THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, May 25, 2010.

PRESENT

His Honour MICHAEL A. CARRINGTON, B.A., LLB. (Speaker)

His Honour KENNETH ST.C. BEST, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Deputy Speaker)

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

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

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

Mr. HAMILTON F. LASHLEY

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

His Excellency DENIS ST.E. KELLMAN:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Family, Youth Affairs and Sports)

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

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

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

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

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

MR. SPEAKER: This House is now in Session.

MINUTES

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I regret to inform you all that I am not yet in possession of the Minutes of Tuesday, May 18, 2010. Therefore, those Minutes will be deferred until the next available occasion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, permit me to remind you of the vacancy on the Public Accounts Committee which we need to address as a matte of urgency, as well as the situation with respect to the Committee of Privileges. We need to get that membership sorted out so that we can move on in the shortest possible time.

PAPERS

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Annual Report of the Central Bank of Barbados for the year 2009;
2. Half-yearly Reports from the revenue earning departments under the Ministry of Finance for the period October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 and April 01, 2009 to September 01, 2009.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 4

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SUM OF $2 750 000 IN THE CURRENCY OF UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, WHICH REPRESENTS ONE-THIRD OF THE TOTAL LOAN IN THE SUM OF $8 250 000 IN THE CURRENCY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FROM THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK TO THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF FINANCING THE UNIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VICE CHANCELLERY BUILDING, ON LANDS ADJACENT TO THE MONA CAMPUS IN JAMAICA.

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before the Honourable House seeks to provide a Guarantee for the University of the West Indies, through the Caribbean Development Bank, in the sum of US$2 750 000. This is one-third of a loan which the University of the West Indies within its holistic or corporate structure, seeks to borrow from the Caribbean Development Bank to finance the establishment of the office of the Vice Chancellery.

The specific terms of the loan are: the borrower is the University of the West Indies and the guarantors are the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Jamaica. The total sum is US$8 250 million; the purpose is to finance the University Enhancement Project, specifically the construction of a new building to house the Vice Chancellery, with attendant parking and associated ancillary civil works. The term of the loan is 17 years. The payment of the amount withdrawn from the Loan Account is 48 approximately equal and consecutively quarterly installments on each due date as defined in the Loan Contract, commencing on the first due date after the expiry of five years.

10.30 a.m.

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Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, in other words, you are given a five-year moratorium following the date of the loan agreement on such later due date as the bank may specify in writing. The interest rate is 4.8 per cent per annum on the amount of the loan withdrawn and outstanding. The interest shall be quarterly and there is a one per cent commitment charge on the undrawn amount from time to time.

Why the partnership of the Government of Barbados as a co-guarantor? We know that the University of the West Indies, like so many other regional institutions, is a regional project. We know that the University of the West Indies arose out of the federal commitment of these countries dating back to the 1950s. This project continues, all be it being with certain dynamic changes taking place over time. The project saw the establishment of three campuses, one university but three campuses. The first campus being in Jamaica at Mona, followed by St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago followed by Cave Hill here in Barbados. The people of the Caribbean, led by the leaders of that time, saw tertiary level education as important to continue to carry forward what we call the federal and national projects of these various island, and education was seen as the central pillar for the development of the regional project, that is, bringing regional people together, carrying forward the agenda of national development and regional development and imbuing within the characteristics of Caribbean people a sense of purpose

and a given strength. Sir, over time, we have continued to function with that early dream of Caribbean unity, fueled by Caribbean education.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados continues to be a partner in that regional project and, therefore, as part of its commitment, it stands before the Honourable House this morning, under the University of the West Indies Guarantee of Loans Act, 2007, Cap. 24, where it states that:

"The Government may by Resolution of both Houses of Parliament guarantee a payment of the principal and interest due in respect of loans granted to the university subject to such times and conditions as the Government may think fit."

It goes on to say:

"Whereas the University of the West Indies on 15th day of February, 2010, enter into an agreement with the Caribbean Development Bank, an entity having corporate status for a loan in the sum of US$8.25 million."

Mr. Speaker, the Government is before this House trying to honour that commitment as agreed to. It is well known that tertiary education is a critical transformational factor for economic growth and development. In other words, it seeks to transform the people of the nation but there are major hiccups in this process, and hiccups that go beyond the provision of tertiary level education within the region.

Mr. Speaker, evidence has shown that countries that have invested significantly in tertiary education have reached levels of economic development that set them higher on the development continuum. We just need to look at places such as Malaysia and Singapore. I am going outside of the established so-called First World countries and looking at countries that, historically, show the same kind of profile as Barbados, countries that were part of the colonial enterprise and countries that were part of the imperialistic enterprise.

Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned Singapore and we could mention South Korea, Taiwan and many other ilks, and even countries in this part of the world such as Costa Rica, Chile and countries in that vein or in that ilk.

Mr. Speaker, over the past few decades, tertiary education has seen substantial transformation both in access and in innovation relative to the University of the West Indies. Sir, demand has been driven by a multiplicity of factors but one of the major factors has been the explosion of secondary and post secondary education in the region. We have found that even here in our Barbadian space starting way back in the 940s and the 1950s with the report of the Moem Commission and what they advocated for the development of education in Barbados and across the region arising out of the riots and the civil disturbances of the mid to late 30s and the recommendations to put education central to the liberation of these particular countries and these particular entities. Sir, more particularly, in a place like Barbados in the 1960s and forward, places in the Eastern Caribbean in the 70s, places like Jamaica in the 60s, Trinidad and Tobago in the 60s, but one has seen a greater explosion particularly in the 80s in many of these countries. Sir, those persons who would not have sought to access tertiary education now seek, and have sought to access tertiary education. Sir, you have seen across the various countries as well post-secondary institutions developing to help fuel the university enterprise. Sir, one had, in Barbados, in the 60s as well, the development of the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP) and across Jamaica there are a multiplicity of post-secondary institutions both in the technical and vocational arena as well as the academic arena, in Trinidad and Tobago and in every country of the OECS because we are speaking of English-speaking Caribbean countries even though in all countries, English, Dutch, Spanish and French-speaking countries one has seen the development of local community colleges developing to assist in the post-secondary arena or the post-secondary provision of tertiary education.

Mr. Speaker, going back as far as 1997, some 13 years or so ago, regional Governments put in place a mandate of a 15 per cent enrollment of the secondary school population having access to tertiary level education because one of the problems that was discerned was that only five per cent was, in fact, accessing tertiary level education. Sir, that figure was too small to push the development of Caribbean society, of Caribbean economies, at the pace at which it should be pushed. Sir, since that period one has seen a movement, with some countries still at the five per cent access to tertiary education and some countries approaching some 41 per cent of access.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to note that Barbados is approaching that 41 per cent of access to post secondary education, captured at the University of the West Indies with its local campus here, the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP), Erdiston Teachers College and institutions such of that ilk. The Bahamas also shows that same profile, Trinidad and Tobago is in the region of about 35 per cent, Jamaica is still somewhat under that even though Jamaica has a multiplicity of tertiary level institutions present within its space but, Jamaica, even though being one of the first campuses established had issues and problems at the level of its secondary provision.

H/A65B/10:40 Sequence 3

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Hon. R.D. JONES: ...even though one of the first Campuses being established, had issues and problems at the level of its secondary provision. That has not now been past, but that was part of the problem within the Jamaican educational environment.

In Barbados we have spoken in the past of one tertiary graduate per household. Persons took that to mean that we were talking about one university graduate per household, but we were speaking generally about one tertiary level graduate per household. It means persons coming out of the Barbados Community College; persons being trained at Erdiston Teachers College, which is a post-secondary institution; persons coming out of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic with their Higher National Diplomas and programmes of that ilk. We have spoken of persons now coming out of that institution with the Higher Level Caribbean Vocational Qualifications(CVQs).

Mr. Speaker, I believe we have about 150 tertiary level institutions operating in the region. That is quite a lot, but the demand for tertiary level education is great. Several of them, as I said, operating in Jamaica, followed by Trinidad and Tobago. Most of those in Trinidad and Tobago tend to be part of the national enterprise out of Trinidad and Tobago. Sir, Jamaica liberalised under the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and therefore their space became open for many institutions to establish a presence in Jamaica. It was done inadvertently, and there are pressures now within the Jamaican establishment for equity. The same way that the University of the West Indies is treated by the Government of Jamaica, they are demanding to be treated with the same level of justice and equity within that space.

Several of the tertiary level institutions come out of the United States of America. Many of them out of Florida and along the eastern seaboard of the United States. My viewing of some of them would suggest there are highly accredited. I want to make that point that there are highly accredited. As you know, tertiary level institutions should be accredited, even though there are many bogus ones that from time to time would seek to invade your space. That is why we have been able to have a very well functioning accreditation agencies in several Caribbean countries. Not all of the Caribbean countries have moved with the same alacrity as Jamaica, Trinidad or Barbados.

Sir, I remember in the last term the Barbados Accreditation Council Bill was passed in this Honourable House. At the time we were in Opposition and we participated in that debate and supported the establishment of our National Accreditation Council.

Sir, the next step, of course, is to have a fully functioning Regional Accreditation Council. Only recently Barbados had not as yet signed onto to the Regional Accreditation Council. Recently I have given the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education the information to communicate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to get that project completed and Barbados signed onto the Regional Accreditation Council.

Sir, the Regional Accreditation Council has been a project of the CARICOM as mandated by COSOD for a long time to ensure that there is an all-embracing Regional Accreditation Council that can do the kind of work within the Caribbean space, so we know that these educational institutions are first registered, and all of their programmes that they bring to Caribbean people would meet the kind of quality and standards as established by both the National and Regional Accreditation Agencies.

Sir, of these 150 tertiary level institutions in the region, 60 per cent are public. In other words rolled out or supported by national Governments across the Caribbean. Sir, 30 per cent are private; 10 per cent could receive some kind of governmental support. I want to repeat those statistics, 60 per cent are publicly funded institutions in some form; 10 per cent are given some governmental support and 30 per cent are private educational institutions at the regional level.

Now regional enrollment at the tertiary education is estimated at approximately 9 per cent of the age cohort. I think I mentioned just in passing those figures, that is low. The age cohorts who are leaving secondary education, some who might be going into post-secondary, but not at full-fledged degree granting institutions, and who would want to access undergraduate and postgraduate training at these various universities.

Sir, students receive education through a whole set of modalities. You have your face-to-face, online process, particularly as done through the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies and also through what we call the Blended Concept, both face-to-face and online education as well.

Sir, the influx of offshore institutions providing education has alighted issues of quality assurance, articulation and accreditation. In the articulation arena, you have to be able to see how the programmes that are provided by these various institutions can be articulated so that there is a seamless flow between the various institutions. We have had several articulation agreements signed between the University of the West Indies and several of these institutions operating within the Caribbean. There would be a Memorandum of Understanding capturing an Articulation Agreement between the Barbados Community College and Community Colleges in places

like Antigua, St. Lucia, Anguilla and wherever there are, and the University of the West Indies. So that you can have two years at the Associate Degree level and two years of studies at the University of the West Indies.

Sir, we know that the provision of education at these Community Colleges tend to be more economically sustainable than possibly at the higher cost institutions such as the University of the West Indies, that higher cost fluctuates between where the Campuses are, because of certain locally dominating variables within those countries.

Sir, the University of the West Indies still continues nevertheless to dominate tertiary education provision in the region, catering currently to just over 40 000 students across four Campuses. I mentioned Cave Hill, Mona, St. Agustine and the Open Campus that ostensively serve the fifteen contributing countries and Anguilla, through livelong learning programmes and certificate and degree programmes offered through online and face-to-face delivery.

Sir, one cannot really question the role that the University of the West Indies has played in the development of the Caribbean region as the primary provider of tertiary for six decades. We celebrated, I believe, two years ago, that 60th Anniversary. In two years, I believe, in 2012, the Cave Hill Campus would be celebrating 50 years as a functioning and viable entity, providing education here in Barbados and across the OECS, as well as students coming from Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas and Bermuda. Bermuda has recently joined the family of the West Indies.

Sir, way back in the Grand Anse Declaration of 1989...

HA 65B 10.50 a.m. Sequence 4

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House A65B, Sequence 05, 10.50 a.m.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, in the Grand Anse Declaration of 1989, the University of the West Indies was recognised as a regional institution indefinitely. In other words, it is making the statement that you should not see a moving away or a pairing off of the regional focus of the University of the West Indies.

I have mentioned before that there are challenges. One saw challenges in the campus at Mona basically unilaterally declaring a Faculty of Law and that caused a major ricochet across the Caribbean space but I believe that we have come to some accommodation for that enterprise. We know here in Barbados the Faculty of law was established at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus, in Trinidad, the Faculty of Engineering at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus and at University of the West Indies Mona Campus, the Faculty of Medicine, albeit each country still being able to carry programmes at the level of humanities, at the level of natural sciences, at the level of social sciences. Sir, these specific faculties were established in these regions.

Mr. Speaker, one saw, as greater and greater demand being impacted on the three campuses, we are going back to a Faculty of Medicine here in Barbados, the Faculty of Engineering still continues in Trinidad and now the Faculty of Law being established at Mono that, as I said, has caused substantial strain because the University of the West Indies must still be seen as a regional project.

We do not believe that any national Government has the capacity to continue to carry by themselves, their own particular university in the form that we have the University of the West Indies spread across these three campuses and now, the open campus of the University of the West Indies. Therefore, if we are to continue to see the University of the West Indies as a regional project, Governments within the region must still see the need to support, as we do here in Barbados, the provision of the economic cost for the University of the West Indies.

