or four groups in this country. I feel strongly about it, Sir. We can spend time looking back but we would never then have the energy to go forward or we can determine that we in 2010 are prepared to do the right thing by this democracy and ensure that an appropriate framework is put in place that meets the general consensus of not just the political parties but civil society and the Social Partnership that we are taking control of our destiny in this respect.

Prior to universal adult suffrage, the major concern of the population was the influence of the few in the raw terms of being able to have the right to vote, of being able to be elected to this Parliament based on a property determination and of being able to influence what governments treat as their priorities. In fairness, we have been able to remove the property restrictions, thanks to the Right Excellent Sir Grantley Adams, we have been able to give the right to vote and we have modified the influence but the influence starts to loom greater again because of the increased emphasis that the society has put on money as a

currency of being able to do business and to get things done.

To that extent, those who do not have access to that purchase of influence or who do not fall within the traditional political classes that are defended by both parties... We have a political culture that allows us to defend the poor man and that is a good thing but it is not only the poor man who needs defence in a democracy. There may be other disadvantaged groups as a subsector within the notion of poverty, there may be other subsectors within the notion of people who may properly be described now as working poor even if hitherto middle class, there may be other groups whose voices deserved to be heard but whose voices may be drowned out in the context of having to be able to service a political culture in a way that is perhaps more reflective of a western society that values money over values in many instance.

I use this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to make an impassioned plea in this Honourable House. I am prepared to move a Private Members' Resolution on it but I would wish to invite the Government to let us agree that it is time that we take responsibility for our destiny in relation to protecting the quality and character of our democracy. I apologise perhaps for not raising it before privately but the truth is that the more I listen to the debate in the last half hour, the more it struck me that now is the time for us to take the break.

I am not sure how many Honourable Members would have had the opportunity to listen to Prime Minister Golding last night in his address to the Jamaican people. He has made the commitment that he is shedding some of his workload in order to focus now on the reform issues pertaining to the quality of their democracy of which one of them is the issue of campaign financing and the financing of political parties. Clearly, he has reached that route by a more torturous path. It is one that I hope never to be associated with either party in Barbados because they have a real, real issue there. Many Jamaicans are living in deep concern as to what would be the consequences now that the extradition request would be signed.

Mr. Speaker, that also raises other aspects of our constitutional and parliamentary arrangements. I have for a long time felt that the notion of elections by surprise or, to put it another way, the absence of a fixed date does not help our structure.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I stand in this position where I am for the first time in the last two years so I am not going to listen to the barbs from the other side.

I make the point, we can choose to look back or we can choose to secure where we are by looking forward. I feel strongly that now that the mother of all Parliaments, as it has traditionally been described, the United Kingdom, has clearly said look they too recognise that there ought to be fixed dates elections... In Trinidad and Tobago, the Opposition is putting it forward as a manifesto promise. Throughout other parts of the Commonwealth, people are considering it.

Indeed, I am not sure whether the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and the Honourable Member for St. John recall a parliamentary conference which the three of us attended on behalf of this Parliament in Trinidad and Tobago some years ago. At that conference, a range of things were discussed and I certainly was of the impression that there was a general consensus as to the need for the reform of Parliament in key areas. One of these areas related to the fact that the largest block in this Parliament is the Frontbench, the Cabinet. I think the Prime Minister may have indicated this when he assumed office as well.

Sir, effectively, whether it is a Democratic Labour Party Government or a Barbados Labour Party Government, you govern by Prime Ministerial fiat, since I do not want to use other terms that may be inappropriately construed. The Prime Ministers get their way effectively in Cabinet, the Cabinet then get their way in Parliament and Parliament ceases to be an effective check and balance on the executive. This is an issue that those of us who have come now to sit in a Parliament 39 years after the last major reform must be prepared to confront. It has nothing to do with the Barbados Labour Party or the Democratic Labour Party. It has to do with the fact that the structure of our Parliament in my view has ceased to be an effective check on the executive.

I feel that this would be an appropriate contribution if we could have a Joint Select Committee looking at parliamentary reform, campaign financing and political party financing. We started the notion of it 15 years ago when we agreed that political parties should benefit from a subvention of \$150 000, which remains the same, and when we agreed that Constituency Representatives should have the benefit of Constituency Assistants and accommodation. That has helped Members of Parliament be able to discharge their responsibilities but there is still a gap. Mr. Speaker, I think that the time has now come for us to visit these issues again but I am particularly concerned about the donations.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West was correct in one respect and it is not a case of it...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: More than one. If Honourable Members can at last have some light relief, I am glad for that.

The point is that his speech was constructed on the premise that entities have the ability now to create charitable foundations that can be used for purposes where, as I said, the blurring of the line is very easy between community issues, the alleviation of poverty and political purposes. We will not secure it by reason of the amendments here neither should we stop the amendments here because of that concern. What we must do is to put a system in place that guarantees how we treat to the issue of political financing, parliamentary reform and our political structures such that this set of amendment to the Charities Act does not become the subject of abuse.

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12:00 noon

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Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I say so in as calmly a way as I can because we do support in principle what is here but we do recognise the potential for abuse. Sir, we say the solution is not to abandon these amendments but to put in place the Charities Commission, the supporting legislation framework that increases transparency and accountability for the charities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Sir, we are all aware in Barbados of one or two entities that have been set up more to defraud than to help. The majority have been to help but there have been a few instances where people used this as a front.

Secondly, we should seek to recognise the reality of our condition, that there is a blurring of the lines between community activity, the alleviation of poverty and political activity. Sir, in those circumstances, let us not become the subject of allegations that would otherwise be appropriately ignored and left out, if we had a proper system. More important, I do not feel comfortable leaving the fate of a political party to a few businessmen. Those businessmen may not have a clue as to what is important to the majority of people who are elected in here. I feel that it is invidious that more than 40 years into Independence that we are leaving ourselves opened to that. Sir, this is a Government that spends \$4 billion a year. What we are talking about is probably \$10 to \$15 million once every five years. I feel that so as not to put the burden in any one fiscal year, that there perhaps could be some kind of fund or trust that the Attorney-General can advise on, so that every year you could put in the \$3 million or whatever that is necessary to be able to secure the cost of running the campaign, such that persons are not beholden to that.

Mr. Speaker, by the same token, I support the fact that we cap donations, which I am sure the whole private sector would be happy for, except for the one or two who may want disproportionate influence, so that there is the ability that no one person has a disproportionate influence. Sir, I have deliberately stayed away from the other contentious political issues because this is too important an issue for us to get sidetracked with what happened in the past and with what is happening now, this is about securing the foundation for the future. Sir, I feel that a combination of Honourable Members in both Houses, combined with some open committee hearings, with a six-month remit looking at best practices from elsewhere... I feel strongly about the notion of national parliamentarianism too. Each one of us speaks primarily to the issue of a constituency but who speaks for Barbados, other than if we then have to do that. I feel that there should be persons elected, who are national Members of Parliament, not by proportional representation but by first past the post because proportional representation puts too much power back into the hands of a political party. Sir, all of us know that sometimes political parties can be myopic and inward looking. Let the people decide.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West suggested, we want the people to decide and that there are categories of persons who may well be willing to serve as national Members of Parliament. Sir, each party can put up a slate. If, for argument sake, we said we are going to 40 so as to take away the imbalance of the Cabinet being the largest single bloc, each party could put up 10 Members of Parliament, so that when a person goes to vote, he or she could vote for their constituency Member of Parliament and then a series of the 10 Members of Parliament could be put by both parties or as Independents to serve in this Honourable House. I believe that is the kind of reform that can help us. New Zealand does it but they do it by proportional representation. The truth is, as I said, proportional representation in a small society puts power into the hands of too-few people in the context of the political party.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to go a little wider. I am appreciative of the Chair's ability to let me go wider. Sir, that really flowed out of the notion of how we treat political donations because this Act does not speak to it, and I am not suggesting that it does, but I do believe that we need to have a dedicated framework, if not the blurring of the lines between politics, the community, the alleviation of poverty... Sir, people are not going to look and point fingers at anybody else but at Members of Parliament when it happens, let us take a front before it takes us. Let us secure this country's democracy

for the next generation. I feel we can do it but I feel that it requires a Parliamentary process that is open, one that reaches out to the community that we can do it.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I enter this debate as the newest Member of the Democratic Labour Party Parliamentary Group. I am also entering this debate as a community practitioner with more than 40 years experience. Sir, I want to congratulate the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance for bringing the amendment to the Income Tax Act to this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak from a very practical position because I can speak about my experience. Sir, I know of the days of being President of youth organisations in St. Michael South East and outside of St. Michael South East. I know of the hardship of sitting down at the committee level and planning activities, particularly fund-raising activities, where we had determined that we have set out to raise "x" amount of funds and we proceed from the area of Parkinson Community Centre, covering the entire community and the various businesses around that community. Sir, I know of the hardship of not having enough money to travel by van or bus and having to walk down the Pine East/West Boulevard into Bridgetown to collect sponsorships from donation sheets. Sir, I know of the hardship where sometimes when you return to the community centres, when you count out those funds, sometimes they do not exceed no more than \$10 or \$15. I know of experiences of having a fund-raising event or a fair and travelling along the various businesses in the constituencies and receiving a pair of socks. I know of those harrowing experiences and I am telling the story from a craft that I have practised over 40 years. I know of the headaches and heartaches of embarking on fund-raising ventures to serve a community. Sir, this amendment before this Honourable Chamber is very attractive to community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Sir, there is always a distinction between community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), although community-based organisations could become part of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) because community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have slightly different connotation. Sir, this amendment will certainly benefit those community-based organisations and the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that we are speaking about.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Leader of Government Business alluded to the fact that there is a critical need for us to develop and ensure that the NGO/CBO policy is harmonised and synergised between Government and those

sectors and that it comes before this Honourable Chamber. It is critically needed.

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MR. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, this amendment before this Honourable Chamber gives the donors and the recipients, which are the community-based organisations and NGOs a better way of raising funds and getting more from the donors.

Mr. Speaker, it is against that background that I also want to congratulate the Maria Holder Foundation, which is a charitable organisation in Barbados, that is doing outstanding working and making numerous contributions to the community and the NGO sector in Barbados. Sir, I am saying that the Maria Holder Foundation is in the process of outfitting a modern arts and crafts facility at the Parkinson Secondary School and that I have to speak to this because this is in the constituency of St. Michael South East.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the Maria Holder Foundation, as we have known, funded a lot of activities in Barbados and also, Sir, there is a promise, in St. Michael South East, that they would upgrade sporting facilities, including the community centre in St. Michael South East. Sir, every time I think about this amendment that is before this Honourable Chamber I think it would be madness or a very crazy person to oppose this amendment that is before this Honourable Chamber here this morning.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, it is critical that this kind of support be given to the community-based groups and the NGOs sector, this kind of philanthropy, in a time when the Caribbean and the developing world is experiencing a financial crisis. Therefore, also in congratulation the Maria Holder Foundation, I also want to congratulate the US Embassy. They are in St. Michael South East and what they are doing, because they are part of the constituency, they have now become a donor to the constituency. I am saying that kind of corporate interest, that kind of public sector interest and business sector interest in communities across Barbados is very necessary at this point in time. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the US Embassy for joining us in our beautification project across St. Michael South East two years ago. We are now embarking with them to develop other programmes within the community that they, too, will fund.

Mr. Speaker, Courtesy Garage. Sir, whenever there is activity in St. Michael South East Courtesy Garage comes and lend the necessary support. I am sure this amendment to the Income Tax Act would allow them to even give more donations to the community. Sir,

McEneaney just donated a vehicle to the Barbados Youth Action Programme and I am sure that with the amendment to the Income Tax Act that they will be able to do more. We have to look at the amendment in terms of the good and the intention of this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, the Pine Hill Dairy. I am speaking specifically to my constituency because I have to speak to it and recognise the people and the companies that have contributed to the sustainability of this community of St. Michael South East. Sir, the Pine Hill Dairy has sponsored all of our football teams in the past and they are still continuing to play their role in the constituency.