The various countries have played with the tuition of that provision but in Barbados we have, from the inception and continues even to this day, providing the full tuition for Barbadian students, accessing education at the University of the West Indies wherever those Barbadian students are. We have not, nevertheless, close the door on students who want to go to other spaces to have either a cosmopolitan flavour to their education or accessing education from those places. We have even gone as far as recognising online education for funding through the Student Revolving Loan Fund, because in our democracy, we are seeing that there are programmes that you might not be able to access at any of our tertiary level institutions here in Barbados and that Barbadian students must be able to go wherever they are, either in a physical presence or using online distance level modalities to be able to access that education. We are moving ahead in Barbados apace, to ensure that young people and that our people generally are able to access that education.

Mr. Speaker, where there are serious deficits in the developmental agenda of Barbados, we will continue to support the National Development Scholarship and special awards to ensure that Barbadians are able to access that education. This blossoming, we have even seen it here in Barbados where our campus, even though still a small campus, student-wise, has been able to move from just about 3 000 students ten years ago to more than 8 000 students.

The demographic profile of that intake changing to an age cohort that in my day and in the day of the Leader of the House and in the day of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and in the day of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central when we were older students at the University of the West Indies, we were in our 20s, to now here you find students 19-years-old, 20-years-old providing challenges to the University of the West Indies' Cave Hill Campus generally across the entire university space, and where the university is challenged to deal with a student who might not be - not all of them, Sir, - as serous as those of us who started out our educational journey, at tertiary level, having first worked, or was working and knowing that we had to go into the university with a level of seriousness that several of our young people might not be approaching studies and that has presented some challenges.

I know here in Barbados that the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus is seeking to confront those challenges by putting in place and saying to its lecturers that they have to understanding the young people which are before them. In other words, without sacrificing your own intellect or your academic pursuits that you have to give those young people a chance, in order to reach the highest levels of their academic enterprise. Many of our young people are, in fact, without dilution of the programme, stepping up to meet the academic enterprise but we know that more and move have to access across the region because the First World Powers are moving ahead at a rapid pace. It is a competitive environment and in order to satisfy the competitive environment it means that education must remain central and pivotal with varying programmes, historical programmes, new programmes looking for niches that education can satisfy, in order to ensure that we are not further and further marginalised.

Even at this time that I speak and I addressed this issue in another place, I know that we are keeping an eye, Mr. Speaker, on the unfolding drama in Jamaica.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Not Trinidad, Mr. Speaker. The Trinidad people went through a democratic exercise, keeping with democratic principles, long established within the Caribbean region and part of that enterprise is as a result of the blossoming of the minds of our people to understand the democratic pursuit. This is why in Barbados where we are approaching 41 per cent accessing some form of post secondary education that our own democratic enterprise exercised, which is near to five years or 4½ years or whatever period, takes place without physical violence. There might be occasionally certain verbal barbs, some of it is comical in its extreme but still a learning enterprise because of the education which we have implanted within our people, and if we want to see that democratic enterprise continue, then we have to ensure that more and more of our people have access to tertiary education, that more and more vistas are open before them, that they can see why the system functions as it does, that they will bring transformation to the system, that there will be a reformation of the political and democratic enterprise but all of this has to be undergirded by solid education and not going down to the lower echelons. Sir, we are going to have a major debate in this Parliament on primary, nursery, secondary education, private education, and education as a tourism product taking place in Barbados.

Sir, within this, the role of the Vice Chancellery is extremely important because of the strategic focus which it has in unifying and in providing the kind of quality assurance, the interface with Governments, planning and development, the generation of funding and maintenance of the University of the West Indies' international linkages and international face.

House A65B, Sequence 05, 11:00:09

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Hon. R. D. JONES: As the central coordinating arm of the university, the Vice Chancellery is responsible for its institutional coherence across the entire Caribbean space; the key aspects of promoting regionality including harmonisation and integration of the management systems; collaboration across the university for joint delivery of programmes and encouraging Governments and other agencies to source expertise from the University of the West Indies on an institutional basis rather than on an individual basis.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we know how the university is structured. We know that there is a regional project such as the Campus Council and the University's Financial and General Purposes Committee. At the individual level, you would find those same things, so you would have a Cave Hill Campus Council and a Cave Hill Financial and General Purposes Committee. Government is represented on all of those committees and plays a critical and pivotal role in the direction of the University of the West Indies. The Democratic Labour Party Government continues to show through the provision of the resources of funds to the University of the West Indies...

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: There is no cut. This year, the University of the West Indies will have access to over $128 million for the economic cost across the region. On top of that, we provide some $30 million for tuition fees which would cover Barbadian students at any of the campuses. Mr. Speaker, the economic cost of Barbadian students in Trinidad and Tobago doing medicine, dentistry,

engineering or any of the other programmes is covered by the people of Barbados through the Government. The tuition fee of the over 6 000 Barbadian students here in Barbados is also covered and the tuition fee of students studying in Jamaica is also covered.

Mr. Speaker, one of the sad realities is that the other side knows that reflected in our Estimates always... This is no playing around with any partisan political agenda. I can share with the House so that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West do not get up and spout from his...

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central were ordered expunged from the record by Mr. Speaker.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I can share with the House so that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West would not get up and speak of things that he does not know or does not understand.

I commend the Barbados Labour Party Government for maintaining the level of historical support that has always been there for education but you do not try to take from the Democratic Labour Party process of the same continuum because you want to get into partisan wrangling. I do not like to get down into the gutter with anybody but the truth must always be told.

Mr. Speaker, approved expenditure over seven years for the University of the West Indies... Let us state the facts. You have sitting next to you Honourable Member for Christ Church West a former Minister of Education who I know has served on the Campus Council of the University of the West Indies both at the regional and domestic levels, who I know served on the Finance and General Purposes Committee and who I know has been a strong defender for the delivery of educational services for young people. Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member in his asides, which I know you did not hear, seeks to impute that we cut this and cut that, then he has to be...

In 2003-2004, $76 million; in 2004-2005, there was a little adjustment; in 2005-2006, there was a little adjustment; but right across the years we have always come back to this House and we have voted over $40 million, $50 million, or $60 million more and the supplementary provision and that will happen again this year as we approach a period in November.

Mr. Speaker, this jumping on a racehorse because you might live near that area or used to live near that area is uncalled for. I am shocked. I keep reminding the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that I knew his father. His mother is a product of a school I went to, Washington High, and therefore I know they are two proud and great people so getting into partisan political divide on an issue like this will get my ire. I do not want to divert nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, but these are the facts. I would not come before the House without the facts.

Mr. Speaker, the previous Government supported the establishment of the Vice Chancellery. Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member is absent of knowledge and his intellectual is in a skid at this moment, he needs to ask those who have been there, who have done that, who sit in the highest councils of the University of the West Indies, of those things and he will be put right rather than being silly.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I am not anticipating because we have conversations with him and he has been at a loss when it comes to education.

It has been established before that the administrative arm of the University of the West Indies, the Vice Chancellery, must be strengthened particularly in its strategic management processes, structures and support systems in order to achieve greater institutional effectiveness and efficiency. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East has spoken to this as well.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Jamaica cut the provision for the University of the West Indies by 33 per cent. That has caused a major ricochet across the University of the West Indies and major problems among the student population in Jamaica. The Barbados Government has not done that. That is as a result of the people of Barbados continuing to provide through the provision of taxes and whatever moneys that we can use for the purpose of educating all Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, the current accommodation housing the Vice Chancellery currently located at the Mona Campus is inadequate and overcrowded. This has severely affected the efficiency of its daily operations as well as the functioning of some its key processes. Mr. Speaker, in order to change that profile of the Vice Chancellery, a project costing some $20 million - I am not going to calculate but it could be JAM$1.6 billion - is being set up.

Mr. Speaker, when you do financial statements at the University of the West Indies, there are denominated in two currencies; the currency of Barbados and the currency of Jamaica. I am just using those to show you what it would cost in Jamaican currency as well as in the Barbadian currency, which is some BDS$20 million. The $8.5 million will not come to BDS$20 million but the university itself will put in a provision and other contributions to top it up that figure. Mr. Speaker, this project therefore needs to start.

Mr. Speaker, the University of the West Indies has a renewed focus on research and innovation. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Innovation and the Ministry of Health are working closely with the University of the West Indies here in Barbados to ensure that we will have the kind of synergy which will push forward those critical areas for development as identified by the partners in education, the Government of Barbados and the University of the West Indies and to some extent the Barbados Community College.

Even as we speak, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Community College is going through a re-energising process to ensure that it is able now to further step up to the plate and continue to provide not only Associate Degrees in the applied areas of education but that according to the Act which established the Barbados Community College that it can also provide undergraduate degrees to those persons.

Right now there are currently two in the Bachelors of Fine Arts and in the technical vocational area but we are looking to roll out areas of growth in physical education, in cultural studies, in the humanities, in physics, in chemistry and in whatever area which would create the opportunity for the University of the West Indies to move more and more towards a post-graduate delivery of education where serious and deeply imbedded research can be used to impact more and more on the Barbadian landscape and on the landscape of the eastern Caribbean.

House A65B Sequence 6

11.10 a.m.

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, the Vice Chancellery Building will therefore house the Office of the Vice Chancellery, where you will have the Campus Bursar and the Campus Registrar and the Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management. Sir, we know that we sit within a space where there are earthquakes, hurricanes and floods. There will also be the headquarters for the Institute for Criminal Justice and Security. At this time, an institution like that, having the space to look at Caribbean society, Caribbean civilisation, Caribbean justice system, Caribbean violence, at-risk young people, at-risk people, particularly as I mentioned what is unfolding in the area of crime and violence in Caribbean societies, we need all parties to be on board. Therefore, the University of the West Indies has to be a partner in the process, to understand the dynamics of all that is taking place in these fragile societies and economies, where a garrison community can now confront the might and power of the State in Jamaica. Sir, the State has to respond because if a garrison community overpowers the State in any Caribbean society, there will be a cascading effect right across countries, where the criminal elements in a society which operates within certain garrison environment as well would believe that they have the power to come out of those garrison communities and spread their wings far and wide. Sir, in such circumstances, the political power, the policymakers and the Government will be brought to its knees. Therefore, as we look at what is unfolding in Jamaica, we pray and give support to the Government of Jamaica to bring quickly what is unfolding in Tivoli Gardens and the surrounding areas in Kingston to quick halt and that the lives of civilians will be spared. I do not want to hear of collateral damage in two-day's time but those who are involved in an enterprise that threatens the State should cease and desist and allow innocent civilians, children and women, to be able to have continued life and to have their purposeful being within the Jamaican society.

Sir, I am not into a social policy discussion but the University of the West Indies is located there and I know that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been having contact through our Honorary Counsel, even as I speak, to ensure that those Barbadians who have not yet returned home are safe within the environment. We know that the examinations for many have finished and that they usually come home in the summer. Many of them have returned but we are keeping an eye on the situation to ensure that Barbadian students are not affected or that they are not in the area of harm. Sir, we know that the Jamaican Constabulary and the Jamaican Defense Force will protect all innocent civilians at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Speaker, there are still some challenges, we have to encourage our young people not to take the provision of publicly funded education for granted. We have to encourage our young people that they need to spend more time being committed to the educational project; that they have to spend more time seeking to operate at the highest level of excellence in their studies; that they need to be more focused when they have their education at the expense of their parents and others within the society. That is what I would hope would be the message that is being brought by their parents, persons in their communities and by Members of Parliament. We know they are bright young people but that at the end of the day if they wane, if they spend a lot of time not focused on their education, then it becomes inefficient and ineffective and that there is a substantial drain in the resources of the country, the moneys which we have provided for their education.

Mr. Speaker, I have taken this debate a little wide because I think we need to reenforce the need for these countries to access more and more education to take the project forward. I am hoping within the next ten years or so that Barbados would be able to say that we are now approaching some 60 per cent of the relevant age cohort accessing to tertiary education. Sir, I am not talking about

graduates coming only from the University of the West Indies but graduates with a Barbados Community College refocus, a Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, a Barbados Hospitality Institute refocus, an Erdiston Teachers Training College refocus that we could say with some authority that 60 per cent of the relevant age cohort has access to tertiary education.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I beg to move that this Resolution do now past.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this is a matter which the Opposition supports and let me say so at the outset, it is a matter that involves the provisioning of the administration headquarters for the Vice Chancellery. Sir, we are well-aware that separate from our commitments to the Cave Hill Campus, the Government of Barbados contractually has to assume responsibility for elements of the expenditure of the operation of the central university, which is led by the Vice Chancellery. Sir, having said that, we recognised that the university has had, in these challenging times, to start to look at some mechanisms that will allow it to be able to meet the demand for it.

I will say from the outset that we do have some genuine concerns about tertiary education and the need for us to be able to expand and to have access to it at an even more rapid rate than we are currently doing. Sir, like everyone else in this Honourable Chamber, we believe that education is the means by which most people will be able to secure a sustainable foundation for themselves and their families. Sir, to that extent, we believe that the goal which we set as a party when we were in Government, one graduate per household which captures graphically the scale of the expansion, even if not a little application of it in respect of how it would be achieved that goal is critical in securing Barbados' economic stability as we go forward.

It is in that context that we do have some legitimate concerns we believe, both in the context of the University of the West Indies but equally in the context of the University College of Barbados. Sir, we went through the Estimates process, and the assurance was not given to this Honourable House until just now, and I wish to thank the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development for giving the assurance that while the Estimates of Expenditure provide $78 million as the amount for the University of the West Indies, we both know that the amount the Government is required to spend on average is between $128 million to $130 million per year. Therefore, you are short by some $50 million in what is published in these Estimates.

Mr. Speaker, the provision of tuition fees is recorded separately from that amount to which I just referred and has equally fallen short this year by some $4 million, from $34 million to $30 million. Therefore, when you add what is here in the Estimates between the provision for the university itself and the paying of the fees for Barbadian students at the University of the West Indies, you are down some $55 million.

11.20 a.m.

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HON. MISS M.A. MOTTLEY: Now, while the Honourable Minister did not say so explicitly, I think there is reason for us to assume, and I am prepared to take my seat if it is not true, that the $4 million shortfall on tuition fees will also be made up, and, in fairness, you do not know what your tuition fee bill is until later in the year.

Mr. Speaker, our concern is this. When we would have, in the past, not show necessarily the full amount for the University of the West Indies, we were not running a deficit at the outset of 7.4 per cent nor were we pledging to reduce that deficit to 5.2 per cent in the next financial year as the Government's medium-term fiscal strategy set out. A reduction from 7.4 per cent to 5.2 per cent is effectively means that you are going to find $200 million either in additional revenue or in expenditure cuts. Sir, that is what it means, it is like balancing a budget at home. You have got to find the money from somewhere.

Mr. Speaker, we are happy for the fact that the Government, in the interest of Barbadians students, because I believe this to be the most important investment that we make as a people because it secures the future of our young people. It teaches them how to fish rather than giving them fish. While we acknowledge that, there will, of necessity, be implications in the rest of Government's programme, given what Government has set itself for next year and given what we know to a $1.5 billion deficit, without bringing to book the full liability of the Barbados Government for the provision of education at the University of the West Indies. Sir, it is a serious issue and we have to discuss it.

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate that we may not have a Budget in May anymore but we say that at some point when the Budget comes, we will know what is the intervention that the Ministry of Finance is proposing to make in order to stabilise the situation because, as we already know, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which is not usually understated in these Estimates nor the Drug Service equally are facing the prospect of receiving amounts that are underestimated by at least $15 million in each instance. Sir, the stated commitment to the students of Barbados is

welcomed but it will inevitably have implications for the rest of Government's programme.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also say that the university itself must continue, perhaps even more aggressively, its pursuit of alternative funds, in order to supplement what the Government has stated it would provide. We had, when we first came to Government in 1994, to pass special legislation for the provision of serial bonds for the University of the West Indies because the reality was that the arrears owed by the Barbados Government, coming out of the 1991 to 1994 period, mounted considerably and it was causing serious problems for the University of the West Indies in terms of its planning and in terms of its execution of its programmes. They asked us immediately, upon coming to Government, if we would agree to the passage of legislation for serial bonds to be issued because, if at least they were able to receive the bonds, which would not affect Government's (11:24:57) cash flow, fiscal current account deficit, they would be able to go and sell those bonds, at a discount, to long-term investors such that the university could get on with its business. Sir, that mechanism remains there and the Minister of Education needs to tell us whether the Government is proposing to make up the difference between what has been voted here by means of the issuance of the serial bonds or whether it proposes to pay out of the fiscal current account, as normally is done.

Mr. Speaker, this is important because there will be implications for the cash flow of the University of the West Indies and we trust that we recognise that effectively what we are talking about is a little more, almost 40 per cent of the overall budget that they have requested from the Government of Barbados. Sir, we ask the Honourable Minister to provide those details.

Mr. Speaker, there are some comments I would wish to make as it relates to some developments generally in the university. I must confess that I, like the rest of Barbados - I think the Minister of Education too was surprised when his colleagues, separately, the Honourable Member from St. James South and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West both expressed their difficulty with the notion of the University of the West Indies building a chapel on lands just above where its newest administrative buildings have been built on the right hand side of the road going down University Drive. I did not say very much on the issue until the very end largely because I find it amazing that it is okay for the university to have a gym, it is okay for the university to have a restaurant, it is okay for the university to have a bar but the notion that the university should not have a chapel but should only use the churches in the district is one that I think is an unfortunate expression of opinion in the circumstances because the university tries to provide for all of the different dimensions of their students. There are some students who may want recreation, and re-creation is provided on campus. There are some students who may want physically activity in the form of sports and that is provided for on campus. There are students who may want to go into the library and have access to a wider range of books beyond their course study and that is provided for on campus. Sir, all of us know that when you are under tremendous pressure, particularly as you are when you are studying for exams at any age, that there are times when you need quiet reflection. Sir, quite reflection is not only about mental preparation but very often is about spiritually as well and, to that extent, the ability to have, on campus, a place which would allow for that quiet reflection and that development of one's spiritually is something that we should indeed encourage rather than cry down.

Mr. President, the Mona Campus has, perhaps, one of the loveliest chapels that you can find on any university in this part of the Americas and, indeed, the converse happens, that the wider community uses it. Sir, in the same way that we accept that persons will go to church, perhaps, at churches in the community on a Sunday, or if they are Seventh Day Adventist, on a Saturday, there is need on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday too. Sir, sometimes when the church services are not happening and the church maybe locked, the university itself would have the chapel open for longer hours because of the nature of what it does. Mr. Speaker, equally, we would expect that the wider Barbadian community will be able to have access to the chapel as well, once it is built and completed. Sir, to that extent, it is to be encouraged.

Mr. Speaker, I also to touch the notion that goes to the heart of the regional character of the university as it relates to what areas of specialities the various campus territories should have.

H/A65B/11:30 Sequence 8

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Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: ... as it relates to what areas of specialties the various Campus territories should have.

Like wise, when the University of the West Indies was first formed, there was a recognition that this was a enterprise that had to retain a regional character. Indeed, there are many persons who work throughout the Caribbean whose sense of West Indian identity was largely bolstered by those years that they spent, either when it was the University College of the West Indies or indeed when it become the University of the West Indies. The fact that there were certain disciplines kept to be preserved of a particular Campus meant that if you wanted to do engineering, you went to Trinidad and Tobago. If you

wanted to do medicine, you went to Mona, Jamaica. If you wanted to do law, you went to Cave Hill.

I am deeply concerned by the replication of all of the professional schools in each territory, largely to deal with the issue with lack of access. To put it another way, largely to deal with the spiraling demand that is taking place for the particular disciplines that are offered. I am concerned that when Barbados, and I make this as a general comment, offers medicine, when Jamaica, as it now has goals, to offer law and engineering, what we now have is the distinct nationalisation of aspects of the University of the West Indies in a way that would not inure in my humble view to the benefit of the university as a whole, nor indeed will it benefit the particular provision of teaching skills, because it means that which could have been concentrated in one faculty and allow where people could have interacted with each other, and where there could be benefits as a result of those synergies, is now diffused and spread over three separate countries, in circumstances where I believe that we will not see a strengthening of the University's output.

I was a little surprised, I must tell, when these developments started. In fairness, the Medical Faculty would have started towards the end of our administration. In the case of Jamaica, I believe it would have happened in the course of the last year. The Minister is in a better position to speak to these issues than I am, but suffice it to say that I think it was the wrong way to deal with the shortage of places that may have existed within the particular disciplines.

There is no doubt that there should be an expansion of the numbers accessing medical training, engineering training and legal training. There is no doubt that the Caribbean will be a net exporter of labour in the future as we go forward, but we do not treat to these issues, in my view, to our advantage is we seek essentially to nationalise the provision of training in the professional disciplines.

I also want to make the point that there is no doubt in my mind that we are going to have to find additional opportunities for Barbadian students beyond the University of the West Indies. There was a time where the accepted wisdom was that the University of the West Indies could provide all that we needed in this island of 166 square miles, in terms of tertiary education places. I do not believe that to be the case. It was for that reason that we would have, in the Ministry of Education, started the efforts towards the University College of Barbados, not initially as a competitor to the University of the West Indies, but in recognition that tertiary education does not only relate to academic studies, but it also relates to applied areas. There are persons, for example, who may need tertiary training as Pharmacists. There are persons who may need tertiary training in other applied areas the in sciences and the Arts. The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, as structured, was not in a position to expand into those areas, but concentrated on the traditional disciplines and, indeed, as I said, the professional areas that you see at Mona, St. Augustine and Cave Hill.

Sir, I am a little concerned, and I would wish the Minister of Education to give us an update. The Government clearly does not like the name University College of Barbados. The Government clearly wants to put its own name on something so that it can be associated with it, but when all is said and done, the Government cannot deny that one of the things that has happened over the last 15 years, is that we have been able to expand significantly over 50 per cent of the number of students leaving secondary school with four certificates or more, and thereby legitimately wanting and capable of matriculating into some tertiary level programme, even if not at the full university level.

It was for that reason that we have seen the enrollment of the University of the West Indies trebled over the last 15 years. It is for that reason that we have seen the enrollment at the Barbados Community College virtually trebled. It is for that reason that we have seen the enrollment at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic more than doubled, and we have not started to scratch the service, yet, because we are turning away thousands of students every year from being able to get into tertiary level institutions in Barbados' because of our inability to execute the expansion which was contemplated in the University College of Barbados.

Sir, I say to you that it is an urgent matter. There are some things which the Government may find that other entities can appropriately do, but there are some things given our commitment for the kind of socio political system that we have chosen to hold dearly, that the Government has to play the lead in. The University College of Barbados allowed for us to integrate the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Barbados Community College and Erdiston Training College, to remove the duplication of costs, in terms of registry and admissions, to remove the duplication of costs in terms of the management of the finances and the accounting departments, but equally to undertake the expansion that would be necessary, both physically and virtually, in order to be able to meet that demand of students that has arrived.

Sir, when we came to office, we came to office with a commitment. The first task I had to undertake in tertiary education, as Minister of Education, was to speak to the World Bank and to tell the World Bank, that the Government of Barbados was not prepared to draw down a single cent from the education loan, if they retained the commitment that the previous Government had given for the charging of tuition fees at the Barbados Community

College, University of the West Indies and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. That was the very first task.

Sir, we signaled then, that we were prepared to treat to education as the corner stone of economic development in Barbados, both at the micro and the macro level. We appointed a Committee Chaired by Dr. Leonard Shorey to investigate the feasibility of financing tertiary education. That Committee recommended that students should pay 50 per cent of their tuition fees and that the Government of Barbados should continue to pay 50 per cent.

HA65B 11.40 a.m. Sequence 9

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House A65B, Sequence 10, 11.40 a.m.

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

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, that Committee Chaired by Dr. Shorey recommended that the Government should pay 50 per cent of the tuition fees and that the students should pay 50 per cent. We as a Cabinet reviewed the report and we felt that it would place too onerous a burden on the particular households and that people who could think of just going to university as a matter of course like how you go to Bridgetown would be precluded from access to tertiary education in circumstances where their predecessors would have benefitted from years of unlimited tertiary education at the University of the West Indies.

We took a decision that spoke to our fundamental beliefs that the one thing this country - even if the rest of us as a society must pay for it, even if we spread the cost over the 100 000 or more working people - that the one thing we must do to preserve the stability of this country was to allow people to attend the University of the West Indies irrespective of their circumstances of their birth. It is a commitment which we still firmly have but we recognise that the time may come when the society as a whole, as well as the university will have to treat to the escalating cost of the provision of tertiary education.

We still feel that cost should not be borne by the student because that particular household, which may not be able to come up with $2 000 to $4 000, whether it is 50 per cent or $25 per cent, that the particular student should not be denied the opportunity to study where the inclination and the discipline were there for them to do so. And that as a society what we are in fact doing is making an investment into the long term economic stability of this country, as well as the area of law and order, because people who are prepared to sustain themselves are less likely to get into disorderly activity when the day comes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore, the rest of the society bearing the cost, in fact, is not only charitable and altruistic but, in fact, an investment into the stability that the rest of the society enjoys, by reason of the expansion of the economic opportunities, by reason on the safety of our society and the safety of our society. We have come to appreciate in recent times is, perhaps, one of the most important things, particularly as we see not just what is going on in Jamaica but you have a country like St. Kitts, where the murder rate is perhaps on the same level as Jamaica. Thirty-eight thousand people, thirty-eight murders.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if Barbados was to have the same per capita rate of murder as St. Kitts, we would have 270 murders a year, instead of the 25 or so that we have. So that the money that we spend in making sure that the child from Hillaby or that child from Bush Hall Yard Gap, or that child from Silver Hill Housing Area or Lodge Road, or Jackmans, their mother was laid off, she is on a three-day week, the rest of the time when they pick her back up so she worked six months on a three-day week. She does not work for the rest of the six months of the year drawing unemployment benefit, which is only a percentage of the salary she would have earned, and that child she has, who may have to go to the University of the West Indies. Already she has to find money for books.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if on top of books, transportation and food for the child, she had to look for $2 000 as 50 per cent of the tuition fee, you could see that the child would not be going very far, or that child would have to look for work and at the best interpretation in looking for work, taking away from their ability to be able to study. Sir, if work is scarce as it is now because of difficult economic circumstances, the child may well have to drop out and differ until they can save the money.

Sir, I am clear as to why the Barbados approach in relation to the provision of free tertiary education requires absolute defence at all cost but I am equally responsible enough to know that we will have to conduct discussions in this country as to appropriately offer what we as a Government can continue to give, how it must be given, where the cost comes and where the returns come.

At that extent, I expect that this Government will start that discussion with the people of Barbados. I say to the Minister of Education but equally to the Minister of Economic Affairs, the Minister of Finance, that this is the kind of discussion that is required now because you cannot underestimate by $55 million what is here and have a deficit going into the fiscal year of 7.4 per cent, want to go

to 5.2 per cent next year and expect that there will be no implications for Government programming.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that this is a discussion that can take place. I also feel that we are owed an explanation as to the status of progress with the University College of Barbados. When we left Government, the draft Legislation was completed. Indeed, a significant amount of work as put into it. When I established the Committees originally, I had asked Mr. Joseph Goddard and Mr. Bobby Morris to take responsibility for the leadership of the Committee. I had a bipartisan approach for the development of the institution because I always understood that an educational institution must remain above politics. This is not about the battle between you and me on this side for an immediate election. This is about building an institution that will help secure this country's future.

It is of some concern to me that some two years and four months later, a Minister of State with specific responsibility for the provision of tertiary education for the majority of that time, we are none the wiser as to where we stand with the University College of Barbados. I go further. I believe that beyond the University of the West Indies and the University College of Barbados that there must equally be an aggressive expansion to attract other universities to locate themselves here to be able to reach persons in the rest of the region and, indeed, in Central and Latin America and the wider world.