Sir, Stokes & Bynoe are the first sponsors of the Pinelands Football Club, which is performing moderately now in the Premier League. Sir, certainly, with the assistance of these organisations, these business entities that I am talking about, the growth and development of St. Michael South East, particularly the Pine and Wildey, could not be what it is today. Sir, I am sure that this amendment would allow them to do a lot more and the communities will benefit.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, additionally, there is Automotive Art. Sir, Automotive Art made their contributions also to the society. I am spelling it out in this Honourable Chamber and I want it recorded in this Honourable Chamber because we cannot these efforts for granted. Sir, I want it registered that these are the major contributors to our particular constituencies. (12:15)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, CBC, a Government entity has embraced the community of Pine and Wildey and the entire constituency and they are doing a wonderful job. This weekend CBC is also contributing to the Terry Mayers Memorial Cricket Match which will be played in Meadow Road, Wildey, but without their assistance, it might not have been possible. Sir, all of us, as politicians, are virtually community practitioners and all of us know of the importance of going to the business sector to get sponsorship for various activities in the community.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I want to address this issue of the Constituency Councils. Sir, every time I say it in this Honourable Chamber, it seems that members in this Honourable House believe there is some sinister connotation about the Constituency Councils. I listened to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in relation to the process of elections. I am going to talk in this Honourable Chamber and it does not matter who gets vexed. It does not really worry me. I am going to talk about my experiences because running a constituency organisation, the first item you look for is results. Then, when you survey your entire community, you look at the best people who could run that community or that organisation.

Mr. Speaker, when you left the process to the system of elections in community-based organisation, it does not really work. The system in community-based organisations of one year, and then the next year you have elections again, does not work. It does not lend to sustainability of the community. It is outdated and it is, certainly, is not applicable to the year 2010. I have proven over a period of time that the process - not election, of selection - of selecting the best persons that you could find within your community to run your organisation, to run your council, is the best system.

Mr. Speaker, we have a fixation on this whole issue of democracy that the only thing that is transparent in a democratic process is that of elections and, Sir, that is foolishness. There are other social systems that you put in place that you would get the same results. If the people in a community determine that these persons are the best persons to serve their purpose and we are going to select them, rather than going through a process of election to have them serve their purpose, what is wrong with that? Certainly, we have to be far more developmental in our ideas. We cannot stick to draconian measures all the time. Sir, because a constitution states that it is a year or that you must have an election every year within a community-based organisation or a constituency, is that the best formula for that community, no. In fact, the year that is written in most constitutions of community-based organisations where you must have elections the next year is certainly very detrimental to the sustainability of the organisation. Sir, anyone in this Honourable Chamber, who has been a member of a community-based organisation, who has been a member of an NGO would tell you that there cannot really fulfill their mandate within one year. They would also tell you that the persons that are elected by the Committee, by the persons that are members of that organisation, once you use the process of election, are, in most cases, the wrong people.

Mr. Speaker, we have tried the process of election, we are not dictatorial. We do not come say, look, these are the persons and you have to abide with them. We look through our community, we look for the best people and select them, once they agree, and ask them to serve the community to the best of their ability.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about election versus selection. The Constituency Councils within the first year, those persons had to be selected.

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Mr. H.. LASHLEY: Constituency Council within the first year, those persons had to be selected. You cannot come in the first year and talk about the selection of

officials for a constituency within the first year. That process will evolve eventually.

Sir, what you need at the front of the constituencies - I want to congratulate the Honourable Leader of the House for the fact that he had the vision to know in the first instance of the Constituency Council, that the process of selection is the best principle and best guideline to follow. Eventually what will happen, the community would say they want to come forward in the process of election. They will eventually come in.

I do not see or understand why they are harping on this whole process of elections, as though the only way something can be done, or the only way it can be transparent is if at a community level you elect. Community practitioners and those persons residing in the community would tell you that most of the time the persons who are elected by a small group of people within that organisation are, most of the time, not the best people.

I am speaking about operating in a community for over forty years. I am saying that the concept of the Constituency Councils, facing us now, is the best recipe that eventually, over a period of time, would lead to a process of election, but we have to start somewhere.

This whole issue about funding and accessing funding - Do you know why some people will not agree with me, because some people's minds are slaves and attest to be slaves of a written document all the time. Some people cannot think outside of the proverbial box.

Sir, let us look at the Constituency Councils. Most of us in this Honourable Chamber would have sat on a sub committee or even act as President, Vice President or hold a very senior position in a community-based organisation or NGO. Let us look at the Council. The Councils are given a grant of \$100 000 every year. In my view that is not enough money for the Councils to function, but the beautiful thing about it, using the process of selection and the resource personnel on those Councils, those persons can establish their own sub committees and fund-raising committees to raise their own funding. What is wrong with the St. Michael South East Constituency Council going to, for example the Maria Holder Foundation and accessing funding? What is wrong?

Sir, why is it that every time something like this where you empower poor people and put them at the front and talk about money, the whole issue of ... this is something sinister. They are going to use - because the Democratic Labour Party started the Council, this is money that is going to be used to fund the Democratic Labour Party, nonsense.

Sir, if I was not in this Honourable Chamber, I would have to use the street term and street slang, because we know it is foolishness. We have to accept the fact that the Councils were conceived by this Party in the interest of the ordinary people, giving ordinary people a stake in the governing system of Barbados. It is not a system of local Government. It is a system of local governance which empowers the poor people of Barbados in a shared responsibility with the Government of Barbados.

Sir, never in the history of Barbados has this system of governance been introduced in this country and practiced as it is, and practiced in a democratic society. So what is wrong with a community having three, four or five million dollars? What is wrong with it? Accountability, yes. You have systems of accountability existing at the Ministry of Social Care. The money is not given in a lump sum to the community-based organisations. It is given in tranches. You have to be accountable. The Ministry knows quite well that the Opposition will always talk about accountability and transparency, as the buzz words. We have to transfer that now into action.

Sir, I am not talking from a hypothetical aspect. I am talking from a very practical aspect. This amendment now gives the community-based organisations more liquidity. We could access more funding. We can plan broader projects. Yes, the funding from Government towards community-based and NGOs certainly going to assist.

All of the Constituency Councils that were established so far, have gone ahead and did their work. I have not seen a single member of the Opposition linking with them. Even more, I have not heard one case of any Government member intervening directly into the affairs of the Constituency Councils. The Constituency Councils ask for advice. There are of the nature of what is inscribed in the Constituency Council. There are also ex-officio members. They have the right to advise. They have the right also to support, but they are not involved in the day to day operation of the Constituency Councils.

Sir, history is going to judge the Opposition harshly and it is going to mark this Government greatly. Do you know why? When the history of Barbados is written some twenty years from now, by that time I will be about 80-years-old and strong enough...

Asides.

Mr. H. LASHLEY: When it is written, in terms of community development, the Honourable Leader of this Honourable Chamber will be written and etched in the pages of history, because he brought the first piece of revolutionary social legislation to this Honourable Chamber to empower poor people in a system of new governance.

Sir, I am very familiar with the operation of local governance as practiced in Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad. One thing for sure, what distinguishes the Barbados model from the rest of the region is, the rest of the region's local Government systems are closely attached to the political Parties. While in Barbados the establishment of the Constituency Council have their own autonomy, with the Representative serving as an Ex Officio Member.

Sir, I hope this will be the last time that in this Honourable Chamber this nonsense, this suspicion about the Constituency Councils, the intent, the motives and the reason why they have been established is seen as something sinister. I cannot see it.

Certainly, in a court of law, and I learned a little law in this Honourable Chamber. I know that the intent is sometimes decided on what is your intention.

Sir, every time we come into this Honourable Chamber - I do not know what is so touching or what is so annoying to my friends on the Opposition side about the Constituency Councils. This is one of the systems of governance, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would tell you, that has been practiced and introduced into Barbados. He too as a community practitioner certainly will support this concept of stabilised community involvement in the system of governance.

Sir, you should see the people when they are going to get initiated, how proud they feel. It is a new chapter in their lives. They feel 'big up' to use the 'block' slang. How could we as a Parliament oppose such? How could we dwarf the imagination, the creativity of those persons that sit on the Constituency Councils?

Mr. Speaker, I will forever defend the issue of the Constituency Councils. I began by saying that I know what it is to walk and beg for business, and got a pair of socks to attend a Fair. I know that. I will not call the names. I know what it is like after walking a day from 8.30 a.m. and returning to The Pine at 3.00 p.m. with \$15.75. I know that.

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Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: I know what it is that after a day walking from 8.30 a.m. and coming back to the Pine at 3.00 p.m. and coming back with \$15.75 and I know what it is that people say wait, you come from the Pine, what organisation you are in, man, we are not giving you anything. You go along. Leave my place. I know that but this amendment will certainly give the group far more autonomy. The benefits are on both sides. The equation is

accrued that is what it is. We have to get away, if it means getting down, according to the people, to brass tax, and getting down to a good old-fashioned Bajan explanation of what it is, then do it because this is making it real.

We have to understand that we have to stop this nonsense and this foolishness when we come in here and see good projects that we cry them down, something sinister. What nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, I said that I was only going to be a little brief but I am sure that if the ball was on the other foot, certainly the Honourable Members on the opposite side would certainly be supporting the Constituency Councils. Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have five minutes in which to conclude.

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: Sir, in closing, there is a saying that there is no greater force than a principal and people whose time has come. The time has come, Sir, that we as a people in this country get on board what I call, Sir, this ship the SS Barbados. The time has come, Sir, when we have to support the good, social policies of the Democratic Labour Party to which I have always supported and I have said I would not deviate from it, Sir, the social policy of this Party. Certainly, Sir, the time has come when all Barbadians are called to put all hands on deck.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I found this to be an interesting debate but I think there is a need for a little clarity. It is not the first time, Sir, that we have had debates like this in here. There have not been any recent attempts to address the law in relation to charities. It is in need of reform, and there are no two ways about it. It is possible in Barbados to create charities by four different methods. We have charities created by Statute, like church charities, the Salvation Army the Scouts, the Lions Club, et cetera. They are established by statute and they enjoy benefits under the Charities Act. You can have a charity established under the Charities Act but Barbados also admits and should admit of a situation where you have informal incorporated associations in communities. Football clubs, netball organisations, and then under our Corporate Legislation, you can have a non profit entity.

Now, that clearly tells you that we need to look at our Charities Law and this Legislation was not an attempt to do that. I believe that is a bigger project, which together with the NGO movement Government can undertake. When I was in private practice, I did work for CPDC and the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus on the Law of Charities in the Caribbean and Barbados does have the most progressive law, but it is also a regime that is not properly or effectively monitored and that is because it is cumbersome.

The question of covenants is also cumbersome. I say that for the benefit of the Honourable Member for St. George. If he wants to build a pavilion in the Glebe, he is not going to get an ordinary Barbadian to give him a covenant for three years. We are making it possible for that person to make the contribution in any given year, receive a receipt and once it is approved, to get a tax deduction.

Now, that would make it easier. That does not help a foreign investor, because the previous Government had removed all taxation on foreign investors already. For example, the Special Development Areas Legislation, I could go through the long list of Legislation. The vast majority of high net worth individuals and wealthy people who come to Barbados, do not pay taxes in Barbados, and it is a pity that the Honourable Member for St. George is unaware of that fact but it is a startling deficiency, when the Honourable Member for Christ Church West also falls into that trap.

We are the people who pay taxes in Barbados, the ordinary Barbadian so the question is the only way that, unless people do it out of the goodness of their hearts, and they are a lot of people who do that, that you can get philanthropic organisations, foundations, large corporations, these are the people who give.

The Honourable Member for St. George North says he wants to know who gives in Barbados. Only the white foreigners give, apparently. First Caribbean has a foundation which does not give. Scotia Bank started a foundation last week to give to charitable purposes. The Barbados National Bank has their entity. Goddards, Barbados Shipping and Trading, all of them have and make charitable contributions in Barbados. The Red Cross is building a building a Warrens. It is not funded by foreign contributions. It is funded by local entities and individuals and we are saying that we should acknowledge it, if the person wants it.

Now, I think it is coming from the other side - and I do not want to sound partisan today - but it is an unfortunate argument, Sir, and I think Honourable Members on the other side, starting with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West fell into a trap, not set by us, but set many years ago when the Rural Development Commission, the Rural Development Commission and the Social Investment Fund started to give money to organisations like the Isreal Lovell Foundation, Pinelands Creative Workshop, and when politicians started setting up foundations.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East has a foundation, the Lime Grove something. The Honourable Member for St. Peter had a foundation, the St. Peter Development Fund. I do not know if these are charities. I have an organisation in St. John, the Family

First. It is not a charity. It is an unincorporated association. Nobody benefits when they give Families First any contribution from any Income Tax deduction. It is not a charity. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has an entity called, South People.

It is perfectly legitimate for an active community person, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East said, to establish a charitable organisation to carry out charitable work, or to establish an unincorporated association to carry out work in his constituency. The law does not forbid it. Sir, the idea that this Act could so subvert people who volunteer to sit on entities like the Heart Foundation, BARP, The Lions Club, that they would collect money for political parties, tells me that something is wrong in Barbados.

As I said, the trap was set because they are only two persons in this Chamber who would remember that I had a Member of Parliament when I was in Opposition who threatened to resign and actually called the Nation Newspaper and had it out in the Sunday Sun that he resigned because the Democratic Labour Party did not oppose funds being allocated to the Isreal Lovell Foundation.

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Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I know the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would remember that. I said how could we oppose it unless you could establish for me that that money is being used exclusively for political purposes.

I make the assumption that the Israel Lovell Foundation has made a contribution in St. Michael East. I believe that the Honourable Member St. Michael East would be charitable enough to say so because any activity that lift the minds and helps young people even if it is motivated by a politician is something positive. Reynolds Weekes' career was based on the chiming bells. Wynter Crawford... Errol Barrow helped established the Cruising Club in this country. You can go through prominent cricket clubs in Barbados and prominent social organisations in which people involved in politics had connections. We must never so debase our thoughts that the contributions that can be made... I know that the Israel Lovell is still given... We advise the Pinelands Creative Workshop on projects. There is the young man Corey Layne with his project and there are so many others who have come forward whom we have sought to assist but Government cannot do it all. This therefore is an adjunct to the activity that Government wishes to undertake.

We hear the talk about financing political parties. Perhaps, when the history of Barbados is written, it would reflect that when political parties subventions were started, I wrote to the then Honourable Member for St. Peter and said that the Democratic Labour Party will not accept the subvention until rules are put in place for financing political parties. We made no progress.

I then set up an entity with Mrs. Kathleen Drayton - sorry to call names, Mr. Speaker, but I am not calling them in any derogatory sense - His Honour Justice Belgrave and Mr. Calvin Springer, former Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados, to look at the issue of financing political parties. Mr. George Brancker, the then Clerk of Parliament, provided me with a lot of information.

Mr. Speaker, the vicissitudes of being in Opposition were such that eventually the Democratic Labour Party Executive agreed that they would accept the subvention. We accepted it and we were pilloried. The then Honourable Member for St. Peter said that we would be the first to line up to receive the money after criticising it and all of that. The Honourable Member for St. George North remembers it, I know his memory is good. I was lambasted in this Chamber but I accepted that in my stride because I realise that at that time there was no appetite for that initiative. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that there is an appetite for it now. It just shows the breath of fresh air that seems to blow on that side of the Chamber after changes.

Barbados has undertaken a process of seeking to attract high net worth individuals to our country, that is not new. It is not a "Reaganite" policy. It is a policy that tax domiciles have always sought to pursue, it is a quality of life issue as much as it is one of tax benefits but the point is it is a strategy that was being pursued and we accepted it as a legitimate strategy. It does not mean that the country is going into economic citizenship, it means that we offer benefits but we do not offer any status with it other than the status identified by the Immigration Department, which I think is a special permit because you have made an investment in Barbados. People buy properties, they make investments and the country benefits in some way.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation does not in any way affect the right of schools, churches or foundations from making contributions. The Honourable Member for St. George North asked who are the contributors. I thought that was self-evident. Barbadians who had to use the covenant rule, which was cumbersome... We eliminated it. Mr. Speaker, what about all of those people in the diaspora that send home medical supplies, that make the new St. Patrick's organisation, that are affiliated to the Constituency Councils or areas in Barbados where they want to make a contribution? They would not get any tax benefit but if they raise that money and Barbadians make a contribution to the effort, then they would get a tax benefit.

The idea that people in Barbados do not make any contribution to charitable organisations is not correct. The Honourable Member for St. George North misled the House. Take up a copy of the latest journal published by the UWI Graduates Association. I think I am a silver contributor. There are certainly more than 500 contributors all of whom had to do it by covenant. These are ordinary Barbadians working in banks who benefitted from university education, who are making covenanted contributions.

PAREDOS benefitted from covenants from individuals for years. The Barbados Museum and Historical Society send around covenant forms every year. This idea that ordinary citizens do not covenant or do not make charitable contributions is not correct, and therefore the idea that this legislation is only being put in place to attract benefits from wealthy people is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, let me however make it abundantly clear that if we do attract to this country wealthy people who enjoy our standard of living and they do not pay taxes, then we have a right to say to them that if you want to see our hospital improve, we would like you to make a contribution towards helping improving it. They do not get any tax benefit from that so this is legislation does not help them.

There would be other legislation, the establishment of our corporate social responsibility foundation and so on, that would come in time. The hospital is setting up a foundation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade through the CEX is setting up one. There are different ways in which they can make a contribution and benefit but it is not intended that this legislation is primarily to assist them in that way, and therefore I thought I should clarify those issues.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that both pieces of legislation are useful and helpful and would contribute to the development of our country, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and others who spoke in this debate have said.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore beg to move that the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2010 be read a second time.

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

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. J. D. Paul in the Chair.

House A64 Sequence 17

12.50 p.m.

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COMMITTEE

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee. Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 9, inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, 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 Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Income Tax (Amendment) Act, 2010.

ORDER NO. 3 – SECOND READING OF THE CHARITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2010.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to adopt the same words I did in moving the amendment to the Income Tax Bill, in respect to the Second Reading of the Charities (Amendment) Bill, 2010.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well.

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

COMMITTEE

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee. Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 2, inclusive, were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, 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 Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by the Hon. F. J. STUART, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Charities (Amendment) Act, 2010.

SUSPENSION

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 2.15 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and MR. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

1.00 p.m.

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RESUMPTION

MR. SPEAKER: This Honourable House is resumed. The Honourable Member St. Philip North.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before this House seeks permission to compulsorily acquire two parcels of land for residential purposes at Brighton, St. George, the property of Brighton Plantation Limited.

Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet at its meeting on March 6, 2008, agreed to the acquisition of these parcels of land for provision for housing development. Sir, I must also inform you too that the two areas of land also require, as recommended, and as instructed by the Chief Town Planner, buffer zones. When we look at the amount of lots we can get from these parcels of land, we believe we can get some 33 lots and part of a ribbon development, as outlined by the Honourable Prime Minister earlier up, when we took over Government, that the Ministry of Housing and Lands be mandated to look at areas where we have the sites and services. (Sequence 3) Sir, it is an area like this in Brighton that we have looked at and we have

decided that we would take these two parcels of land, of course, with fair compensation going to the land owner.

Mr. Speaker, this acquisition is primarily geared towards that particular person, who cannot afford to purchase land on the private market, namely, the gas station worker or the maid, who work in Government and the janitor who will not have the access to financing to purchase land on the private market, and these lots, we are looking at putting them in the \$5 lot programme. Sir, given the fact that sector of worker is excluded, it is now the responsibility of the Government to assist that group in becoming property owners.

Mr. Speaker, given the fact that in rural districts, according to, and as expressed by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, give them a piece of land and they would self-help, they would get the community involved in assisting and building their house on that same spot. Indeed, apart from this too, Mr. Speaker, we would also be requesting willing landowners to come forward and join with Government in terms of giving us access to land and, as I have said before, the condition will have to be fair compensation.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North knows full well that there is a spot of land in St. George North, Dr. Hamblin's land that really, to my mind, would fit in good for housing development, given the fact that on both sides, we have houses. Sir, this particularly piece of land, during the time that the Honourable Member for St. George North was Minister of Housing, was denied permission for housing but it is still there lying idle. It is not agricultural land, it is marginal land but we believe that it could be utilised for housing and, indeed, Mr. Speaker, throughout areas in St. Philip and St. Lucy. Sir, we have been looking at Cluffs in St. Lucy and those areas that we believe we could utilise for housing development.

Mr. Speaker, as part of this process, areas like Clifton, Guinea, Woodbourne and Branchbury, have all been vested in the National Housing Corporation and we need National Conservation Commission, in relation to the buffer zones to provide the trees for the buffer zone. Sir, areas like

Vineyard, Todds, Cherry Grove, Pool, Blackmans and Henley are the areas we are looking at in terms of housing development.

Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to detain the House but I know the Honourable Member for St. George North will agree to this acquisition, which is in the area of St. George, and also in the Honourable Member for St. George South because it is in her constituency. I am asking, respectfully, Mr. Speaker, that this Resolution do now pass.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged. The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I will not be speaking long on this Resolution because, as the Honourable Member pointed out, I am well aware of the Brighton area. It is within a residential community and is very close to the development in Ellerton Gardens, and east of Ellerton Gardens is Brighton.

Mr. Speaker, the two parcels of land identified is situated in a residential community. It is situated in a community of lower middle class people where the income level is roughly between \$2 000 to \$3 000 per month.

H/A64B/14:25 Sequence 3 & 4

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Mr. G.A. CLARKE: I believe that this particular acquisition will go well in helping to provide the Ministry of Housing and Lands, especially the National Housing Corporation, with additional land for the housing of our people.

Sir, I just want to say that housing still remains, to a large extent, in demand.

The Minister made the point that Cabinet approved on March 6, 2008. This is more than a year ago. It shows us the length of time development takes to get land into the people's hands is still too long.

I remember when the Government first came to office in 2008, I said to the Minister, then, that most of these developments usually take two to three years, from my experience. We need to devise a system where the National Housing Corporation, along with the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Chief Surveyor and the Town and Country Planning Department to work hand in hand to get these lands into the hands of would-be house owners.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for us to note, and I have tried over and over while in Government and now on the Opposition benches, that we still need to look at the large number of cases where the courts have given persons notice to quit. There are still a lot of them.

I know that the Minister has tried. I have spoken to him on numerous occasions about cases, but I am not sure that the National Housing Corporation is moving with any sense of alacrity in moving the pace forward.

Asides.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Sir, this is something that I know. Many times the Minister must intervene. I have no

reason to doubt that the present Minister is intervening, but an active Minister of Housing must intervene on numerous occasions for the people of Barbados.

Sir, I wonder sometimes if the National Housing Corporation usually emphasised or sympathised with persons who had to lose their homes. Sir, I remember, one night, having to intercept a truck that was carrying a lady's house from Christ Church down to the dump, and ask them to put it on a lot in Walkers, St. George. The lady is still there up to now.

Sir, too many cases are coming to the attention of Members of Parliament where the court - and rightly so - because if you are living on a single lot and the landlord asks you to move, from the only lot he has - tells you to move within six months or one year and you do not move, then the bailiff removes the house and put it in the dump.

Sir, I am wondering if the National Housing Corporation is ...they have lots. You have 33 lots that should be made available, not primarily for the people of St. George South. I understand the Minister will allocate them to the community first, which is normal. St. George South will get...we usually allocate 80 per cent. So 80 per cent will give the Honourable Member for St. George South approximately 20 lots, and you still have lots available here. You need to satisfy the community first. That is what we do.

Sir, you have cases in the St. Michael area, like the St. Michael West or Christ Church South where lots are not available, but there is a demand for lots, we need to satisfy those areas.

Sir, let me explain what is a Ribbon Development. A Ribbon Development is a portion of land which has in place the services of light, water, telephone services. So this parcel of land can come to the public within a matter of days, if the Chief Town Planner so desires.

I must say that many of the officers working in these departments must be more responsive to what is happening out there. Sir, I am faced with three or four cases in my constituency where people have to move within a matter of weeks. I have been appealing to the Ministry of Housing, since last year, to help. I know that the Minister has approved it. The Manager of the National Housing Corporation told me that the Minister has approved it, and it has been approved by the Board, but so far the person has not received anything in their hands.

Sir, it means now that the person has to go to the financial institution. In order to relocate your home you need finance. That is why I have been saying, through this Parliament that despite your land, you still need access to finance and other resources. The Chief Town Planner must

be sensitive enough to ensure that persons who have applications for chattel houses, that those applications are processed within a matter of days, because it does not take long.

Sir, we come to Parliament and approve these lots. I believe that with the amount of acquisitions that have taken place in the last couple of months, we should have land capacity to house most Barbadians. We definitely need to ensure that the persons who are in demand of these lots get them. I am appealing again not only to the Minister, but to those persons in the National Housing Corporation, the Ministry of Housing, the Prime Minister's Office, through the Town and Country Planning Department, to ensure that the system gets going.