The truth is, a student is an educational tourist. When all is said and done, a student who is studying here from overseas, is living here for seven of the 12 months of the year on average. It therefore is a plan that I believe to be complimentary to the work that the Ministry of Tourism does. It also allows in our instance, opportunities of Barbadian businesses and homeowners to be able to provide services, whether it is in accommodation or transportation through the public service vehicles, minimarts, bars or medical services. The exponential impact of the presence of that student here is so great, while at the same time creating additional opportunities for Barbadian students, who may want choice beyond the University of the West Indies and the University College of Barbados.

House A65B, Sequence 10, 11:50:19

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, last week I spoke about a Joint Select Committee of Parliament. I do not believe that our only role is to just get up in here and talk as an Opposition and go home. I do not want to hear about the past because I keep telling you that we would not secure the future by dwelling in the past but I feel that this country is robbing itself of the ability to draw on the skills of the majority population.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if Prime Minister Kamla Persaud-Bissessar election stands, in my view, as historic for one thing, it is in her commitment to reform the governance of Trinidad and Tobago more than anything else.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, unless you have a way of drawing on the people and unless you have mechanisms that can be reformed to take out the cobwebs to remove it... You are going to hear me talk about it over and over and over in and out of here because I feel passionately about it. Unless we can find a way where Parliament can play a more meaningful role in support of the Executive and as an appropriate check and balance on the Executive... We have the ability to be taking, in my view, programmes, recommendations and suggestions... I am putting it before the Cabinet. This notion that you should only govern with the divided walls of the traditional West Minster system is one, in my view, that is deleterious and does not assist the development of small states such as ours.

I feel strongly that education has been a brand for Barbados. Education has been at the foundation of us being able to liberate our people out of poverty. There is still a hard core of persons who remain there, some of them needs special needs education but they too at tertiary level can get additional training that allows them to be able to earn for themselves. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have not yet therefore touch the surface in terms of what can be the opportunities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was amazed also at the fact that Trinidad and Tobago under the PNM understood it too. They implemented free tertiary education only 12 years ago at a time when Barbados had it 40 years ago and they have seen an expansion in the number of persons going to university - clearly, their population base is 1.3 million - which moved from 8 000, 15 years ago to 55 000. When we were talking about the University College of Barbados, they were talking about a University of Technology of Trinidad and Tobago. A UTT has been established and is expanding and we are still talking about a University College of Barbados. These are the things that would cause us to lag behind.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there are issues, utilise the skills of both Houses and in the broader civil society and let us get the thing done. It is not simply about BLP, DLP, DLP, BLP. Barbados does not have the resource base of 270 000 persons to be artificially divided who can help and who can do work. It is not about a hankering after being in Government, it is about having systems that allow all people who want to assist to come on board and be able to deal with it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why we kept saying that when we hear in budgets the rhetoric of "Team

Barbados" without the appropriate systems being put in place, all it does is to lead to disenchantment among our people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have tried to address some of the issues in the context of tertiary education but believe you me I believe that we have not yet scratched the surface here. I believe that it is critical to secure law and order, to secure economic sustainability and indeed to allow us once again to be able to export citizens to the rest of the world in order to make that defining difference to their families as well as to the country in terms of the earning of foreign exchange.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have not had a full scale education debate for some time and therefore in a sense I have treated this morning as that in relation to the provision of tertiary education even though we are only dealing with a loan guarantee. We will support the loan guarantee but we have concerns that we believe to be legitimate and we have also ideas that we believe that can help the country go forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do want the Government to be frank with us in relation to the University College of Barbados. You cannot continue telling 4 000 and 5 000 Bajan students every year that they cannot get into the Barbados Community College or the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. The figures may well be more than that, the Minister can check because when we left Government two and a half years ago that is roughly what it was. That somebody should have to come and beg a Member of Parliament to help them get a place in a particular class at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic is invidious. This is a country that says we want people to educate themselves and therefore we should be providing the spaces in order to allow them to do so, so that they can take themselves off the road and build a life for themselves and their families.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to address today the Students Revolving Loan Fund issue. I do think that we need an update on it from the Minister. There were some changes that were to take place but those changes, as I understood it, were not the complete suite of changes and that there were others that were needed because there is still a significant disparity between what we provide for and what the actual cost that those students who do go overseas have to bear and it is still causing significant hardships on some families. I think that we are going to have an ongoing review of the Students Revolving Loan Fund given the fact that the truth is that the biggest business in the world is education for profit, it is not oil, it is not construction or all of the other things that we would imagine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker vacated the Chair and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member, sorry about that.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Sir. It is the legitimate desire and aspiration of every child to be able to learn as much as they can learn to be able to be the captain of their own fate and the master of their own soul. We have chosen as human beings to do that most economically through a school system but it is not the only mechanism for learning. To that extent, that little Barbados has been able to develop a brand and to assist its people in this area is, in my view, one of the key ingredients to our tremendous transformation over the last 70 years in a way that the rest of the world envies.

With these few words, Mr. Speaker, I thank you and say to the Government to press ahead on this matter but we do need to know whether the serial bonds would be utilised or money would be paid out of cash to help us get through this year with the university. Secondly, we do need to know the status of the University College of Barbados.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise too to speak in this debate. It is quite interesting that for over 14 years the same question was asked and it was answered. Every year in the month of February or so a sum of about $40 to $50 million is brought to this Assembly as a supplementary to pay the University of the West Indies.

There was a time, Sir, when we also would have questioned the amounts that were paid to find out whether we were paying our fair share. When one looks at the total amount, one recognises that it is US$8.25 million and it is divided in three equal shares, which is rather interesting.

House A65B Sequence 11

12:00 noon

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member knows that the University of the West Indies has always been given consideration by this Parliament and that we have always fulfilled our obligation. Sir, there is also no doubt that we have sometimes taken a share much larger than we should have done.

Mr. Speaker, we also have to recognise that we have created a formula and that we need now to take this formula a step further. Sir, in the same way we know that the time is right for us to deal with the University of the West Indies, the time is also right for us to look at the productive aspect of CARICOM and to deal with it. Sir, we cannot know how to deal with the educational side of it, then to have a situation where we are having graduates and we are not finding a base to provide productive opportunities in which those graduates can operate. Sir, in the same way we know how to operate and how to finance the University of the West Indies, we also have to find a way to deal with those industries throughout CARICOM that have potential to enhance the foreign reserves of the countries within CARICOM and also to deal with them.

Sir, there is no doubt that we have to use these CARICOM students to push the individual country within CARICOM, We cannot pretend that we are only dealing with the three campuses, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica and not the other countries and that it is only those three countries that would have to carry this debt. Sir, every country within CARICOM must understand its responsibility, it must understand that the cost must be borne by every country within CARICOM. It cannot be that these three countries have to carry the cost when the overall benefit is for all CARICOM countries.

Sir, too often we are recognising within CARICOM that there is a too-few who have to carrying the cost of everything. Sir, for example, if we speak about LIAT, you would see that it is the too-few who have to carry the cost while everybody benefits. Sir, this is not fair, if we continue like this, we would not be able to deal truly with CARICOM at the level at which we should because we would be having a number of party hoppers.

Mr. Speaker, it is rather interesting what occurred last night. Sir, when one looks at what has occurred during the last few years, it was Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana that benefited the most in the crisis that occurred in the world. Trinidad and Tobago benefited from the sale of oil, while Guyana was able to benefit from the agriculture. What was interesting was that Trinidad and Tobago was expected to behave like the godfather for everybody, excluding Barbados, but even though Guyana had benefited just as much as Trinidad and Tobago, when one looks at the growth of the Guyana economy, one would recognise that even though they were able to grow their economy, Guyana was not asked to dish out the largesse in the same way that Trinidad and Tobago was asked to do.

Mr. Speaker, I remember speaking to the honourable gentleman in Antigua some time back and I said, you have to be very careful how you continue to be the godfather of CARICOM because it is alright to have money to give away and to do good within CARICOM but you have to be careful when this money is given that it is not used for productive purposes to enhance that individual country within CARICOM. Sir, what was happening was that the 'petro' funds were being used and people were begging for them.

Sir, you know there is a particular group well-known within CARICOM that walks with a hat and is always willing to receive but we have to recognise that if we are to take CARICOM forward, it cannot be that countries like Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago are expected always to be giving. Sir, citizens of these countries have to watch while they give but they have to take it a stage further. Sir, we have to recognise that we need now not only to give but to provide a fund where if a country has a product that has potential, we can use that fund to buy investment in that particular country, so that all citizens within the country that is prepared to give up that money would know that it is not giving to the benefit of one, at the exclusion of themselves but that at least the whole CARICOM region would be able to share in that benefit. In other words, if Guyana believes that it has something that is good, in which the other CARICOM countries could invest, then that investment should not only be for Guyana; if Barbados has something that is good, the other governments could invest also, so that there would not be a backlash like the one that occurred last night. Sir, what a lot of people have not recognised is that Trinidad and Tobago has given a lot to CARICOM. Sir, the truth is that the people of Trinidad and Tobago do not believe that they have got anything in return, even though the 'petro' dollars have gone far and might have even helped to build an airport someplace within CARICOM, the people of Trinidad and Tobago do not believe that they had a fair share in the building of that airport.

Mr. Speaker, we have to recognise that we have to move towards something called a developmental fund which must be used to push those products that have export capacity in which the various CARICOM Governments can have a opportunity to invest. Sir, that is a personal opinion, I do not expect people to share in this opinion but I think now that we have this opportunity, it is a good time to recognise that we can no longer carry party hoppers. Sir, for too long within CARICOM we have allowed some Governments to believe that the time is right for party hoppers and we have encouraged them to party hop, so much so that it has gone so far now that if you do not watch it, the actions of some can be the embarrassment for others.

Sir, we have to be very careful how we continue to allow a too-few to behave as though they are carrying a hat for all CARICOM countries, the truth is that when people speak within CARICOM, they believe that all countries are the same. Sir, we have to be very careful. Sir, my advice to the tourism planners within CARICOM is to move swiftly and not to wait for a backlash from what is occurring in

Jamaica. Sir, people believe that when you speak about Jamaica, it includes Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados and that we are all one. We have to be very careful how we deal with this issue or we could have a very serious backlash, especially for countries such as Antigua, Barbados, St. Lucia, among others, that depend on tourism. Sir, that is why we have to be very careful how we deal with what is happening within CARICOM at this stage because there are very serious issues that are occurring with which we have to deal.

Mr. Speaker, today I speak as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and I offer my advice in this Parliament on this issue. Sir, this allows us now, even though we are dealing with a Resolution in relation to the University of the West Indies, to recognise that we have some very serious issues with which to deal, one of which was Haiti previously.

12.10 p.m.

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Mr. R.C. Eastmond: In a situation where the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East said that Caribbean countries could very well be exporting labour, and that is not at all. We have to figure out where we want to put our persons in this community who have behaved responsibly for the most part, who have benefitted from universal health care, who have benefitted from universal primary and secondary education, we have to position these people. There can be no doubt, as the record of this Parliament would show since 1990, that the future Barbadian is going to have to be multi-skilled. There can be no question about that. Sir, to make yourself marketable in a competitive job market situation, the future lies in being multi-skilled.

Sir, this is no farfetched theory. A person can go to the Barbados Training Board now. About four or five weeks ago this Parliament heard about the evolution of Technical Vocational Qualification and the evolution of National Vocational Qualification, but a person as humble as he or she is can be multi-skilled in plumbing electricity, tiling and masonry, and can do so through the modular courses offered by the Barbados Vocational Training Board. Multi-skilling can occur at a certain level, the level of the artisan. Then multi-skilling can occur at a different level where, has been happening in Europe, some people read law while also reading medicine, and a lot of them are pressed into service as Coroners. The argument being that the perfect Coroner should know a lot about law and about medicine. That type of multi-skilling is occurring in Europe.

Sir, in the Barbadian scenario, we have to be inspiring to our young people. We the leaders of this country have to take the young people in our confidence and guide them. Much as there is a measure of guidance training at secondary level, we still have to hold some persons who are past school age, help them to develop their self-confidence and train them in such a way that they would first recognise the value of training and the attitudes that should inform their whole approach to training.

I am disappointed that there is a cadre of Barbadians, I am not sure about the exact numbers, but there is a cadre of Barbadians who would more settle for a short-term handout than a long-term skill. Politicians who have clinics for constituents often encounter situations where particular constituents come, they ask for a particular type of job, that job is not available, then they ask what you have to offer them. When the politician tells them about the existence of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, about the existence of the Barbados Vocational Training Boards, and about the existence of the Hotel Training School, a lot of them actually resist.

I do not like what I hear out there. I hear too many females, mothers, saying, “Man everybody cannot learn.” In a sort of fatalistic way, everybody cannot learn.

Sir, in a culture where you get that fatalistic, deterministic type of attitude, everybody cannot learn, then if that spreads sufficiently, the wrong attitudes would develop.

We have had situations where people have come to us specifically for a school meals job. You tell that no School Meals jobs are available, and they begin to get hostile by saying that, Hyacinth got one two years go. Why can Hyacinth get a School Meals job and I cannot get one. Then they ask you, what about the Market Constable job, or the NCC Ranger job. We have to wean our people away from that because ultimately the beneficiaries of those opportunities are perceived to be the recipients of political patronage.

We have to recognise that in this small country, we cannot create such cleavages, such disunity among the ranks of the working class as to dissuade them from undergoing training. I would really urge, in all seriousness, that we in here spread the word and insist that education and training are lifelong processes.

Sir, there is a view that the longevity of Barbadians will increase. There is a view supported by actuarial evidence at the National Insurance Scheme that Barbadians would live longer, and they could actually be a population decline in about 30 years if you hold migration constant.