We understand, as Members of Parliament, the dilemma that people face from time to time. We understand it and I want to ensure that those persons who must carry out the orders, get onboard to help the large percentage of Barbadians.

Sir, I was pleased when I heard the Minister say that these lots would be provided for the gardeners, maids and artisans, those persons who are right down the line who cannot really help themselves.

Sir, another problem which I have, even though we are advanced in technology, it is so difficult to get through to Government offices, sometimes. I wonder why they have phones.

Sir, yesterday I was trying to get through to the Attorney General's Office, and it took me a whole day, one whole day, in order to get somebody to answer the telephone. It is a serious matter.

I believe that sometimes we mean well and it seems to me the more things change, the more they remain the same. We need to put systems in place, but we need to ensure that those persons who are supervisors and have the span of control...I wonder sometimes if these supervisors are really supervising. Many of the workers take long lunch hours, they take long breaks and they do not return to the public.

I remember someone said to me, only two weeks ago, that they went into a Government office and remained there for the entire day, officers past them up and down and did not say a single word to them. Sir, these things are hard. As Members of Parliament, within your Department you do not see things, right under your nose. We cannot blame the Government, Opposition or the Parliamentarians for these things. Sometimes you cannot even blame the Manager or Supervisor.

We need persons to understand that here is a Government providing house lots, and the persons down the line must ensure that the maids, gardeners, carpenters, the artisans and the civil servants get them.

I am calling, once again, for these departments to fast-track the programme that is providing the lots for the people, especially those persons who do not have a lot, or who have to move because the court said that they must move. We are not blaming the court for anything. Many times the magistrates would give additional time, sometimes the magistrates would say to go and talk to the landlord...

HA64B 14.35 p.m. Sequences 5 & 6

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House A64B, Sequence 7 & 8, 2.35 p.m.

Mr. G. CLARKE: We are not blaming the court for anything because sometimes the magistrates would give additional time. Sometimes the magistrate would say to go and talk to the landlord and get additional years.

I know of a particular case where the magistrate has told the landlord to give the man some more time and the guy was there for six years. I cannot really blame the court system but I think that lots are available within the National Housing Corporation and we would like to see them provide them for a number of persons within our community who are really in need of these lots.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Minister touched on Hamblin's Land which was acquired in December 2002 that has not got off the ground and we need the Ministry of Housing and Lands, along with the Town Planning Department to do something about this. When you look at what is happening all around this development, one wonders why it is not finally approved by the Town Planning Department. I am calling on the Government. I have spoken to the Prime Minister about it and I have spoken to the Minister and I know he is trying his best but again, we sometimes depend too heavily on the technocrats to make these approvals.

I believe that the Government must, in all sincerity, approve this development because it was acquired by this Parliament since December 2002. Mr. Speaker, I tried within my own means but for some reason it slipped by and time has now elapsed and we are still at that initial period.

I want to support this Resolution but I am calling on the technocrats in the Ministry especially, to do something in fast tracking the lots that are made available for the people who are really in need of them.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. R.C. EASTMOND: Briefly, Sir, as the last Honourable Member who spoke suggested, this side is in favour of this Resolution and will support it. In recent times, Sir, much national interest has been manifested in respect of housing but when one checks, 35 or 40 years ago, there would have been even then, an expectation by certain segments of the community that where the poor could not on their own afford housing, then the state would intervene.

Indeed, Sir, way past 40 years ago, in the late 1950s the Housing Authority was established, and as one Honourable Member on the other side would doubtless suggest the major thrust behind housing in those days was to provide housing facilities and housing solutions for the poor. The particular statute that enabled the emergence first of the Housing Authority and now what is called the National Housing Corporation did expressly provide that Government should be providing solutions to those in the most dire financial straits.

Over the years, Mr. Speaker, we would have witnessed a number of developments. We would have witnessed, Sir, the continuation of the chattel house culture, private sector driven, or privately operated, and that chattel house culture, Sir, often resulted from the fact that those own the chattel houses had to end up renting the land. There are those Honourable Members both on the other side and this side who would have witnessed a culture which is now dying when on Sundays you will see a truck with parts of a chattel house being transported and many a civic minded citizen on the truck doing voluntary work to set up the house in its new location. That culture is dying out and part of the reason why that particular culture is dying out is that even when people are served notices to quit or have to leave the spots on which they are residing at the time, there is a dire need for house spots.

When the Honourable Member for St. George North was Minister, he did carry out an experimental housing project at Bakers in the parish of St. Peter, and what was interesting about that is that the total cost of the house itself was not more than \$70 000 but the space provided was enough to permit the owner to occupy a house and then there was enough space behind the house for expansion. We have had the concept, Sir, of starter houses in Barbados. In recent times, Sir, in light of Government's attempts over the years to do something to provide housing solutions, we have been hearing a number of questions asked by Members of the wider community.

For example, Sir, there are those persons who have read the National Housing Corporation Act and who are in touch with the community and are asking the question, who really qualifies as a low income earner? That question is being asked. The reason why that question is being asked is that Barbadians are aware of the fact that to build a house is extremely costly. People then go on to ask but then who qualifies as the middle income person. Again, Sir, they do so in a situation where people are worried that the costs of construction are astronomically high. On this side, Sir, we realising that a lot of Barbadians did not want to go to the National Housing Corporation empowered the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company to offer 100 per cent mortgages. Of course, to qualify for a 100 per cent mortgage, there are certain conditionalities that would apply but in it all, Mr. Speaker, a middle income person working for between \$5 000 and \$8 000 a month, is still going to find him or herself hard pressed, having to confront a situation where the house that he or she will construct, might end up costing \$500 000 or more. It is in these circumstances that Government has to between the market and the person whose ambition it is to own a house.

In these cultures, similar to what we inhabit, this whole notion of market forces is inimical to the interest of any socialists thinking in this country. We cannot leave people to market forces. Where we see that market forces threaten to destabilise the ambitions of worthy people seeking to advance in life, then Government cannot be a practitioner of laissez faire, Government has to be very active in the whole process.

I am wondering, Sir, in circumstances where this country has diplomatic relations with many other countries if we could not exploit the diplomatic relations in a way where we could use those relations and the principles that govern them to invite friendly people who have schemes by which they can cheapen our cost to get involved.

I am mindful of the fact, Sir, that many years ago, there was the famous Venezuelan project at the Cane Garden, St. Thomas and at Husbands, St. James but the conditionalities imposed were not necessarily in favour of Barbadians or even of the Government.

Sir, in recent times, we have strengthened our relationship with China and the Chinese have a number of registered companies in Barbados and are willing and anxious to work. In a situation where China is already here and where Government has now dispatched an emissary to be resident in China, I am wondering if diplomatic channels cannot be used to persuade the Chinese to go easy on us to render what we would call soft financial assistance or even to render labour in a way that would help our cost coming up.

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Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I am putting it out and wondering because to tell the truth the Chinese have done very well in terms of earnings out of Barbados.

Sir, I have no doubt that the type of individual who represents Barbados' interest in China would be mindful of the fact that in this era, notwithstanding China's huge distance away from Barbados, they may be able to help us to reduce cost. The problem comes sometimes with what builders called specifications. There are countries whose electrical systems, plumbing systems and related things are different from ours and in those cases we do get problems. One problem with the Venezuelan projects at Husbands and Cane Garden had to do with the technical aspect of the types of fittings and such like that were necessary to complete the houses.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Minister suggests, and I am thinking that he is very right on this, that beyond the St. George Project, which is the immediate subject of this debate, there is a place called Cluff, St. Lucy. Mr. Speaker, it is a wide expanse and it is dry, dry, dry. It is possibly the driest part of Barbados but the land space is expansive. Sir, even though 40 years ago, the owners of Cluff were like part of the plantocracy, the fact of the matter is that nature has so rendered that land marginal that... The remnants of the plantocracy at Cluff, I believe, migrated to New Zealand and Australia and the land is therefore ripe and ready for acquisition for public purposes, it is a good area.

As I said, Sir, in cases where the poor needs help and where middle income people needs help, we need to identify properties on which we can develop housing or properties which we can make into house spots. A survey has to be done by the Ministry of Housing and Lands over two questions: The extent to which Barbadians want house spots and thereafter they would look after themselves to do their building and then the extent to which people need terrace units.

The typical country person from St. Philip, St. John or even my area would rather have a spot and build for themselves than have a Government unit. In the relationship between the town dweller and the country person, the country person has always taken great pride in building for themselves while the city person has had no objection to living in terrace units. Some of them do very well in the terrace units. Some of them with permission from the National Housing Corporation are able to render cottage businesses. At the end of the day, the question is: Will the National Housing Corporation check its records and verify the list of those most urgently in need?

Mr. Speaker, there was a culture of fatalism in the National Housing Corporation, not yesterday, not two years ago nor not five years ago. There was a culture of fatalism in the National Housing Corporation going back years where particular officers would tell the public: "Man, bring a letter from your Member of Parliament and you would get a house" just like that and dismiss them. There was also a culture of fatalism where particular officers at the National Housing Corporation would tell people: "You wasting your time coming here". There was a culture too where a person could have applied for a house at the National Housing Corporation in the year 1974 and then see somebody who applied for a house in 1990 get the house in 1990 and the person who has applied years before has to wait. Mr. Speaker, that is a culture of inequity that has to be put right.

Sir, the final point I am going to make in this short address is that there used to be an officer - I believe that officer has a successor - who had an inventory of Crown lands and who would had made that inventory of Crown lands available to successive Governments. Mr. Speaker, within that inventory of Crown lands, we have to identify particular areas for housing, particular areas for agriculture, particular areas for recreation and even particular areas for manufacturing.

Barbadians are not ignorant to being manufacturers. Mr. Speaker, you could get all types of manufacturers. You could get the manufacturer who is manufacturing furniture, you could get the manufacturer who is dealing in textiles and you could get a whole range of citizenry interested in different aspects of the manufacturing industry.

Mr. Speaker, I would hate to see the day come when we give up the manufacturing industry on the grounds that the cost of manufacturing in Barbados is so high as to be discouraging. I would think that we could use our positions in Government and in Parliament to persuade those with the skills to pursue careers in manufacturing if it suits them.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to an item that I have to mention today before I sit. We here on this side and they on that side speak of economic enfranchisement. We have heard a lot about cottage industries. Nobody doubts the contribution that persons who operated cottage industries would have made. We have a new culture where, with the rise in technology and the skills acquired by many a person, people who otherwise would have been unemployed are operating businesses in their house which are computer-driven. In other words, there are ladies who otherwise would have been unemployed who would have gone to courses in the Barbados Labour Party resource centres that introduced computers to the community and who decided that rather than risk going on the labour market...

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the public the impression that a political party called the Barbados Labour Party built resource centres for people. What he meant is that a Barbados Labour Party Administration built resource centres but not a Barbados Labour Party resource centres. As far as I know, they belong to the Government and the people of Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well. Yes, Honourable Member.

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I know the Honourable Member so well, Sir, that I would not even say that I would ignore him. I know him so well that I know that...

Mr. SPEAKER: I would not permit you to say that either, so you go ahead.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I know that the Honourable Member understands though what is happening. The point I was making is that there are people especially females... In our culture, the misfortune is that female unemployment is generally higher than male unemployment even though a lot of females are getting to the top in managerial positions. Mr. Speaker, for the working-class maid and the working-class unemployed, this computer training that has been introduced and practised in Barbados has been so working that we have young ladies who are now staying home using the computer and making money.

The issue, Mr. Speaker, and it is serious, is that there are landlords who would let in these young ladies as tenants at a domestic rate and then when they become aware of the fact that their tenant is using the computer, they are arguing now that the house or the residence is not for domestic purposes but is for industrial purposes and they are either raising the rent or encouraging the utility providers to make these persons commercial. In our system, I think that something has to be done to correct that.

In a cottage industry situation where somebody is making pepper sauce or preserves, jams and jellies, you do not normally get a landlord harassing a tenant suggesting that the tenant is using the house for commercial purposes. The irony is that the landlord may not even understand that the income generated from running the computer business actually go to his rent.

Mr. Speaker, I want Government to be aware of this. In fact, I want Government to look closely at the Landlord and Tenant legislation of Barbados.

House A64B Sequence 9 and 10

2.55 p.m.

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Mr. RAWLE C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I am making a stirring call for a revision of our landlord and tenant legislation, some of it is common law oriented, some is found in Cap. 230, some is found in Cap. 236, some is found in the Landlord and Tenantry Act, some is found in the Property Act and some is found in the contract between landlord and tenant, in a situation where the landlord is in a superior bargaining position.

Sir, I want that the Honourable Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, the Honourable Minister of Economic Development and his companion, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, to set the stage that where we are seeing a good 5 per cent to 7 per cent of our female workforce employing themselves at home by doing certain things with the computer that would earn them a living, that they should not be so oppressed by a landlord or by a utility company, into succumbing to the type of duress that informs this rather strange policy that you cannot run a computer business from your home and pay domestic and normal rates. It is an injustice. It clearly is an injustice if a girl called Dina, whose income would have been zero but who can operate a computer and who can pay the landlord \$800 in rent, for Dina then to be told by the landlord that she is running a computer business, that the rent must now be increased to \$1 600 and then when Dina and the landlord are having their tussle and argument, suddenly the landlord tells the telephone, the electric and water company, who then threaten this growing niche of skilled females and a few males, who are using computers at home to generate business activities, in circumstances where they have no alternative. I am therefore making a plea for this particular scenario to be looked at.

Mr. Speaker, the Right Excellent Grantley Herbert Adams used to say the only thing that you cannot legislate is that a man becomes a woman or that a woman becomes a man. Sir, what I am suggesting is not beyond legislation, it is not beyond the creative thinking of the officers in the Office of the Solicitor-General or the thinking of the learned Attorney-General to develop policies by which far from allowing the prejudices that impact on unemployed persons using computers, that these persons be facilitated. Sir, the whole question of our landlord and tenant legislation has to be looked at, we do not have anything call rent restriction in Barbados, some other territories in the

Caribbean have rent restriction but it does not necessarily work well. I believe that Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have rent restriction legislation, we do not have it.

Sir, one consequence of not having rent restriction legislation is that not only are rents too high but very often landlords do not maintain properties. There are situations where if the contract between landlord and tenant is silent, the tenant is responsible for the interior, while the landlord is responsible for the exterior. The curiosity then becomes where does the obligation lie with chattel houses. It might be easy to interpret a situation where the tenant is responsible for the interior within a walled solid structure but with a chattel house, reference to things like outer drains and such like would have little meaning.

Sir, I am therefore concluding by saying that as supportive as we are of the measure before this Honourable House, we still have to look at the whole gamut of the procession of land, the usage to which land are put, the extent to which we are duty-bound to help the poor, the extent to which housing now is a difficulty, the reason being that the cost is too high and sometimes the cost is not necessarily reflective of the quality of work done.

Sir, recently I was pleased when I heard about a medium-size contractor doing an excellent job and doing it on time and below budget. Sir, we have to set standards like these, we have to encourage our artisans, our builders and contractors to set standards and that when they are in doubt, they should turn to the sources of the type of expertise that would enable them to perform well. The reason I mentioned this is that I want the Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment, Urban and Rural Development to understand this.

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

Mr. RAWLE C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I want the Honourable Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment, Urban and Rural Development to understand, there is evidence that some small men are getting a break, that is an opportunity to do work but some of them are lying their way into getting the work by holding out that they have skills, which they do not have. Some of them not necessarily lie but misrepresent the situation by suggesting that they can do a job at certain cost.

Mr. Speaker, very often when something is put out to tender or quote, the person to make the award goes to the lowest bidder. The lowest bidder needs not be the most desirable, very often the lowest bidder does not have the skill, very often the lowest bidder does the work and then realises that he has incurred overruns that he did not foresee, very often that lowest bidder is learning by trial

and error. Sir, recently I have seen a few instances where some small men who, unwisely did not incorporate their business, got Government contracts and were disappointing in those contracts. Mr. Speaker, I am not reflecting on the political class because although those persons may have a political hue and complexion different from mine, the hard fact of the matter is that we are duty-bound to facilitate persons but we are not duty-bound to facilitate mediocrity or unusual practices. Sir, over the years, too many persons have taken advantage of both Governments by getting work and then performing in a substandard type of way.

Mr. Speaker, I am aware I have 93 seconds left and with your leave I will not consume the 93 seconds. I will not trespass on your patience and shall cut short my modest contribution at this time. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Speaker, with no hesitation at all I rise to support this Resolution. In fact, I am much excited for the people of St. George South because we are seeing something happening in St. George South, in terms of housing solutions for them. This is an exciting time for persons who had their names on the list for very long periods, who were hoping to get assistance from Government in the area of housing solution.

Mr. Speaker, I laughed when I heard my neighbour, the Honourable Member for St. George North, speaking of the length of time it has taken to have these issues dealt with. Sir, on the one hand, the Honourable Member lamented the fact that this was a matter that was passed by Cabinet in 2008 and that it has taken two years to reach Parliament. On the other hand, the Honourable Member referred to land in his constituency that was approved in December 2002 and when they demitted office in 2008, some five years later, that land Resolution had not yet been passed. Sir, I want to encourage Honourable Member for St. Philip North to continue to press on. I do not think that anybody could make any fair comment about the lack of alacrity or haste in this matter. Indeed, what we are seeing happening in two years is definitely commendable.

Mr. Speaker, this is certainly commendable in St. George South where we have not seen low income housing solutions for decades. The Ellerton Housing Areas was developed in the 1960s or 1970s, it has been there for as long as I can remember and we have not had any low income solutions since then. Sir, I want to commend the Honourable Member, the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the National Housing Corporation for exploring the Housing Every Last Person programme. It is indeed one that Barbadians would be able to see the benefit of. In fact, Barbadians have already begun to see the benefits of that programme. It is not just a matter of building houses, we have seen houses built in St. George South but many of them were built outside the reach of many persons in those

rural communities. Many of my constituents in that community are low income earners and would not be able to afford some of the houses done either by Government or in the public/private sector partnership arrangement. Therefore, they welcome other solutions.

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Dr. the HON. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Indeed, there are many persons in our constituency who have chattel houses and I know this is not unique to St. George South. We have spoken to the chattel culture, those people who have chattel houses and they have reached a stage in their lives that they are comfortable that they have, at least, acquired a home for their families, only to be told later that their houses have to be moved and, perhaps, they have been on those particular lots for decades. Sir, I know cases where persons have grown up on a piece of land that has been rented, it is not their own, they were renting that land but, of course, the land in St. George has escalated in terms of value and price and so the land they would be on now, the landlord, the owners want to sell those lands. The owners figure they could fetch up to \$20 a square foot for those lands and they demand that they move. Sir, many persons in the rural parts of this country, who just want a piece of land that they can put their chattel house on. Sir, that is all they want, and they need it urgently.

Mr. President, the matter of urgency has been spoken to and that is not just an issue for the National Housing Corporation, that is an issue for all the social agencies, the Rural Development Commission, the Urban Development Commission as well as the Welfare Department. We can go on to have a discussion on public sector reform at another time because, certainly, that is not a matter that has only developed in the past two years, that is a deep-seated matter. I, certainly, hope that nobody expects that Government, after two years, could be able to dig out these deep-seated issues that have been there, certainly well into the past 13 years and long before.

Mr. Speaker, I will say it again for emphasis that I want to commend this administration for working even within that culture that has been referred to, to get something done as quickly as this. Sir, we have heard the characteristics of the land at Brighton described earlier and we know that there are houses that have been built at Greens. Again, those houses at Greens are not expensive houses but for many persons who have applied for houses at Greens, the cost of those solutions would be outside of their reach also. Again, many of the persons in the Greens' area and in that part of St. George have found that they are not able to afford the asking price for those houses. Sir, I am using the word "commend" many times because, indeed, this is how I feel. Mr. Speaker, when it came to

looking at selecting persons, the Minister was not closed to the idea of exploring other options which included the rent-to-own programme for persons who cannot afford these houses outright. We need to have that approach to housing.

Mr. Speaker, Government cannot build all the houses that people need and persons cannot afford to have their houses built because they cannot afford mortgages in many cases, so we need to have an approach that would address all persons. There is the rent-to-own programme and now this is land that is being proposed and cost somewhere in the region of \$5 per square foot that will more readily meet the needs of persons in those communities.

Mr. Speaker, that area of Brighton is, indeed, an area for low income earners but it is a very close knit community. There is a lot of family expansion in that area, there are a lot of chattel houses in there but we have also seen an apartment building that has gone up in that area and seemed to be successful. Indeed, when an apartment building was put in the middle of that area folks wondered who would go for an apartment in the heart of a rural community like that but we have seen that the need for housing is so dire that they had no problems filling that.

Mr. Speaker, that area in St. George, I do not know how familiar you are with St. George but it is a large community. There is upper Brighton and there is lower Brighton and the two parcels that are being looked at, one would actually be in lower Brighton and one is in upper Brighton although they are next to each other. Sir, these communities are expanding but they also need to have certain facilities that would be put in place to support this kind of development.

Sequence 13

Mr. Speaker, we have spoken in this House many times to housing and to his credit the Minister has brought many pieces of legislation and Resolution here with regards to housing but, as we see this area grow, we know there would be a need for other facilities in the Brighton area of St. George. Sir, the roads, for example. The roads at Brighton in St. George that goes from the Brighton Ridge area pass the St. Lukes Anglican Church and the St. Lukes Primary School, is an awful piece of road and we would know that road would have to be addressed, as we bring more people into the area. Gladly, we have buses that pass through that area so the area is well connected. There are at least two bus routes that pass through that area so the area is well connected. There are at least two bus routes that pass through that area but I know the bus drivers also complain about the condition of that road.

Mr. Speaker, right in that area also is the Skills Training Centre, the Barbados Vocational Training Board,

which is now offering programmes, which include autoronics, and we need to see more of our young people and more of our rural young people subscribe to those programmes. We are not seeing enough of our young people in the rural areas getting involved in these programmes. Sir, they may start the programme, as I would have mentioned on an earlier date, and then drift off into something else and find themselves without the skill or the training later on. Sir, that is another facility that is in the area by the St. Lukes Church and the St. Lukes Primary School.

Mr. Speaker, this land is agricultural land. It is marginal land and currently that land is under sugar cane. Sir, as we develop the rural area, we know that the soil in St. George is rich, fertile soil and we still want to think that St. George has its value recognised for feeding our nation and that we do not give up the agricultural potential of the land in St. George. Sir, land in St. George carries a high price on the market and there are some areas nearby, which will fetch \$25 per square feet. The view from there is fantastic and, indeed, people who live in St. George and who grew up in St. George, are hardly ever desirous of moving from that area. I know that many people are going to want to stay in that area and subscribe to this land at Brighton.

Mr. Speaker, as we look to develop housing solutions, it is more than likely that will be touching agricultural land. Certainly, there is a proposal for Todds as well on land that is agricultural land also but as we do that we are mindful of a plan for that development. It is not going to be anything like Six Roads or Pickerings that was mentioned earlier today but that it is done in a controlled manner. Sir, recreational facilities will be needed in the area because the area of Brighton now has no recreational facilities and the young men at Melverton find themselves in Randall's house all day and all night occupying themselves, not gainfully employed but we need to provide recreational facilities. We talked a lot about charities and right now in St. George, in that very area, St. Lukes Primary School has no hard court. The students at St. Lukes Primary School play netball in the driveway of St. Lukes Anglican Church and that driveway is big enough to support one-half of a court, so that when they leave there and go to play against other schools, they find themselves terribly disadvantaged because they do not play on a full court and they would not have played on a full court.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of the surrounding area are trying to assist the school with providing a hard court for the school. The land that it will go on is not Crown land so it is not necessarily a Government project. I am managing to get the residents of the area together to be able to contribute and develop a hard court for the school primarily, but as we already have these large communities of Friendship, Melverton, Upper Brighton, Lower

Brighton, Mount Tenantry, just around that area, we are desirous of this facility serving those communities and, in particular, those young men at Randall's house, who lime morning, noon and night.

H/A64B/15:15 Sequence 13 & 14

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Hon. Dr. E.R. Byer-Suckoo: With the other people coming in as well, we need to have facilities for them in that area. I know my colleagues will be hearing from me from time to time, as we look to develop more amenities for persons in those areas.

I want to encourage persons to continue to come out and work with us, as we raise funds for the hard court at St. Lukes in getting that facility developed.