In their actuarial review, which you have to do every three years, the National Insurance would hire competent actuaries who would make predictions based on life

expectancy and a number of variables, and who would eventually end up suggesting how viable the National Insurance Scheme is, or what changes should be made. In it all, we have to ready Barbados for the challenges that would face Barbados. Barbados is heavily competed against. Barbados is seeing competition come against her right where other CARICOM States are competing against Barbados for foreign investment. Other CARICOM States are competing against Barbados for technical expertise. Many large countries are jealous because of the strives that little Barbados has made, and you have to be very careful where technocrats attached to lending agencies, and I am not referring to Caribbean Development Bank at all, certain technocrats attached to lending agencies do actually express amazement at the progress that this country has made. It would therefore surprise nobody that at one point the World Bank said that Barbados was too rich to access aid from the World Bank. That is why ultimately we saw the need to enhance the resource of the Caribbean Development Bank and to allow it to continue in the direction in which it was going.

Sir, the final I will make in this brief intervention is this. We in our patriotism must look at composition of this society. We have to look at where this society was before 1945, before the second World War. We have to look at the nature and character of the Barbadian society. We have to come to the inescapable conclusion that education is not a privilege, but education is a right. Education is not a privilege, but education is a right.

Sir, why do I say so? Prior to 1945, prior to Adult Suffrage, a lot of people who had power in Barbados saw education as a privilege and saw an elitist component to education. The etonharotite mentality was not absent from Barbados in that era.

Sir, I am saying now to this Honourable House that bearing in mind where we are with our development and where we want to go, education must be a right and not a privilege. If I can differentiate between the two, a privilege is something granted sometimes incrementally on the basis of enabling somebody in circumstances where that person could not demand the outcome of the privilege. A right is almost inbred and properly conferred where a right is something that enables the person who can exercise the right to be able to advance.

Asides.

Mr. R.C. Eastmond: Sir, all of us recognise that education must always improve. We must always be looking at it. A man called Illich mentioned that education need not even proceed in the normal school environment. That there could be a system of education complementary to the education system that could very well inure to the benefit of those educated, which brings me to a very important point.

Sir, there are certain disciplines that are not readily done in universities, polytechnics and such like.

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House A65B, Sequence 15, 12.30 p.m.

Mr. R.C. EASTMOND: There are certain disciplines that are not readily done in universities, polytechnics and such like and we are into an era where we get a clamour for entrepreneurship. Before th e current administration took office in January 2008, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North was able to develop a paper with clear goals and objectives on this whole question of innovation and innovation was mentioned today by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, the Minister of Education. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North had developed a paper on innovation with goals in mind.

Sir, in a situation where we speak of innovation, we have then to wonder how we can get people on board with innovative ideas beyond mere fiscal incentives. Fiscal incentives, yes, but how do we actually get people to become innovative. In light of the debate that transpired in this Honourable House four or five weeks ago a lot of what we can do by way of engendering innovation, will have to come through courses offered not at the university level necessarily but at the Barbados Vocational Training Board and through the good offices of the Technical Vocational Education Training Fund.

A question that is a mute question is, can you really train a person to be an entrepreneur or are entrepreneurs mutually born? Sir, that is a mute question and that is a question up for the day. There is no question about the fact that a lot of people from St. Philip, St. John, St. James and many rural area were naturally entrepreneurial, without a formal school certification accompanying their efforts, naturally entrpreneurial. Then, we have had persons with something in the way of education, who tried their hands at business but failed to become business people.

The debate now must assume a nature and character, whether or not an entrepreneur is like a natural gifted person with that gift of enterprise or whether you can bestow and confer enterprise on that person. If the Honourable Member if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy had not already spoken in the debate, or if the rules were different, or if he wants to rise on a point of order, perhaps he can briefly send a signal to the rest of the community on what really makes a successful entrepreneur, or really helps a person to become a manager. If he wants

help writing a book, even though at this stage of my existence I am inclined to writing fiction, I will not give him any fictitious stories. I will give him the benefit of anything I know that goes towards educating people in business.

A lot of schools have done an excellent job in teaching office administration, in teaching principles of accounts, in teaching principles of business but the difficulty with that is that a lot of our people, even after successfully finishing secondary school and tertiary education do not go forward to be more educated.

There are too many people, some of whom become middle classed, based on income and salary after university education, who do not read and do not want to exert themselves anymore, in the quest for further training and education. I think that we cannot really afford to have that type of person because the more of that type of person we have, the more complacent our potential leaders of the community will be and at our level of development. Sir, we cannot be complacent. Sir, we have to be proactive and we have to be energetic. We also have to consider any institutional biases that have stood in the way of the progress for our people, whether as entrepreneurs, whether as people pursuing an education and such like.

I was heartened when one Honourable Member who spoke, said that the humble child of a labourer should not be denied access to education. I think it was the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East who said that, in the context of a proposal that students meet half the tuition expenses and the society meets the other half, Sir, that we ought to be conscious of the fact that they are those who ordinarily cannot pay for an education but who deserve an opportunity to get one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I appreciate that the topic has given rise to a lot of agitated debate among yourselves but the buzz is a bit loud now and I cannot hear the Honourable Member properly, so just keep it down a bit, please.

Mr. R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude. The Honourable Members who are talking are lamenting the fact that the West Indies Cricket Team, once again let us down yesterday...

Asides.

Mr. R.C. EASTMOND: ... in a situation where we think that West Indian institutions should stand tall as inspirations to posterity and, Sir, I think there is a CARICOM Committee on cricket. Certainly, the former Prime Minister of Grenada, Mr. Mitchell, had lead responsibility for the development of cricket.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, education is ongoing. Training is ongoing. Education is never ending but the assessment of where we are with our educational system also has to be ongoing. In other words, Sir, the authorities responsible for education, training and instruction must always be taking an inventory of where they have come.

We have a situation now where the average age of the entrance at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus is 19. The concern is not whether or not they will pass degrees which they will, the concern is whether certain skills that they should develop are present or whether they will, after degree, go back to acquire these skills. Some of these skills tend to be skills of language, the use of English and things like that and some of them are other skills that they need to develop.

Mr. Speaker, the University of the West Indies, the Cave Hill Campus for sure is now totally unrecognisable from what it was in 1974. It has expanded. It has been able to cater to those from far and wide. I recall, Sir, persons who were at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus going on to higher heights in the Caribbean scenario. I recall, Sir, that the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus does have an excellent name among universities in the world and that is a credit to the administrations of the University of the West Indies. It is a credit to all those involved with the university. It is a credit to the wider society that has never frowned or turned its face away from sensible educational programmes.

Thank you very much, Sir.

SUSPENSION

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House be now suspended until 1.50 p.m.

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

The question that the House be now suspended until 1.50 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

House A65B, Sequence 15, 12:38:07

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting of the Honourable Chamber is resumed. When the suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 4, with that we shall now continue. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central.

ORDER No. 4 (Resumed)

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this debate and to indicate my support for the Resolution. In indicating my support for the Resolution, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to draw the attention of the House to what I consider to be a very important role which the University of the West Indies needs to address through the project that it is engaging upon because the purpose of the financing is really to assist in the University Enhancement Project. Mr. Speaker, part of that enhancement must certainly be to try to facilitate change in our society that will at the same time produce a society in which the objectives of the persons who are impacted upon by this particular project can be achieved.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I think we really need to address when we look at projects in the past which the University of the West Indies has engaged in, is the fact that it has not really in many cases addressed the fundamental needs of the productive sectors. When we look at a lot of the initiatives that we are currently engaged in in the society, and even from an economic perspective, when we look at the real needs of this society in terms of trying to form a stronger economy, the University of the West Indies has a critical role to play in ensuring that the fundamentals of our economies in terms of ensuring that we have a stable and competitive productive sector are actually addressed through the programmes and projects that it brings to governments to support, that is why framing a project and titling it the University Enhancement Project speaks to what we really need.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, we have invested a lot of money in our educational system. Sir, we also have to be very focused in terms of what we are trying to achieve as a result of the investment of that money. Sir, we cannot assume that spending the quantum of resources that we have put into education, means that we will address every single ailment that we have in our society, however, we would also expect though that it would at least address some very critical needs that are there. One of those needs is the whole question of how do we develop our productive sectors.

Sir, I happened to be at BMEX this weekend. When you look at the kind of innovative approaches that ordinary people within our society are taking towards the development of products in terms of trying to ensure that first of all the products meets certain standards, that they appeal to the consumer and that they also satisfy certain regulations that are there, it says really that these are the kinds of things in which the University of the West Indies needs to come into the community and assist our producers in terms of trying to ensure that they are producing products that are relevant.

Mr. Speaker, I go back to the whole question of the University Enhancement Project because I should think that in terms of trying to enhance the ability of the University to deliver services and to be relevant to what our community really needs that it needs to find a way to actually integrate with the producers in our community. It needs to find a way to ensure that the services or the projects they engage in have some impact on the productive sectors.

This is an environment in which, when we look at what has been happening recently in our society, there are concerns that in some cases that we are actually over investing in some areas of activity at the expense of others. As a matter of fact, when we look at the amount of money that is invested in our entertainment sector and other services sectors and we look at the returns that we get from it, we sometimes have to question it when we compare then the amount of resources that we are actually finding being invested in our productive sectors.

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2.00 p.m.

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Mr. JAMES D. PAUL: In that regard, we need to look at the kinds of programmes that we are offering to the players in the productive sectors. Sir, presently we have people producing products, one of the problems that you find in terms of the products that are producing is that we are not sure whether or not the persons who are producing those products are aware of the kind of standards involved in terms of the production of those products. Sir, besides that there are some technical specifications in relation to the production of products that need to be addressed.

I am saying that in the kind of environment in which we are today, in which the world is saying to us that we have to deal with our problems... Sir, the fact that we all say we have a University of the West Indies that has the best minds, they should certainly be able to wrap their minds around the kinds of problems our producers are facing in order to make their products become more competitive in today's environment. Sir, let us face it, unless the University of the West Indies addresses the issue of making our productive sectors better able to compete in the current economic environment in which we are, it would be signaled failure for Barbados as a nation and the wider Caribbean, if we cannot wrap ourselves around the problems that are addressing the productive sectors. Therefore, we need to see are programmes which cater to that productive sector.

Sir, I am not saying that, in any way, we should slight what is currently happening. As a matter fact, I heard coming from the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, when he was looking at some of the old

faculties, that you should be looking to see whether or not they need to be revamped in order to make them more relevant in terms of our current age. Therefore, it emphasises the point I am making that why are we at this stage, why when you talk to persons within the productive sector, they somehow feel removed from the current programmes that are being put out by the University of the West Indies. Sir, that is a fundamental issue which we have to address.

Mr. Speaker, I think that even in terms of this University Enhancement Project, we have to find a way to make that kind of connection between the University of the West Indies and what is happening in our productive sector. It takes very simple things. Sir, Barbados produces a lot of lovely products which, if properly utilised, will put us in a position to at least claim special privileges as a result of that utilisation. Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, one of the things we can say, as we move forward as a developing country, is the question of how do we look at our resources in order to at least develop our intellectual property initiatives we are trying to develop. Sir, one simple product, for instance, that we take for granted is the Barbados breadfruit. We know as consumers that, generally, wheat flour, in some cases, is a commodity which very often gives some people problems. There are some people who cannot consume wheat and certain products like cassava and especially breadfruit offers us the opportunity to provide an alternative to wheat. One of the things you would note is that when you look at the work of the St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago, in terms of arresting those problems, in terms of developing a product...Sir, first of all, in order for a product to be accepted into the market, it must look attractive; it must also be offered at a price which the consumer can find attractive. A product is not simply put on the market without doing the kind of research that is required, to make sure that product can compete with others on the market.

Sir, one of the things we have constantly talked about is the indigenous communities in North America. As a matter of fact, we say we have a large immigrant community of West Indian origin in North America, which we at least should be looking to tap into, in terms of trying to earn the foreign exchange that will drive development in these countries. Sir, I keep on saying, one of the things that we must not fool ourselves with is that we as a nation seem to be caught up with the gloss and glamour that come with activities such as the entertainment industry and cricket but at the same time, we have to ask ourselves, are we really maximising the foreign exchange earnings from these activities as if we were to invest in other activities in which we have the ability to say that we have a unique product.

Sir, I would like the great minds at the University of the West Indies to wrap themselves around this particular problem, to see how they could assist our producers within these communities, to help develop better products. Mr. Speaker, I must say this, maybe one of the reasons for the hesitancy and maybe the slowness on the part of the intellectuals as the University of the West Indies to wrap themselves around this bigger problem is because of the fact that the people who are developing these products are very ordinary people; these are the people who when you go into communities to see who are the persons who are producing, you wonder how could those persons be so innovative. Sir, the reason for that is that these are ordinary men and women who stay in their kitchen and ask how could they develop a product that they could sell to either their neighbours, their communities or the hotels. Sir, maybe it is the appearance of these people that is preventing the intellectuals from wrapping themselves around them. Sir, I am sure had it been somebody else of a different colour or dispensation you might get quicker action.

Sir, in terms of the University Enhancement Project, I want those intellectuals at the University of the West Indies to understand that these are the kinds of projects we need to see happening in our communities that will help ordinary people to make some contribution to the livelihood of the families they support. Sir, one of the things we also need to recognise is that Barbadians or West Indians in general have always been able, when give the opportunity, to show that they can perform in certain areas. What we are seeing today is a retreat from those centres of excellence that we have always had traditionally, into other areas in which basically it seems as if we are being told by the greater powers that is where you need to go. Sir, the University of the West Indies should not be part of the tool by which we encourage our ordinary population to move in that direction. As a matter of fact, one of the things I believe, which strengthens my argument, is that they should be looking to strengthen what we are already doing within our communities in order to make it better.