Mr. Speaker, what concerns me, before I take my seat, is the number of persons who find themselves homeless, who find themselves without somewhere to lay their heads. I mentioned earlier that there are persons who have to move their chattel houses, because the owner of the land suddenly realises the value of the land and wants to sell it on the market, or for whatever reason they need to have the person removed, or they may have had some sort of unwritten agreement with a mother, an older person, the grandmother and so on, and when that person passes, then they use the opportunity to take the land and the younger persons in the homes find themselves being put out.

Sir, that is one issue, but what really concerns me is where persons find themselves homeless at the hands of their own relatives. Too often we see young women who have been put out by their mothers. I do understand that there are mothers who, when their children have broken the house rules, they may have become pregnant, they may be in a situation which their parents did not sanction - "so, this is my house you abide by my rules and when you are not abiding by my rules it is time to go, two grown women cannot live in one house," that kind of thing.

Sir, we know that very often there are women who find themselves in that situation, and once that happens they have to go.

That is not the only situation. There are cases where an older sibling just seems to be waiting and biding his or her time until the mother or father dies. As soon as that happens, they put the younger persons out of the house. We see in this country so many times where a younger sibling who may not be working, but is at home looking after the older mummy or daddy, the old whoever, and of course in this country we have not really put a value on this kind of care. It is unpaid work but we have not put a value on it. The person has given up work, they are not receiving any

money, they stay at home day in and day out and caring for the old relative, because they cannot afford to put them in some kind of facility for the elderly, so they stay at home with them. As soon as that person demises, the older relatives, relatives overseas or whoever come for the funeral, and before the person is well in their grave, they say to that sibling, We want this house. We are selling this house, land or whatever, you need to go.

I am not going to get into family dynamics and what happens in families. We know there is a lot more than meets the eye in family situations like that, but I think that we have as a society to reexamine ourselves. When we get to a situation where we can without batting an eyelid put our relatives out, it is not one or two, all of us can recount many stories where it happens in our constituencies. Too many of our people are being made homeless at the hands of their very own relatives. That is a matter we need to look at ourselves more closely and address. We need to our brothers' keepers, literally, and we need to be have a little compassion when it comes to our brothers.

We understand money. We understand the almighty dollar and the value of land and so on, but I urge Barbadians, please, we need to stop this practice that puts our very one kin out on the streets, sometimes with their own little children because we need to sell the land, we need to get rent for that household.

Sir, if it continues as it is, it is going to be more than the Ministry of Housing can address. Already I know they have their hands full. The waiting lists are quite long, but we all have to do our part.

Sir, I encourage Barbadians to look out for one another, and at the same time encourage the Minister of Housing to continue with his work. Again, on behalf of the people of St. George, I gladly support this Resolution.

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

Miss C.Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the privilege to speak in relation to this particular land acquisition at Brighton, St. George. I want at the outset to indicate my support for this measure and indeed any other measure that is raised in this Honourable Chamber that will redound to the benefit of Barbadians.

Sir, there is no other piece of legislation that has impacted on the lives of Barbadians in a phenomenal way, like the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act of 1981 under a Barbados Labour Party administration with the then Right Honourable Tom Adams. I think we need to seriously look at the impact this piece of legislation has had on changing the whole outlook of the lives of Barbadians, particularly those in the plantation tenancies.

Indeed, it was followed by another Barbados Labour Party administration, with the Private Tenancies Act where tenants are required to pay \$2.50 per square foot while the Government subsidises the rest of the payment per square foot for land. I am saying that in any partisan way, but indicating how over the years different administrations would have played their part in assisting with the housing of Barbadians. Now this administration speaks of the whole issue of housing every last person. Therefore, this acquisition will add to more Barbadians being empowered to own their property.

Mr. Speaker, this acquisition at Brighton, as I said, must be lauded. Therefore, I look forward to the people of St. George and indeed others, who may have had eviction notices and so on, to be given an opportunity to get these spots to make themselves comfortable. There is nothing that upsets me more than seeing families being dislocated, and their dignity exposed to the public in the newspaper and other forms of media at the last moment when, I believe that action could have been taken if it were proactive to save that kind of embarrassment.

Sir, I know that Farmers, Phases 1 and 2, were developed out of a critical need for housing, where persons who were living in the Scotland District, in particular, and I am talking of Cane Garden, Chalky Mount, Belleplaine, St. Andrew, and other communities, that were affected by the land slippage.

Sir, indeed, there were some houses in St. Thomas and St. Joseph that have been affected by the land slippage. I know that particularly Phase 2 was acquired by the then Barbados Labour Party Government, to accommodate many of those persons who were affected by the land slippage.

Mr. Speaker, sad to say, those spots I have been told have already been sold to ordinary Barbadians who never had a challenge. Therefore, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North must meet some tremendous challenges when land acquired for the purpose of relocation of resident from these communities which experience flooding, land slippage, evictions and so on, would have been sold to individuals who never had a problem before.

HA64B 15.25 p.m. Sequences 15 & 16

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House A64B, Sequence 17 & A64C, Sequence 1, 3.25 p.m.

Miss C.Y. FORDE: I know, Sir, that there were other sites where these people could have been accommodated and let that aspect of the community remain for such a purpose so I know the difficulty which the Honourable Member has to experience.

I also know that at one point in time there were houses in the Housing Area that were specifically kept so that when there were serious house fires, the same slippage and other forms of dislocation, housing was there for those individuals. They were remaining vacant for those purposes. I acknowledge, Sir, that over the years, with house fires, the dislocation, flooding and so, most of those houses would have been allocated. I am not grumbling about that because the reality is if one's house has to be relocated because of slippage and the other challenges I mentioned, then there has to be somewhere to house them. I am not quivering over that, I am just saying that as time goes forward there will be tremendous challenges for the Minister of Housing and his staff, when it comes to the accommodation of individuals.

I can speak of a family, Mr. Speaker, who had to stay in a guest house for almost six months and to this day, they have not been accommodated at all because there was nowhere for them to go, so I know of the difficulties which a Government will experience. Mr. Speaker, what I want to say, is that there are still numerous persons, who had been threatened with notices for eviction that have absolutely nowhere to go and the time is running out. Therefore, every effort must be put in place for these individuals to get an opportunity to carry on with their lives.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at it, we are talking about families that are caught up in the dislocation, particularly young children. When a single parent with five or six children has to be scotching in somebody's verandah, or in somebody's back house out of plywood, where there is no water, there is no electricity at night and so on, Mr. Speaker, that adds to the dislocation of a family and creates further confrontation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please keep down the several asides meeting, please.

Honourable Member for St. Thomas, please continue.

Miss C.Y. FORDE: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, it is also sad, when there are son unscrupulous landlords, who entice these young mothers with their children to occupy their properties when in truth and in fact, there want to be able to have some kind of relationship with the woman or whatever. Sir, when that does not work out, the family is thrown on the streets. Again, another set of children who when teachers see them in the class room, they do not know of the challenges that are taking place in their minds but they expect them to learn and to learn well and when they do not, some form of punishment, expulsion, flogging insults, whatever, as a result of that dislocation. Sir, many of us may not have

experienced it and we may not really be able to understand the reality of the situation.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying all of this because I believe there has to be a more proactive approach in helping those persons who have been dislocated and who require a comfortable place to live. I am not talking about an elaborate house with a patio and a washing machine. Sir, that is not the request of those persons who are evicted as a result of the slipping, the flooding and the family disputes. They just want somewhere comfortable to rest with their children, to prepare a meal, to pray with them and to embrace them. Sir, most of the time, that is not possible because the stressors of mother and father or husband and wife and the children are so tremendous that there is no way of healing and it takes a really long time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to relate this, Sir, to Allen View. I am only saying this now because it is a unique situation and that is why when the project was conceived in the past before this administration and I want to commend the Honourable Minister for the continuity of the project because he too recognises, with the Democratic Labour Party that people are first, and then anything else can flow thereafter. When you are talking about politics, it is about the people, a project like the Housing Neighbourhood Project is important in these times when life becomes really very difficult for many persons and so, with the Allen View situation, it really requires special and urgent attention.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of it is to do with the expansion of Harrison's Cave that is our eighth wonder of the world but at the same time, if I were a resident of Allen View owning my land, whether I bought it or it was bequeathed to me by a relative, or whatever and I cannot develop my land, then I would have to have a problem with any Government. It does not matter which one. I believe that I must be able to build on my land but we know, Sir, that there are numerous restrictions when it comes to Allen View. Therefore, a suggestion again I will put to the Honourable Member because I believe he is a minister who will listen and who will continue to carry out the policy.

The instructions were given by the Town Planning Department. You can expand with the permission of the Town Planning Department but if you did not have that permission with a little plan previous to that arrangement, there are still residents there, Sir, with no running water in the houses. There are still a number of pit toilets, there is a need for an access road so that residents can get in and out if there is an accident and so on, there is a need for further employment and there is a need for upgrade of the houses in general because most of them are large families.

Sir, what happens to the land that is owned by residents who can do nothing on that land. My suggestion, Sir, to the Government is to acquire the land. It is not a

great amount but they would at least be able to build their play park, because you are talking about hundreds of people with nowhere to play but the road. All of this was in the project and Allen View was unique because we knew of the circumstances of the residents there. Some of them cannot get electricity because of the same intricate situation that exists.

Mr. Speaker, it is not only Allen View, Welchman Hall proper, the Vault Road, Carrington Village, Bloomsbury, Bryan's Road, where people say, "I cannot get subdivision even though my family left two acres of land because of the expansion of Harrison's Cave," and that is understood. All it needs, Sir, is for further dialogue with the residents, as has happened within recent times, again, for the residents to be able to get a measure of comfort, knowing that Government may devise a plan to acquire land somewhere else in the Parish because when you are talking about ancestral ties of residents, they still want to be near the school they attended. They still want to be near their families who will look after their children after employment. They still want to be near the Church which they attended and so on and so forth. At the end of the day, they have needs that must be attended to.

Sir, I would wish to inform this Government to look at a package where the residents of Allen View in particular and, indeed, any other communities in Welchman Hall to develop their land, because of the restrictive situation that exists, to be offered the opportunity, where they can buy their land at \$5 per square foot and the Government should acquire so whatever is acquired, the compensation will go towards that package for them to be able to live a little more comfortable.

Mr. Speaker, home ownership is paramount and we all know that. Everybody likes to own a little piece and keeping families together is something that we must work towards because that is where the Barbadian culture comes in. You still like to go and look for your mother, grandmother, relatives and so on at the end of the week or during the week.

Sir, I may have been naive at that time, according to what Honourable Members may say about this project but I believe that there is a principle involved. I have been raised in an agricultural parish where St. Thomas was like the breadbasket, as St. George has been, over many, many decades.

House A64B, Sequence 17 & A64C, Sequence 1, 15:35:17

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Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, when the idea of a ribbon development for Duke's Tenantry was put on the table between 2001/2002 and the designs were made

available, the Honourable Member for St. George North knows of what I speak, I did not turn it down because I did not want a project. I said to the then Cabinet that while it is a laudable idea I would prefer for us to look at Lewis Village, Hangman's Hill and Endeavour in St. Thomas because those are lands that were lying fallow for more than 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, Duke's Tenantry is one of the few plantation lands in the parish that now grow yams, potatoes, sugar cane and vegetables, so I could not have accepted or supported a project there for housing where you would destroy the agriculture in that area. I still do not support Duke's Tenantry being taken out for housing development. I still support the Lion Castle, Endeavour and Hangman's Hill areas where there is a lot of rab land where houses could be put for the residents who need a place to live and who have eviction notices and things of that nature.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the Honourable Minister to help me to understand the status of the General Workers Fund at the National Housing Corporation. I note in the past persons were offered opportunities to rehabilitate, to upgrade and to expand their houses or to build a new house and there was a ceiling. I know that the Housing Credit Fund had injections of funds over the years to be able to assist residents with the construction of their houses. Mr. Speaker, that would have been coupled with the provision of the 100 per cent mortgages, the downward adjustment of the interest rate to 6 per cent for first-time homeowners, the extension of the maximum repayment period for mortgages from 25 years to 40 years and the increase in the age limit repayment from 60 years to 65 years.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to be able to speak to persons when they query what is the status of the General Workers Fund and the Housing Credit Fund because we are not hearing very much about those two institutions that have served Barbadians well and will continue to serve those persons who are working for \$500 or less per week who would not really be given the opportunity in the same way if they are not permanent workers as would the credit unions, the banks and the Mortgage Finance Department and so.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to speak in relation to a property in Spring Farm in St. Thomas, again with ancestral ties to the residents there who prefer not to move because there is an open space. This is nothing new to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. This is something that has been in the works for the past five or so years, two and half years in this Administration, and indeed two and a half years in the other Administration where formal requests were made time and time again for the acquisition of the property there so that residents can build their own houses, as has been said for many years by

myself and indeed the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, on a Saturday morning weekend kind of project where people build from the back and come forward.

Mr. Speaker, that option is still there because people are yearning to move out. When the households are becoming bigger because children are having their own children, persons are actually looking for somewhere to spread out but again not too far from home. Mr. Speaker, King's Land in Spring Farm, St. Thomas would be a good prescription for accommodating the needs of those residents who are living there.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. James North speaks to the whole issue of the landlords. This is one that bothers me more than anything else. There are some unscrupulous landlords both in the private tenancies as well as in the general tenancies who continue to raise the house rents sometimes by more than 150 per cent, and as a result of that, many of the tenants are unable to meet the demands.

Sir, while they are making the request, they are not improving the environment in and around the same houses so that some of them have leaking roofs, some of them have termites and mice, bats and so in the ceiling and the toilets are broken and they are not maintaining them.

I agree Honourable Member that there has to be proper registration and investigation of such situations so that tenants can enjoy a better quality of life. Some of them seem to think that they can treat the tenants as they so desire and that the tenants have no say in the matter.

Mr. Speaker, in private tenancies like Bridgefield, Melrose and other communities, people are being asked to pay \$15 per square foot for house spots that they have been living on for 50 and 60 years, and therefore, I think that the Ministry of Housing and Lands, through the Chief Housing Planner and whoever are the members of that Committee, should seriously and critically look at that issue because it is getting worse by the minute. The residents who are old who have lived there so many years, they are in the 60s, 70s and 80s, abhor the request to pay \$15 000 for a \$3 000 house spot. Mr. Speaker, it really is an exorbitant request. Where do the tenants go to seek redress? Mr. Speaker, I know that the Ministry of Housing and Lands has that facility to be able to listen to them and to treat to the issues that are being raised.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Ministry of Social Transformation in another Administration, now the Ministry of Social Care, has for many years treated to the issue of residents or tenants who are caught in the poverty line, who suffer as a result of some of the maltreatment extended by some of the landlords and even families. The Honourable Member for St. George South spoke about

families and the dislocation that takes place because of ownership of property and who the persons have assigned the responsibilities for when they die and so on and it really creates a lot of sad experiences in families.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Ministry of Social Care has undertaken the responsibilities that where families are dislocated and where families are meeting additional hardship that their water bills, their light bills and even the rents for the facility will be undertaken through investigation and recommendation. I believe that further examination must be taken because we have a lot of single-parent homes especially homes under the management of women who are still suffering but because of sometimes the treatment that is meted out to them when they go to these social institutions a lot of them are afraid.

Mr. Speaker, I would wish to implore Barbadians, despite what levels they are at in their employment, whether private or public sector, to give people a chance to explain themselves and not look at the false fingernails they may have on because the false fingernails they may wear to the department are not false fingernails they would have bought because they do not have the monetary resources but false fingernails that a friend comes and says: "Girl, you look so distraught, let me put on these for you."

Mr. Speaker, it is the same way with children in school where some children may come to school with a pair of Nike shoes but they do not have text books or exercise books and then a teacher who does not understand may say if your mother can buy Nike then you must be able to pay for your text books not knowing that a friend, a Godparent or whoever might have gone to Puerto Rico or New York and bought that pair of Nike and gave it to the child. It is not that the parents or others closely associated may be able to pay for them.

Mr. Speaker, I am imploring those institutions that look after social care, the Welfare Department, the Child Care Board and those departments, to give that extra compassionate approach to those persons who go to them for assistance particularly those who have challenges with housing.

As I come to a close, Mr. Speaker, I want to engage the Minister in some of the ideas that have been put forward. I know that his portfolio is tremendous. I recognise some of the things that are being done. Yes, I mentioned earlier that some are a continuation.

House A64C Sequence 2 and 3

3.45 p.m.

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Some new things have come into the world sooner rather than later and this land acquisition at Brighton is one that I support. Sir, I would wish to say that I too eagerly look forward to the project at Forty Acres because I need for the Minister of Housing and Lands still to explain what kind of development there is for that area. Sir, that was also a request that came from this humble servant for Forty Acres to be acquired because the sites and services were already in and the infrastructural works were already put in place. Similarly, Spring Farm and Allen View are all communities where the sites and services are there, only awaiting the exploration and the request to come in, to be able to aid those residents who are in need.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to say too that I hope the landlords and other persons who are associated with looking after the needs of others in Barbados would put the compassionate heart in place and would ensure that at the end of the day... Sir, we do not know how long we would live. I do not understand how money could always be an overarching component of doing things, when people lose the common touch of understanding what it is like to receive an eviction notice or to be told that their house would be demolish in two week's time. Sir, nobody knows the stress that kicks in, the challenges that come about and the hurt and pain that one has to endure as result of having nowhere to reside that house or nowhere to live.

Sir, I want to say that I strongly support this acquisition at Brighton and I trust that more of this kind would be put in place across the rest of Barbados to ease the plight of those individuals who cannot better themselves because of their limited resources and their opportunity to ownership in the way that we would expect that to happen.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution. I also rise to ask the Minister of Housing and Lands to have compassion on the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Sir, after hearing the Honourable Member and after participating in a bi-election in 2001 and promising the people of Allen View that when we got to Government that we would help them, I believe that nine years after that we now have a good opportunity to deliver that promise we made in the year 2001 during the bi-election. Sir, it is also clear to me that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has a lot of confidence in this Minister of Housing and Lands because what could not have been achieved in 14 years, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas now expects the Honourable Member for St. Philip North to deliver in 2½ years. Sir, I would think that after giving such a blessing to the Honourable Member that this Honourable Member should not be partisan, like what occurred in the last 14 years but that the Honourable

Member should be compassionate and deliver to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I know you were not in here for 14 years but your Party was here.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say that it is also clear that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas did not support the land bank and that what the Honourable Member is now saying is that instead of putting land in the land bank, that land should have been given to the people. Sir, this tells me that for 14 years the Honourable Member did not support the concept of a land bank by her Party and that the Honourable Member is now happy there is a Minister who can provide lots to the poor people of Barbados.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, first, Allen View was on the boundary of St. Joseph in 2001, when I became an Honourable Member of Parliament, it was only rejoined in 2003. Secondly, there was housing development in St. Thomas by the Government at Rock Hall and Arch Hall. There were numerous houses built at West View, Rock Hall and there were numerous houses built at Cane Garden Park and Cane Hill Terrace, et cetera, by the private sector. Sir, the houses at Rock Hall were built by Government.

Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is that the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House because I indicated that I had made requests of Ministers of the past and now this Minister. Sir, I support the acquisition at Brighton because at the end of the day Barbadians will benefit. Sir, that is the premise on which I am speaking.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I remember well we spoke about Allen View and about Vault Road during that election.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: And I came back in time to help you speak on these issues.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, everybody in this Honourable House would know you do not go to Australia on your own, you would have to be sent there.

Sir, it is clear that the Honourable Members on the other side had no confidence in their housing policies, now in less than 2½ years they have that confidence. Sir, I am

saying to the Minister of Housing and Lands, seeing that everybody now has confidence in his housing policy, that it is only fair we do what was done with free secondary education in Barbados, that is to have a policy for all.

Sir, the Honourable Members on the other side need not worry about us, it is well-known within the Democratic Labour Party that we carry policies for all. If you look at all of our social policies there is a norm. We have now come to the issue of land as one of our social policies and so no one needs to fear, we will ensure that all 30 constituencies, including St. Lucy, will get their fair share. Sir, that I why I also expect that in the same way at Brighton, St. George, the Land Acquisition Act is being put in place, I look forward to seeing it happening in St. Lucy with the same speed.

Mr. Speaker, we need not worry, I know that we will get our fair share in the north. I know that North Stars will get their land. I also know that there will be numerous house spots, especially now there is no need for the Land Acquisition Act in relation to Cluffs. I know that the Honourable Member for St. George North also believes strongly in having land where people can live and farm at the same time. Sir, one of the first pieces of land that he has agreed to that policy is Cottage, St. Lucy, in relation to an acquisition which occurred since 1999. Sir, we too look forward for this type of development where people can have a house and can farm at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, when I first heard about this policy, about using plantation land, I spoke on it and said that I would accept it, providing that we created a buffer. Sir, the reason for that was that the previous year people allowed housing on agricultural land as an opportunity to develop the whole field. They never created the buffer, what they did was that they put down houses and then used the excuse that if you have houses put down and there was ever a cane fire, that the cane fire would burn the houses down and so you had to allow the whole field for housing development.

Sir, the creativeness of the Democratic Labour Party is such that we have been able to have housing and still maintain agriculture. Sir, one of the best examples is the good agricultural land that was seen in the Warrens area. Sir, the majority of that land, which was good agricultural land, was taken out of agriculture because housing was allowed on one section. The argument was then used that if you were allowed to use this strip for housing, then you had to allow housing to take place on the whole field. Sir, we have recognised that we have infrastructure and we are now maximising the use of that infrastructure without interfering with the agricultural land that we have allocated for development.

3.55 p.m.

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

HIS EXCELLENCY D. St.E. KELLMAN: We are happy to be associated with a political Party that understands there is a possibility that there can be co-existence between housing and agriculture. It is rather interesting to hear the Honourable Member from St. James North speaking this evening about the virtues of having a house spot and how important it is to give a man a house spot. I am glad that, all of a sudden, people have recognised the importance of a house spot and not a house. Sir, for 14 years or more, I have been trying to get this House to understand that the biggest problem facing Barbados today has nothing to do with a house, that it has to do with getting a house spot. Sir, once you provide that house spot, you will see within the next few months, once certain things go in place, that the house will come. Sir, you can get the house but there is no surety that you get the house spot. Sir, many people in Barbados can get a house but they cannot get a house spot. Sir, the problem is not the house, it is the house spot.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things we wanted to do, and I hope we will find a way, is to find more \$5 lots for poor people in this country. Sir, people have spoken many years about housing the poor and the first time I have seen a real opportunity for poor people to be housed is now that the Government has been changed. It is no doubt that the \$5 lots have given an opportunity for poor people now to get a house. Sir, when you work it out, it comes to about \$19 000, which is reasonable and acceptable but when you think about it, you are paying \$19 000 for something that is either \$45 000 or \$50 000, which means that you now have collateral to take to the bank and you have something to negotiate with to get a house.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the expansion of this project because we are truly now solving the problem of housing for the poor. I have seen many projects where people said that these projects were for poor people and when the projects were over, I saw middle income people living in them and, Sir, in some cases, I saw rich people living in them too. Sir, the poor people never had an opportunity to get a look-in but, under this project, I am now seeing some poor people getting an opportunity to look in.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Prime Minister for the idea and I want to thank the Cabinet of Barbados for recognising the brilliance of the idea and taking it, not only to the top but to action in less than two year and a half. Sir, they must be complimented for it. There are so many people who are so happy about this project. I do not know why the Minister of Housing does not go to Mount Poyer and do a comparison between the building to the north and the building to the south. Sir, you would be shocked and even the Honourable Member for St. George North would

cry to see that an idea he has was bastardised and then, when he looks at the one to the south, he would say that it was the idea he had, when poor people, when given the opportunity to build on the spot given to them at \$19 000, can now build houses that look as if they are truly in a development. Whereas now, on the other side, poor people were given houses that before they got the opportunity to live in the houses, National Housing Corporation had to repair them.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we in Barbados cannot afford to do these things to poor people any longer. Sir, what was interested is that the houses on the south are three times the value of the ones to the north but the ones to the north cost three times as much to achieve. Sir, if we are truly to tackle the problems as it relates to housing for poor people, we have to give them the land to build on and let the weekends work in magnificent ways, as we know. Sir, politicians believe that they have all the ideas, that they can do as they like and that they can dictate to poor people what they need to do. (16:00) Sequence 6

Sir, some of them are more interested in their friends than in the people who have to live in this houses. Sir, that is why they could not understand that they needed to put the people on the land and let them build, even if they use cardboard in the beginning, because whatever a man decides to live in, that is his choice, and that is what he is happy with. When you can give a man a house that appears to be good and in less than three months, the wood ants move on, that is worst than card board. Sir, today, I am a happy man because I am now seeing the solution being played out for the poor to be looked after.