Sir, I want to look at the wonderful work that the Groves Agricultural Sugarcane Station does here. Sir, we have a wealth of experience in developing a variety of sugar canes. This is one of the areas in which the University of the West Indies need to be giving greater priority. Sir, with respect to other products we have here that can help, I am hoping that when we see the results of the projects on which the University of the West Indies is embarking, we would have deepening of those relationships with those persons within the productive sectors who have used the initiatives and resources at their disposals and have been able to come up with products.

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MR. J. D. PAUL: ...that we would have a deepening of that relationship with those persons within the productive sectors who, using initiatives and using the resources that they have at their disposal, have been able to come up with products but what they need is guidance as to how they can actually develop that project to be one that can actually compete with other similar products on the world stage. Sir, for instance, we have certain companies in Barbados already that export things like hot peppers, pepper sauces and seasonings but there are other things which can be done. Sir, I think that the University of the West Indies needs to look and see how it could help persons who process these projects into making them better.

Mr. Speaker, not only that. We have certain problems even at the level of primary production of these commodities within the sector from time to time and, again, I make emphasis on the productive sector. Sir, some times there are small problems which we need to be addressed and instead of developing the ability to deal with these problems locally, very often, we have to call on experts from outside to help us solve these problems.

Sir, the University of the West Indies has been around for almost 40 years and I believe we are at a stage where instead of having to rely on the research that has been conducted by overseas universities on a constant basis, the University of the West Indies should be developing the capability that says they can actually go into a situation, where a person within the productive sector is experiencing a problem, and the university should be able to come up with solution to what is happening with that particular individual. Sir, at least, we need to be able to develop that capability.

Mr. Speaker, one of things I note that we are talking a lot about in terms of the educational system. Sir, we have also to ensure that we maintain a certain quality coming out of the system. I know that when we look at it, we have a large number of graduates coming out of the university into the world but one of the things we are dismissing is the whole question of the attitudes of some of the graduates. I want to say that we cannot take a paint brush, stroke it across, and think that everybody is the same because it is not that. We have a situation where we have people coming out who are excellent who are making a contribution to the world of work and who a lot of employers will actually grab up but we also have some negatives. Sir, in some cases, some employers would tell you that in terms of the quality of the graduates coming out that there are certain deficiencies which I believe that the University of the West Indies needs to listen to. S ir, we cannot be satisfied with a system that pushes out thousands of graduates on an annual basis, and we are not asking ourselves the extent to which those graduates can actually meet the needs of employers out there in the world of work because, Sir, we would be fooling ourselves. We would just be doing education for doing education sake. Sir, that is one of the fundamental mistakes because we always need to look at what we are doing to see whether or not it is appropriate, whether or not it is relevant and too, Sir, whether or not it can actually deliver to us what we consider to be our primary objective.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to say that when you look at the economic circumstances that we are in, we cannot fool ourselves that doing things the same way that we have been doing them over a number of years, and not changing what we are doing, that it is going to help us. We have to recognise that sometimes we have to take radical decisions that ensure that what we are producing actually meets our need (14:15) and after deciding it does not, we probably need to look and see whether we need to tweet the programmes to ensure that what we are actually producing will actually meet the needs of the persons who matter.

Mr. Speaker, in this situation, I want to say again that the persons who matter are the people out there who would be buying the services of the graduates that you are actually producing. Sir, I do not want to say employers because we are living in a world today where we are young people are promoting small businesses and we are saying to our young people to go out there and establish a small business but if after going through a university education that graduate comes out and does not know the first thing about how to establish a small business, it suggests to me that something is wrong, that maybe in some way, even going right through school that the educational system might have failed that graduate in terms of helping him to understand what the peculiarities of business happens to be.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that even in terms of the whole question the development of intellectual property, we talk about excelling there. Sir, also, we are concentrating a lot on the area and the contemporary music we have around, and there are certain peculiar art forms that are indigenous to the Caribbean itself and if we learn how to actually develop it, we could use it as a means of showing the Caribbean in a difficult way. Sir, one of the difficulties I have today about our cultural expression is that we are conforming to what Europeans or the North Americans think of us. We are not developing our cultural expression in a way that reflects the unique characteristics of the Caribbean identity.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes the Chinese send their performing artistes here and when you go to see them perform, you see something unique about China in itself and it is presented in a way in which you want to go to China because you have seen something that is unique about China. Sir, sometimes when you look at the cultural expression of the Caribbean, the way in which they present it, you really wonder if these people now come from New York.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the University of the West Indies even in that regard can play a role in terms of ensuring that how we present ourselves to the world is one that makes us more marketable, that it does not put us in a position where we find that we are just the same. Sir, I want to say that the objective of this is to ensure that Barbados, as a nation, has something that says to people that they we have something unique, that we have something that is valuable and, as a result of that, we have something that could at least pay our way in the world today.

Mr. Speaker, as I have emphasised, in the world today, we cannot go with any sad stories and ask for help because everybody needs help and that is where I believe that the University of the West Indies has a critical role to play in terms of ensuring that we understand our responsibility in terms of trying to earn the kind of foreign exchange that this country need.

Mr. Speaker, in that regard, again, I want to say that I support the project. I would want to hope that the University of the West Indies utilises the funds that are being provided to ensure that we go in a different direction than we have been going in the past. Sir, I thank you very much.

H/A65B/14:20 Sequence 18

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

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

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution before this Honourable Chamber and to say that I, personally, can identify with this need to provide the necessary accommodation for the work of the Vice Chancellor and his team at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies, since your humble servant was fortunate to serve as the President of the Guild of Undergraduates at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus many years ago, and would have interfaced with the then Vice Chancellor, who was a former CARICOM Secretary General. This is back in the 1980s and early 1990s, and a leading economist. There are other distinguished Vice Chancellors. I will try not to call names, but a leader in dance, the late Vice Chancellor, world renowned leader in dance, and the former Secretary General of CARICOM who was Vice Chancellor when I was at University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, at the time, would have been appointed as an UN arbitrator in the Guyanese/Venezuela border dispute.I remember him at the time, a leading economist, having the sort of principle that called upon the lecturers of the University of the West Indies Campuses to publish or perish, thereby encouraging them not just to teach, but as part of their contract do research that would advance the work of the university, and he and others would have pushed as part of their mandate to garner much needed funding from the international donor community for the work of the community. The current Vice Chancellor, distinguished medical practitioner trained at Harvard, is very enthusiastic.

Recently we saw him open up the University of the West Indies Consulting Company, where the research capabilities of the University is being marketed around the region and internationally, so that when we have the various consultancies available, University of the West Indies lectures can bid for that work.

I am saying that the work of the Vice Chancellor in pulling the team of the university, all three Campuses, and the other associated agencies with universities in the region, pulling them together to ensure that August institution excels, is very important.

I remember visiting the Mona Campus to attend the various University Academic Committee Meetings and the Finance and General Purposes Committee, and the University and Campus Council and so on, visiting the Vice Chancellor's Office, as the Honourable Minister of Education mentioned, even back then was very cramped, part of the main administration building. This funding will go along way to really ensure that the nerve center of the university, as it were, is properly equipped.

I just wish as well to correct the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, when in her quest to promote the University College of Barbados, which her administration spearheaded, referred to this administration as having a Minister of State responsible for tertiary education. In fact, your humble servant, while serving as Minister of State within the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, would have been asked to focus on private education up to secondary level and special education, but of course I worked as part of a team with the Honourable Member the distinguished Minister of Education, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Sir, talking about the presentation of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, I heard very colourful language from the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. I remember hearing the Honourable Member for St. James North saying that education is a right and not a privilege. The Honourable Member for St. Michael spoke about the Barbados Labour Party's focus which was ensuring that all and sundry had access to education at the highest level, irrespective to the circumstances of their birth. Sir, very nice and colourful, but the reality is, the track record of the Barbados Labour Party, when they were in Government in terms of the access to tertiary education was woefully lacking, when we note that it was under the

Barbados Labour Party administration in 1994 to the 2008 period, that 14-year period, that the Barbados Labour Party administration took the decision to make Barbadians pay for any second Bachelor degree that they pursued. That is, the first degree would be fully taxpayer funded, then for the second degree they would have to pay the full economic cost.Sir, I am saying that this is not consistent with the mouthings of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East and the Honourable Member for St. James North, as mentioned earlier in their presentations today. I am saying that they are now seeing the irony of their ways.

Sir, the irony of the fact is, I wish to stress that we should not kick down the ladder. Those people who have benefitted from fully taxpayer-funded education at the tertiary level, should not kick down the ladder and deny future generations that equal opportunity.

Sir, I know of at least two former members of the Barbados Labour Party, one of which was in the Cabinet, the one in the Cabinet would have done a Bachelor in Arts and then went on to do a law degree fully taxpayer-funded, under the previous dispensation. The other former member of the Barbados Labour Party did one Bachelor Degree in one area and then a Bachelor in another.

Sir, this is very important because us and I would know that there are a number of students who are unable to gain direct access to the medical faculty, based on their Associate Degree results or A'level results, because there is a limited number of students in Barbados that would be allowed to read for the medical programme in a given year, given the quota existing. So many students have to do a first degree in natural sciences, be it Biology, Chemistry, Physics or a combination of these. Then hope to transfer after graduating into medicine. A number of my constituents have complained to me, prior to the election, that they would have suffered because having done that degree in natural sciences, the Barbados Labour Party administration made them to pay through their teeth to do their medical programme at the University of the West Indies.

Sir, more over, when the students, by the same token, are unable to get into the Law Faculty, because there is a limited number of Barbadian students being allocated each year, many students do a degree in Arts and General Studies or Social Sciences, and after graduating read for the law degree.

Sir, under the Barbados Labour Party administration, their decision was, that once you have done a Bachelors Degree, the second degree would have to be fully paid by that individual, and this is burdensome. This administration must look at this very seriously because we still need lawyers, doctors and engineers to develop our country. So we have to look at this reality.

Sir, we should not see education as some sort of luxury. It is a critical part of national development. Indeed I remember Professor Ibrenos Persaud, in recent months in his response to the whole global meltdown making the point publicly, which I support, that in order to facilitate and catalyse the medium-term and long-term of our country in the post recessionary period, we need to invest heavily in education as people will seek to retool and reequip themselves as they lose their jobs in one particular sector, they have to be trained in other areas that may emerge in terms of career path opportunities. So that the investment in education, as we have seen in Barbados, spearheaded by the visionary policies of the Democratic Labour Party administration from the provision of free, that is taxpayer-funded education from primary to tertiary level, this is creating the middle class that has emerged in Barbados in recent decades, causing the children of the poor through education to gain those various skills and degrees that have allowed them to become the accountants, engineers, doctors, lawyers, civil servants and so on. This is very important for national development.

The Barbados Labour Party, as I said, their track record is woefully lacking in terms of education.

HA65 14.30 p.m. Sequence 19

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

House A65B, Sequence 20, 2.30 p.m.

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: As I said, the Barbados Labour Party's track record is woefully lacking in terms of education because, Mr. Speaker, I know that for example when I was a student in 1980s and 1990s, I was able to get a bursary offered by the Government of Barbados for full time study at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies. It was BDS$1 800 per annum and you know, Mr. Speaker, that the Barbados Labour Party was in office for 14 long years from 1994 to 2008 and this administration now assumed office and we have found those bursaries at the same level.

Do you understand? Not a cent was added to assist those students who would need assistance in terms of bus fare, lunch, books, clothing and other basic amenities to have their minds in a framework to fully assimilate the education provided for them. Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap but the proof of the pudding is in the eating and the approach of the Barbados Labour Party left a bitter taste in the mouths of the students and the people of our country, and that is why they are in Opposition as we speak today.

Where was the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East or indeed the Honourable Member for St. George North when the Barbados Labour Party sat idly by and did not come to the assistance of Barbadian students,

when the Barbados Labour Party imposed this student amenities' fee? Burdensome. Hundreds of dollars those Barbadians had to pay, during the dying years of the Barbados Labour Party administration. They did not step in and say that the Barbados Government will pay all of the student amenities fees for the students.

No. They left the students to suffer so then the poor people, their circumstances of birth would have mattered under the Barbados Labour Party administration. In other words, the rich and the well-off in our country, where those students' amenities were peanuts but the poor people, the working class persons of Barbados would have suffered. Many of them would have been unable to access fully university education because of those burdensome fees, in terms of the student amenities fees. Sir, this has to be reviewed again to rescue the masses of our country so that they can really fully access education up to the highest level.

Mr. Speaker, I remember in the 1980s just prior to the 1986 general election when the Barbados Labour Party was in power again, they set up a committee, headed by a prominent lawyer at the time. The committee's terms of reference were to seriously look and review the finances of the university, clearly hinting to the public that the then Barbados Labour Party Government was on the verge of charging fees for Barbadians studying at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus. Sir, it was the vigilance of the Barbadian electorate that intervened and swept the Barbados Labour Party out of office and that was the end of that. Mr. Speaker, the facts are there before us and we see the Barbados Labour Party's approach to education has been rather elite.

Mr. Speaker, I would wish to dissociate myself from any view that suggests that too many people are getting degrees. We hear some people giving the impression saying, oh, you know degrees are like a dime a dozen, so many thousands of Barbadians now are getting degrees. I really wonder if these people are not caught up in this elitist mind set that whereas years ago, it is only the richer who could afford to send their children to England and USA to get degrees. They were a cut above the rest because the masses were unable to assess education at the tertiary level. Sir, there are some people who do not like the fact that the flood gates have been opened and the masses can have access to education at the highest level. Again, I dissociate myself with that completely.

I am very happy to hear the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central making the bold assertion that his vision is to see at least 60 per cent of the high school graduates access tertiary level education. Mr. Speaker, as I said, this is a pivotal and critical for national development. When you look at the United States of America, I believe there is well over 70 per cent of their high school graduates end up at college or university and you see the emphasis on science, creativity and innovation.