Mr. Speaker, they cannot accuse us of only housing the poor. We are housing everybody because, as I have said, the Democratic Labour Party will not have a housing programme for the poor, the middle-class or the rich, we will have a total programme. The first time I have ever seen a total housing programme in Barbados is now under this Government where we have given people the land at the right price and we have also given them something to work with, where they can use it as collateral to get a house.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy and I hope, as I have said, that nobody would ever thought they had some place called Forty Acres before, Allen View, Vault Road, Dukes Tenantry, Lion Castle, Spring Farm, all of these things have been requested in two years and a half by this Minister. All of these projects have been requested and you would not believe that, Sir. I say with all fairness that I want to see the Minister doing some work in these areas too because if the Opposition has confidence in the Minister, he should show them that he is truly delivering too.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged. Yes, Honourable Minister.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Honourable Members who have contributed to this debate. I want to first thank the last Honourable Member who spoke, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy as he is very consistent in his plea. Sir, in relation to his plea, he always requested, even when he was in Opposition, to give poor people the land and that they would do what is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said in my opening speech, when you give someone in the country side a piece of land, they would, through savings, through hard work and through the help of the community, build a house value to some of the ones even built in the private sector at a cheaper cost. Mr. Speaker, there were some remaining lots in Mount Poyer and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy requested that all he needed was the lots, that no houses were to be built. I answered his request and I believe we can go to Mount Poyer now and see the construction started by those individuals themselves, and that is testimony to the fact that once you give them the lots, they would do what is necessary. In fact, in relation to the request of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, we also recognised that there was some residual land in the Cluffs' area that was acquired by the Crown and that all we needed to do was to put an access road into that area and, of course, we can get another 25 lots or 30 lots in there out of the residual land that is remaining. Again, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would benefit from the residual land that is in Cluffs that we are looking to fast-track and put in the hands of the people from St. Lucy and other people in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas spoke about Allen View. We had a town hall meeting on Saturday in Allen View, in St. Thomas. We had an excellent crowd and there was good participation. I want to say to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that, indeed, the consultants are looking at an access road.

H/A64B/16:05 Sequence 6 & 7

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Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: ...The design of the consultants, they are looking at the access road. There is provision in the project for a sewerage treatment plant. I think we have to make a further acquisition. We have to make, I think, a further acquisition since there are a number of toilet add-ons that have gone into the Town and Country Planning Department for approval, hopefully, so that we can get the project started by September.

Again, we heard of the challenges being faced by the residents of Allen View. I also suggested that we can look at other areas outside of Allen View to house these

residents, or some families that exist in Allen View. I have answered the call of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, that we have acquired Forty Acres, St. Thomas. We have not sat down and conceptualised the type of development for that area, but of course we will notify and have dialogue with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in relation to what we will do in St. Thomas.

Of course, there is a Ribbon Development in Forty Acres. We have actually got permission for the Ribbon Development in Forty Acres, but we have acquired the whole field. So, at this moment we will look at, the Ribbon Development, to make those lots are only available to the people of St. Thomas and other parts of Barbados. I do not want to say that those lots for the people of St. Thomas, but of course for other people from across Barbados, probably people from St. John, Christ Church, St. Philip and other areas would go into St. Thomas.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: We must have further dialogue with the residents of Allen View, because we need to have a representative from the Town and Country Planning Department, a representative from the Ministry of the Environment, Sanitation, Water Resources and Drainage, and the Harrison Cave Project to be present at the next meeting, for further dialogue and other issues raised, last Saturday, can be debated and trashed out. I want to assure the Honourable Member for St. Thomas with respect to the track at Allen View and other challenges, we would look at the other agencies that would answer.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas also raised an interesting issue in relation to the fact, and it was also raised by the Honourable Member for St. George South, I believe, in relation to families putting out their relatives, probably violence in the home and people are out on the streets looking for housing. As a result of house fires, the State cannot always readily be there to provide accommodation and so on, while agencies like the Ministry of Social Care and other agencies have to pay rent to upkeep them.

I am looking at the area of emergency housing. Certainly, we have some State properties that are available. We have some schools that are closed and some properties owned by the National Housing Corporation in the constituency of St. Michael North West, where we have to get together with the Ministry of Social Care, to see how we can rehabilitate those properties and make them available for emergency housing.

Indeed, we have one in Parish Land, Christ Church, and one in St. Thomas. I believe there is an old school, St. Albans. Those schools we would have to look at. Once we get the Town and Country Planning Department approval

we can make them available for emergency housing. We can rehabilitate them properly and utilise them for some sort of emergency housing.

Sir, in response to the Honourable Member for St. George North, I also wonder why Marshals, as a result of a court eviction order, sometimes break down a house with good value and then carry it onto the dump. I am making a plea to the Marshals, particularly the court Marshals, that I believe that the National Housing Corporation has property. We have a yard. Place those houses in the yard at the National Housing Corporation and then we can provide or look for lots to place those houses on.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: That is a worse case scenario.

I believe that you have acquired a house during your time, you improve it, and then one morning the landlord decides that he is going to take you to court. You get a court order and then, of course, you go to a magistrates court, get extensions after extensions, then there comes a time where the magistrate cannot do anything further. Then comes the Marshall, of course, carrying out the order of the court, takes the house and carries it to the dump, a good house which can be utilised. I am saying that we must look at somewhere, where the National Housing Corporation can store some of those houses. There are not many. It does not happen every day or week, but of course we can cooperate with the Marshals and provide any available lot or land. Of course there would have to be some contractual arrangement between the person who owns the house with National Housing Corporation, before we decide to put the house on the lot. That is another that problem we have to look at in terms of emergency housing.

In response to the Honourable Member for St. James North, who spoke about inventory. We need to look at the list. I believe he was hinting at the purging of the list so that we can have an accurate demand of those who need land and houses. Of course that purging of the list would reflect the accurate demand of housing in relation to land and rental units, or who wants to purchase house.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George South gave an impassioned speech. Of course she is benefitting from the houses in Greens, and her constituents hopefully will benefit from ...

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Well they will benefit from housing development in St. George, Constant, Greens and Brighton.

We said that the State alone cannot provide housing. There are 33 lots and we have to maximise the land space.

There will be a time when we have to look at building duplexes, maximising the land space to house more persons on the lots. Of course, we have to build more rental units to assist those who cannot purchase a home. We have to look at that. It is a total overall approach and a total housing policy to cover every category or group.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the State cannot provide all the housing, and the private sector would have to play their part. That is why developments like the Pickering Development is welcomed, because there is a provision of 1 000 houses at Pickering, as outlined today in the Ministerial Speech by the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Prime Minister. That includes a total building of a community, amenities, Post Office, primary school, communication facilities, parks, spaces, bus terminal, sewerage treatment plant and, of course, a town centre, similar to a model...

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Sir, this is the model that we have to look at in terms of development, and this is the model we have to look at in the area of Bushy Park. This model already follows our development at Coverly. It is a similar model with a town centre, a sewerage treatment plant, postal services, school, church, et cetera, in the same Coverly Development.

I am saying that with the private sector and the National Housing Corporation, hand in hand, providing these houses in St. Lucy, I believe we can have some dent in the demand for housing in Barbados.

HA 64C 16.15 p.m. Sequences 8 & 9

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

House A64C, Sequence 10, 4.15 p.m.

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, with the private sector providing these housing in St. Lucy with the National Housing Corporation hand in hand, I believe that we can have some dent in the demand for housing in Barbados. I know the Honourable Member for St. George North will support this model that was outlined by the Honourable Prime Minister. I fully support it and I know that the Honourable Members on this side fully support this model in terms of development, where we have large tracks of land and we can look at establishing Town Centres and put in all the amenities. As we said in our Manifesto, we are not about building houses but building communities.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks, I support the Resolution and beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Asides.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do not adjourn until Tuesday, May 25, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 25, 2010 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

House A64C, Sequence 10, 16:18:19

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Suspension of Standing Orders. The source records that the question ‘was put and resolved in the affirmative with division’, but no division is recorded; elsewhere such questions are resolved ‘without division’. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Order No. 2, Hon. C. P. Sinckler. The opening of Hon. C. P. Sinckler’s speech (two paragraphs, beginning ‘(11:26) HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not imagine ...’) is run on in the source after Mr. Speaker’s call, so it appears under Mr. Speaker’s speech heading. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 2, Committee. The source records twice that the House resolved itself into Committee on the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, once with ‘Mr. J. D. Paul’ and once with ‘Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees’ in the Chair. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 3, Committee. The Committee stage of the Charities (Amendment) Bill, 2010 is headed ‘COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY’. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Resolution, Brighton, St. George. After the resumption the Resolution for the compulsory acquisition of land at Brighton, St. George is debated without an Order number or title in the source. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Resolution, end of debate. After the Minister, Hon. M. A. Lashley, had replied, a speech headed ‘Mr. H.F. LASHLEY’ repeats the Minister’s closing words about the private sector and the National Housing Corporation in St. Lucy and moves ‘that this Resolution do now pass’; it may belong to the Minister. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Adjournment. The motion reads ‘that this House do not adjourn until Tuesday, May 25, 2010’, presumably ‘do now adjourn’. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 18th May, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair. The Minutes of Tuesday, 4th May, 2010 were confirmed, and Mr. Speaker welcomed second-form students of the St. Ursaline Secondary School. The Prime Minister, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, laid the Report on the Audit of the National Insurance Fund for 2001 and 2002 and three Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) Orders, 2010, among them those for Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. and Apes Hill Development SRL; the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2010 was read a first time.

In a Ministerial Statement, the Prime Minister described the Pickering Project in St. Lucy by North Ridge Development Company Limited: a mixed-use development over nine years, with a town centre of 200 000 square feet of commercial space, a light industrial facility of 75 000 square feet, 20 acres for intensive agriculture and the restoration of the plantation house as a museum and civic centre. After Standing Orders were suspended, Mr. Speaker ruled that a prima facie case had been made out on the matter of privilege raised by the Member for St. Joseph and referred it to the Committee of Privileges, deferring it until the Opposition reviewed its membership in view of the new seating of the Member for St. Michael South East.

Under Order No. 2, the Prime Minister introduced the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2010 together with the Charities (Amendment) Bill, 2010. The measures reduce the effective rate of tax on foreign income of persons resident but not domiciled in Barbados, exempt certain dividends from tax and withholding tax, and abolish the covenant rules for charitable donations in favour of official receipts. Dr. W. F. Duguid asked whether the legislation could be used to channel donations to political parties; Mr. D. St.E. Kellman spoke on earning foreign exchange; Mr. G. A. Clarke asked who would give, citing the lack of sponsors at the 20/20 cricket, and the Prime Minister rose on points of order to correct him. Hon. C. P. Sinckler called for a Charities Commission, and the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, said the Opposition supported the Bills in principle but saw a potential for abuse and argued that the State should carry the cost of financing democracy.

Mr. H. F. Lashley, speaking as the newest member of the Democratic Labour Party Parliamentary Group, defended the Constituency Councils and said the amendments would help community-based organisations and NGOs. In reply, the Prime Minister said the Bill was not a reform of charities law, that ordinary Barbadians did make charitable contributions, citing PAREDOS and the

Barbados Museum and Historical Society, and recalled his past efforts on rules for financing political parties. The Bill passed through Committee, with Mr. J. D. Paul in the Chair, and was read a third time. The Charities (Amendment) Bill, 2010 was then read a second time without further debate and passed all its stages.

After a suspension until 2.15 p.m., Hon. M. A. Lashley moved a Resolution for the compulsory acquisition of two parcels of land at Brighton, St. George, the property of Brighton Plantation Limited, agreed by Cabinet on 6th March, 2008, to provide some 33 lots for low-income

Barbadians. Mr. G. A. Clarke supported it and raised evictions and the demand for lots elsewhere; Mr. R. C. Eastmond called for revision of landlord and tenant legislation; Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo welcomed the development for her constituents; Miss C. Y. Forde spoke of Duke's Tenantry; and Mr. Kellman raised Allen View, drawing a point of order from Miss Forde on the constituency boundaries. The Minister replied, citing 1 000 houses provided for at Pickering, and the Resolution was agreed to. On the motion of Mr. Sinckler, the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 25th May, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.