In Japan, there have cram schools. They even send them to school of Saturdays, not that I am suggesting we do that because that was shot down when the Barbados Labour Party tried to tout the idea of sending to school children on Saturdays. The point I am making is that there is a very high level of competition among the developed world, in terms of investment in education.

In India, you will see it is an emerging world power now, in terms of the fact that many of the information technology software development and so on is being pushed in India with such a huge population. In fact, I was listening to the BBC a few days ago, to this concept of soft power where they say emerging countries such as India and China are using this soft power, this international ability outside of mere economic and political might, in terms of military hardware.

Sir, the fact that you have a rich culture, a highly educated and motivated population, you can drive international support and investment in your country. This soft power we, as a third world country must get involved with to ensure that we get the necessary investment in our country to propel our country forward and increase, thereby, the standard of living of each and every citizen of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I agree, we much ensure that we have best practices and high quality of graduates produced but I am saying that we still have a ways to go to catch up with the 70 per cent of the high school graduates, attending college or university in North America. It is not wasted money because the country would benefit as we develop the engines of the economy and the standard of living of our citizens, so it is an investment. It is not money badly spent. Mr. Speaker, we should look at the long term benefits to offset any sacrifices which the taxpayers may have to make to educate the Nation's children.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the fact that we as a country, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central mentioned, can encourage the university to really propel the area of research, development and innovation. I heard a Barbadian academic on a call-in programme on the radio, a few weeks ago, I think a day after the National Innovation Awards, making the point that he has been able in North America to develop several patents, copyrights and trademarks. He does not have to necessarily take it to a stage in terms of the manufacturer of the final product but having the rights to intellectual property, he is able to enter into strategic alliances with the manufacturers so that for every finished product produced, he gets a certain percentage of the royalty. And so, this is where we can

really have our academics bring in foreign exchange for our country, in terms of research and development.

Sir, I was so proud at the Innovation Awards, where I saw an individual with Ph.D. from Dunlow Lane in the City of Bridgetown. I would not call his name but a leader was able to produce non plastic packaging material, biodegradable and so on, straight from the heart of Bridgetown. Whereas some people would like to think that nothing good comes out of Bridgetown, here is a person with a Ph.D., from the heart of Bridgetown in Dunlow Lane, coming within the first three places of our National Innovation Awards and congratulations to him.

Sir, we have seen the good work of Dr. Leonard O'Garro at the UWI, in terms of research in the diseases of food crops and now he has been grabbed away by international agencies to our loss but here is a Vincentian, living in Barbados, being a world leader in agronomy and research. People like Marian Hart has been doing a tremendous amount of work over the years in terms of production of an alternative to wheat flour in terms of cassava flour and breadfruit pace and all these sorts of things. Sir, she needs assistance in terms of the technical scientific approach from the university and other research agencies.

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that we have to link the investment in education with national development.

House A65B, Sequence 20, 14:40:14

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: When I looked at the list of National Development Scholarships being offered in the media recently, I saw a comprehensive list, dozens of various specialities. When I was in the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, I met the group that won the scholarship last year and there was a young medical practitioner who has now gone off to do post-graduate research in urology.

Mr. Speaker, we notice that there is a limited number of urologists in the island so when we have the brain drain and more and more are lured away, then we as a population suffer. Who would look after the men in terms of testing for prostate cancer and other such issues in that field? When we have all of our leading dentists who are specialists in implants immigrating to Canada, then we in Barbados are left wanting. I really would wish us to really sometimes make the sacrifice of earning a little less money in Barbados and giving back something to our country.

Mr. Speaker, investment in education is a serious business and I congratulate those who seek to ensure that we have a graduate in every household. There is nothing wrong with that. I heard this talk about matriculation. We have the higher matriculation of two A'levels or an Associate Degree with your five or more CXC certificates to get into the higher level matriculation at UWI so that you could do you Bachelors in three years full time and then you have the lower level matriculation which has been there for donkey years of five CXCs including English language. This is nothing new. This has been in existence since the 80s when I was there. There was no problem then but now all of a sudden it is a big problem to some people.

Mr. Speaker, in developed countries all around there is the concept of a mature student where a person who has matured because of their experience in the workforce over a number of years, who do not have the five CXCs but once they have the basic equivalent, are able to enter a Degree Programme, and many of them excel. I know that the Barbados Community College is now engaged in this concept of mature students. Not that we abuse it, we monitor it and tweak it where necessary but we should not limit ourselves in this myopic cocoon to say that because there is this escalation of access to education at tertiary level that automatically we would get a watering down of the quality of students produced.

I am saying to have the standards, the best practices and the checks and balances. One, for example, is the concept of an external examiner. I think the University of the West Indies has gone away from this in recent years. When I was a student there and you were a student there, Mr. Speaker, in the 1980s, this was commonplace. Many of the courses offered had external examiners from universities from around the world that would come in and check the exams set by the lecturers and visit the campus to ensure that best practices obtained. I am saying that the university, notwithstanding the cost, needs to have this reintroduced to keep the standard of our degrees on par with international best practices.

Mr. Speaker, there are ways of ensuring quality control. We have heard the Honourable Minister talk about the good work of CAN CAPE the regional accreditation grouping and our local affiliate, the Barbados Accreditation Council so there are ways of checking to ensure high quality. I agree that yes we need to ensure that students do not waste taxpayers' money. I am saying that we need therefore to strengthen the counselling and mentorship programmes at the university because oftentimes students are just left there to attend classes and there is not enough career guidance and general counselling. In many universities and colleges in North America, it is commonplace to have each student assigned to a Guidance Counsellor and a Faculty Advisor and so on. This would help these students to recover in a speedier manner from failing.

Mr. Speaker, when I was on campus the semester system was being introduced and all the consultants and the proponents of this system said that one reason why this is being introduced is to ensure that students would be able to recover early from failure. Mr. Speaker, now you have the summer courses and the repeat courses and so on, so there are ways in which we can ensure that students do not waste taxpayers' money. Mr. Speaker, we should not throw out the baby with the bath water or put any measures in place that would stifle the natural increase in the number of graduates that we produced each year. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we should not just have the Cave Hill Campus as a machine for just spouting out Bachelors' graduates, we should ensure that there is more research and development. I congratulate the current Principal and his team at the Cave Hill Campus for emphasising this need for research. However, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central that the research must be relevant because we should not try to sort of mimic what occurs in affluent countries where various benefactors can give millions of dollars for a chair in this and a chair in that discipline, which may be esoteric and abstract. We need to ensure that the research is heavily bias towards national development. We need to identify the areas within the Caribbean that are needed and ensure that the necessary funding is provided in a tangible and meaningful way to ensure that these areas are not neglected.

Mr. Speaker, the private sector must get on board and that is why I can congratulate construction companies. There is one construction company that provided the funding for a Masters' in Construction Science. Insurance companies have built buildings and so on and this partnership must be strengthened.

Mr. Speaker, this Resolution, as I said, enables the Vice Chancellor and the team at the University of the West Indies to focus on bringing in international funding to the university including promoting the concept of students tourism because many students from around the world are very interested in coming to the Caribbean to study marine biology. We have the good work of the Belair Research Institute associated with McGill University in studying Caribbean studies, our culture, our heritage and so on. Students could come here in the summer or even entire semesters and spend some foreign exchange here.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would wish also to ensure that we as a people encourage our Caribbean brothers and sisters to keep and maintain the regional identity of the University of the West Indies. As we see there is the contentious issue of Mona which is about to start doing their LL.B Programme and so we could easily have national universities as opposed to the regional university.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to having funding provided to allow students from Cave Hill, for example, to be able to spend a semester at Mona or at St. Augustine to learn about our Caribbean brothers and sisters so that we can really propel the regional integration movement after they have graduated.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to speak briefly on this important guarantee for the University of the West Indies for the sum of US$2.75 million.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to say from the outset that this side has always felt that education is of primary importance. Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party fully supports this guarantee of money for the University of the West Indies. It is important for us to note and for the public at large to note that the guaranteeing of money for the advancement of the university is nothing new, this has taken place over time by both political parties.

House A65B Sequence 21

2.50 p.m.

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, who has just taken his seat, would like us to believe that the Barbados Labour Party was the party that wanted to introduce fees and that we believe education should only be for the few. Sir, I am sure, despite spending between eight or nine years trying to graduate from the University of the West Indies, that the Honourable Member has not learned anything at all. The Honourable Member has learned anything either even from being on the Front Bench. Sir, in the 1980s, the Barbados Government had spent more money on the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown as an individual than on any other member I can recall. The Honourable Member was at the University of the West Indies with me. I left in the l980s and my son came, found him and left him there. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member must not get up in here and say that education is an elitist thing and that the Barbados Labour Party wants only a few people to be educated, that we want to kick down the ladder. Sir, what the Honourable Member has said is not worth repeating, it is not fair that we as educated people...

Mr. Speaker, honestly I had no intention of speaking because I believe the Minister, who introduced this Bill was fair to say that the University of the West Indies came out of a colonial experience during the 1940s and l950s. The University of the West Indies is 60 years old and the

Honourable Member, who has spent so many years there, does not even know that the University of the West Indies was formed in l948 and that it was Sir Grantley Adams, one of the first Ministers of Education, who tried to promote tertiary education in this country.

Sir, the Honourable Member should read, I think the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development should pass the brief to his Cabinet colleague because his colleague does not understand that the genesis of the University of the West Indies came out of the very bosom of a colonial experience and that persons in this community before our time went to Mona. Sir, persons who were scholars in those days were sent to Mona Campus to do medicine or history. One of our Prime Minister was a Barbados Scholar in History and out of that experience he not only believed in the integration movement but you will see that most of the persons who would have graduated out of Mona Campus and St. Augustine were persons who felt the need for a regional integrated movement but who believed that the CARICOM and the Caribbean is about one unity and one people.

Mr. Speaker, since the introduction of tertiary education in this country, we have moved beyond leaps and bounds. We have to thank those persons who established the University of the West Indies on a model out of the London University. Sir, the University of the West Indies came out of the London University model. Sir, out of that experience, we have persons across the region who have graduated from the University of the West Indies. Sir, as the Minister said, 41 per cent of persons in this country now has access to university education.

Sir, I would want to say that we must move beyond 41 per cent, if you look at Jamaica, less than 41 per cent of the population accesses university education. Sir, the statistics which I would hope the Honourable Minister would share and make a document of this Honourable House, is important information, it is information that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown must read. Sir, the Honourable Member must not come here and talk a lot of things that are not factual.

Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by indicating that this Honourable Member has been misleading this House by mentioning things that are not factual.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I accept that and will give the Honourable Member for St. George North the opportunity to withdraw the comment. What I want to say too, the Honourable Member for St. George North, is that this debate has ranged very wide. I think I have been very lenient in terms of the relevancy rule. Essentially it was permitted because things being said were...

Honourable Members, let me put it another way, I am not going to bend the relevancy rule if all Honourable Members are going to do are to make statements that are not necessarily complimentary of other Honourable Members. Please bear that in mind. Let us proceed.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to offend any Honourable Member but the point is that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown would want us to believe that this side would want to kick down the educational institution that we have helped to set up. Sir, it is not fair for the Honourable Member to say this because both parties over the years, since the 1950s, were able to establish the University of the West Indies and to try to promote an atmosphere where you have one graduate in every household. This is what we were saying and this is the philosophy by which we were guided during the latter part of the 1990s and the early part of this century. Sir, we still believe in this. I believe the present Government is spending more than $130 million on education, so that both sides believe that there must be tertiary education and that it must be funded by the State.

I want to say that it is important for us to move towards that situation where we want to improve the level of tertiary education among our people. Sir, that is why when we were in Government, this side was looking at a situation where, at the end of the day, we would have the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and Erdiston Teachers Training College, those institutions that practice skills, giving students tertiary certificates. Sir, we were also moving towards a University College of Barbados. Sir, it is important that we do so.

Mr. Speaker, I am of the view that the university has been playing an important role in this society and in societies across the Caribbean. Over the years, the university has come out as an independent body. Sir, one has seen, over the last decade or so, more so the Principal of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, moving towards the university as a community organisation where it is now engaged in drama and research. Sir, the university is also playing an integral role in developing sports, especially cricket.

Sir, I want to compliment the university for moving towards that important aspect of development. Therefore, I believe that we have practised in this island, way beyond the political parties, the right to education. Sir, that is fundamental therefore the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown must understand that it is a fundamental to all Barbadians. Sir, it is not necessarily the two political parties that believe, all right-thinking Barbadians believe because it is something that has set us apart. We all believe in a right to a decent education.

3.00 p.m.

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: We, fundamentally believe, in this island, of the right to a decent education. I want the Honourable Member for the City to know that every Barbadian does not belong to a political Party either, that there are some people who believe they have a right to education. Sir, my grand mother was not a "B" or a "D" but she felt the right for a primary education and, Sir, that set us apart from the other territories. I have always heard that there was a right to education.

Mr. Speaker, we need to move beyond the right to education because we are now into tertiary education. Sir, most of us here are graduates of the University of the West Indies, and we are proud that we have gone to that institution and we did some sort of training there. We were the beneficiaries of a good secondary education and beneficiaries of tertiary education and some of gone beyond graduate level and some of us have done post-graduate work in other universities or even at the same University of the West Indies and we are proud of our university.

Mr. Speaker, I have said that we need to move now towards the right to a job. The university, as an independent body, must come out at this stage and do research into how we can move this society, not only the Barbadian society but also the Caribbean society in accessing the right to a job. Sir, from Jamaica in the north to Barbados in the south, we in the region must now look at how we can move this country to full employment where everybody would have a right to a job.

Mr. Speaker, a right to a job is important, not necessarily a job from the State but I believe that we must look at the whole question of entrepreneurship, access to funding and how this funding can move beyond the political level. I believe strongly that the whole question of political organisations, where we are now into partisan political politics, where we are into a situation where you look from Jamaica right down to Trinidad and you see what is happening in region. Sir, the region is now engulfed in all types of problems. There are criminal aspects, drugs, economic problems and many problems are engulfing the region. Therefore, the university must carry out that research to let us know what it is that we, as a government and Parliamentarians ought to do to move our society beyond this level.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, just one moment. An urgent matter has come up which requires my attention. The Deputy Speaker will take the Chair.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point I was making when the Speaker left the Chair was this. We must now move towards a situation where the university must help the Governments of the region to underscore the whole notion of full employment and they must help the Governments of the region, as an independent body to move towards this partisan atmosphere that is now engulfing the Caribbean region. For example, o ne of the problems I have identified is this. In Jamaica, you have a polarised society where you have persons from one political Party wearing red versus persons wearing yellow and you see the colours of the various political Parties being highlighted not only in terms of when there is an election but you see that the whole society is being polarised at this time. Sir, this House as led to a lot of conflict within the region. I believe the university, as that independent body must look at the new way of governance. The university, through its department of Government, must look at the way forward. For example, for too long, we have heard members in here, especially the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East speaking about the new way of Government and what we would want to see as a people as we move towards this century, how it is that we could look to redefine the whole Westminster model, as we know it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the university, through its department of Government, should look very carefully and give an independent view as where we are going. Sir, we in Barbados are guaranteeing this money but the money will not be spent in Barbados and the public needs to know this. This money will be spent in Jamaica to help the university develop the chancery in Jamaica, so we are helping our regional body because it is part of what we agreed. Sir, when the university was set up, it was agreed that each territory would contribute money for the development of the university. I believe that the university must, at this time, look at where we are going, how we are going and at what would be the eventual place for us in this world. Sir, the university must look at these things. The university must show this independent view as to what is happening in Jamaica, what is happening in Trinidad and Tobago and what is happening in other parts of the region. Why is it that you have a problem in Jamaica that has been existing for some time that has not been fully ventilated? We hear about the problem of gangs, so should the university come out and do a study on that. We hear of problems about the criminal aspects in our society, should the university do something on this. I believe if this is done, it would help our people in the region to move forward because the university, over the years, has done a lot of good work in helping to bring the community together and I am now calling on the university to go even

beyond that and look at how we can have a new way of governance within our region.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen the problem and we have seen the frustration that has seen to engulf our people over the recent decade or so and the time has now come for us to move faster and look at our system of Government and see how we could redefine what was given to us way back in the 1950s and the 1960s. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you must know that it was the Westminster system of governance that was given to us in the Caribbean. It was something that we inherited from Britain. It was something that was given to us after we became independent and we have held on to this system for all these years but the time has come for us to look at what would be the future of our people and the future of our island and to see how....

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Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Those persons who feel marginalised...

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

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Those persons who feel marginalised, who feel that they do not play a part in the governance of this society, what meaningful role those people can play. It is the governance of this society and the societies of Jamaica, Trinidad and Bahamas, big territories in particular, and the small islands, I believe if the whole question of governance is redefined, persons in the society who now feel that they are not part of the process, they will have a better role to play as we move forward these countries in the region.

Sir, after 60 years of education in Barbados, the time has come for the university to speak out and redefine the whole Westminster system, as we know it, the question of governance and what is the role each person in the society whether they subscribe to the university or not. Sir, I believe that as the university moves towards the society and becomes part and parcel of the whole question of governance, this would serve the countries of the Caribbean better.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I first want to lend my support to the Resolution which seeks to provide funding, that will allow the university to engage in an enhancement and expansion programme in regard to its infrastructure. That infrastructure in a setting that allows the university to continue not only its educational components and imputs into the society, but also to play a meaningful role in the future development of Barbados.

It is from that perspective that I would want to start my discussion. One has to appreciate the very positive correlation that exists between tertiary education and socio-economic development. I think all anecdotal evident in this country and throughout the region will attest to that as a matter of fact.

I would also want to say that there comes a time when the growth and the development of an education institution must also evolve in regard to what is necessary for the development of a particular people and a country at a particular time. I believe that time has come when the University of the West Indies throughout the entire region now, must not only redefine itself, but redefine specifically the role that it must play in the future development of this region.

I will start by paying special emphasis on the critical role, that a redefined university can play in relation to the use of science technology and innovation, in the development of our neighbouring territories and Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the movement of our universities from universities that concentrate heavily on undergraduate training must be changed. It is going to become necessary where our universities core functions, as it relates to the economic development of each one of our territories be driven by a set of postgraduate curricula. That we redefine the area as areas referring to the individual islands within the CARICOM membership, so that we can benefit collectively from the capacities of our peoples, to become producers and by necessity craftmen of their own fate. That is only going to happen if we can evolve a culture, where our universities prepare not only our students for the type of training, that allows them to understand the critical role that their innovation and the application of their capacity, to create their logo and to manufacture ideas and move ideas from product for sale within our region and internationally. That must become a critical mandate of our universities.

Sir, part of the very versification that becomes very necessary, becomes evident when we want to engage high value-added businesses in this country, or develop high value-added businesses, it becomes important that our students who are involved in technical and vocational training, and our students who are involved in the hard-core sciences at the University of the West Indies, those students have additional opportunities of the traditional spheres, that they would have had over the last 15 or 20 years ago.

Sir, I would want to see the use of science, technology and innovation driving new industry in the area of bio-technology. I would want to see that our university becomes an engine through which we can develop new industry in the area of new engineering facilities. Those engineering facilities whether it happens to be in the area of information technology, or any other of the engineering areas that could produce jobs and marketable products for the future.

It is from that perspective that I would cast my full support behind any programme that seeks to enhance the university because the role that it must play in the future in redefining the type of sectorial development and growth in Barbados, even becomes more critical at this time as we try to carry this country forward.

Sir, I always like to put it this way. If the evidence is correct at this point in time where we are talking about probably between 9 and 12 per cent of Barbadians now getting a university education...

Asides.

Hon. Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: I am being told that we could be looking at over 30 per cent at this point in time who presently get a university education.Sir, that is rather low for a country that is positing to move towards first world status. When we look at the countries that have achieved first world status, you are in fact looking at 60 and 70 per cent of students having a university education. It is not the qualification. It is the capacity to have the mind so malleable, that the mind can adapt and the mind can use this information in a positive and productive way, once the training imputs are put in place. That is what university training is designed to do.

Sir, it is therefore important that the correlation that I spoke to earlier, between having a tertiary education and soci-economic development stand clearly demonstrated, because that is the way it is done in many of the developed countries as well as many of the countries in Asia, the ones that we speak to so fondly regarding their use of innovation, science and technology, Singapore and the likes and so on.

Sir, from that perspective I would also relate this directly to economic development. I believe that when one looks at the 1970s and 1980s, and we look at agriculture, let us pick one sector, when I analyse that sector and compare that sector with other sectors that were moving similarly with respect to the development of that sector, like Singapore and so on, it becomes quite clear why many of those countries move way ahead of us. They move well ahead of us because they understood that in order to move the sector from a primary exporting entity, they had to come up with...

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Dr. Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Sir, the reason they moved well ahead of us is because they understood that in order to move the sector from a primary produce exporting entity, that they had to come up with what economists call the components of total factor productivity. All it is really saying, Sir, is that you use technology, you use education and training so that you start to manufacture secondary products and tertiary products so that you have a broader expanse of usage of your agricultural base.

Sir, that happened in Singapore, it happened in Korea, it happened in Vietnam, it happened in Ireland but it did not happen in Barbados and up to today, you show me one fundamental area where our produce is used in form of tertiary production for the export market. Sir, that is where your university can play a critical role in building the human resource capabilities so that the elements of your productivity could be enhanced, not by enhanced Labour but enhanced inputs in education, training and in technology use, with respect to the growth and development of the particular sector under consideration. Sir, that same approach could be utilised when it comes to information technology, as a sector, it could be utilised when it comes to alternative energy as a sector, it could be utilised similarly for any of the sectors that we now would want to evolve.

Another good example, Sir, has to do with sugar cane. In the years when we concentrated on the primary production of sugar, some countries recognised that there would come a time when the preferential treatment regarding sugar quotas and the revenues from those preferential arrangements would have declined.

What happened, Sir, those countries started a diversification that involved the use of technology and innovation. The results are of those are those countries now that are way ahead, regarding the alternative outputs from sugar cane itself. Meaning, whether it is alcohol, whether it is fuel cane and the list goes on, Sir, but we would have waited until we are kicked off the steps of the European Union now to start to analysed these things, when those things should have happened many years ago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the sort of approach that I speak to, where our university must now galvanise that telescope, Sir, and be able to be seeing in the future, and help us to utilise those gifts of brainpower that they have up there to help us succeed, retroactively those types of policies and programmes that would carry us forward in the future.

It is from that perspective, Mr. Speaker, that I interjected in this discussion but I also want to explain this at a more basic level, when it comes to output or enhance production within a sector of the economy. Let me explain it this way.

Mr. Speaker, let us assume that the total output from all the sectors in Barbados was only $1 000. We already know, Sir, how many people in the country are employed so you can take the total output, which one refers to as GDP, and you can interpret that in terms of a dollar value, so that the total amount would be $7 billion. Sir, because you know there are 100 000 persons who are working, and that may not include those in the informal economy that we have to estimate, you can therefore take your total GDP and divide it out to know how many people contribute to that GDP. Then what you can do, because you are already locked into very inflexible Labour relations, you already know that the persons worked on average eight hours a day, by five days a week, so you can therefore divide that further so you know how many hours persons worked to give you that economic output.

What I am saying here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that is right where we have to introduce the science and technology because you can increase your output by increasing the numbers of people working or you can increase your output by adding technology, knowledge, science and innovation to drive your national output. Sir, that is what has to happen sectorially so that the country can go forward and this is where our educational system therefore has to come up to standard in order to do this and this is why I would say to my comrade, Minister Jones, his role is now a critical one.

Sir, I say also to the principal of the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus your role is now a critical one to move Barbados forward and to move our countries forward in the region. It is now critical that we embrace all of those elements and it can only come from a redeveloped University, that has as its core a post graduate research programme that design out relevant research towards product production and relevant research towards solutions to problems that affect our own economic growth and development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is therefore from that perspective that I give this Resolution my full support and I cast, again, my full support behind the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

I thank you very much, Sir.

Asides.

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

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

I rise to make a very brief contribution to this interesting debate, in relation to a guarantee to the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus. Let me begin first by focusing on two things raised by the Honourable Minister which I believe when you analyse those disclosures, one can only be of the view that the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus continues to excel and continues to do well in relation to the evolution of Caribbean economies.

One area related to the question to online education and the fact that the funding which the Government would be looking to identify for that kind of education will soon get recognition and identified through the Student Revolving Loan Fund. I think that is a significant development, particularly as it relates to the availability of online education. We recognise that within the context of the physical plants, both at Cave Hill and throughout the University of the West Indies that dispute whatever physical improvements that you use, one would never be able to provide the kind of physical capacity to accommodate all students.

Therefore, the foresight which has gone into ensuring that online education be made more accessible by providing funding through the Student Revolving Loan Fund is an initiative that ought to be commended. In addition, the Honourable Minister also raised the issue and he did disclose that there will be a new focus within the context of the University of the West Indies on two very key pillars, the areas of research and innovation. These are two very important areas because all Governments in the Caribbean at this particular juncture in our history, must now begin to focus in a large way on research and innovation.

I think what the Minister was signalling was that in relation to the evolution of the University of the West Indies and all of the various foci which we have actually highlighted in relation to where the university must go, must now be to a large extent driven by the economic and socio political agenda of Caribbean Governments. There is no difference in relation to the approach that is being taken by the Barbados Government in relation to some of the pressing economic and social problems that we face. What we recognise is that in relation to the specific focus of the University of the West Indies it really has got to be the Government that will have to signal those key areas of activity that we wish to get assistance from, or that we need the University of the West Indies to focus its energies on.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: We intend on doing those key areas as outlined by the Minister in relation to a very proactive approach recognising on the one hand that we have no choice but to embrace technology and that online learning is the future direction of the University of the West Indies. It will not only save cost but will make sure that a wider cross section of Barbadians - certainly once that is expanded throughout the university community in the Caribbean - and a wide cross section of Caribbean persons can gain access to university education by being at their homes or being in a community centre or wherever the online access is.

I also believe that this debate is timely because it is coming at a time when we are gripped by a global economic recession. I feel that one of the things we should certainly be embracing the University of the West Indies on would be looking at the economic recession which is impacting on Caribbean economies and how we could actually research the economic recession, the problems that have led to the recession and the vulnerabilities of Caribbean economies.

The University of the West Indies should see this as a part of its mission to identify by case studies what has happened in relation to this current economic recession and the impact on Caribbean economies. I believe that once carefully researched, the outcomes that could come out of that kind of regional research would enable Caribbean governments to plan even better in relation to what would surely happen again when we have to face another economic recession.

There are a number of things that we can say in relation to the future direction of the University of the West Indies, which I think this debate will allow us to do. Mr. Speaker, before we can do that, I think that this Parliament ought to record for history the appreciation of this Government for the very insightful productive work which has happened over the years within the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that the University of the West Indies remains one of those Caribbean institutions that have performed with distinction. I think we ought to record that because oftentimes in our passion to push our institutions to the next level - that is fine because I think we have to be always aiming for excellence... We have to note and commend the efforts by the Cave Hill Campus, which is the arm of the University of the West Indies in Barbados, and by extension the various campuses across the Caribbean by means of how they have been able to impact on the lives of Caribbean people and certainly the kind of research assistance they provide to regional Governments.

We recognise that the focus of the University of the West Indies must change. I think one of the key areas that the University of the West Indies by means of the actual policy shifts which have already begun to occur within Caribbean governments, as it has been in relation to the Barbados Government, from the traditional sectors to the entrepreneurial-driven economy has become a reality and it has become accelerated because of the global economic recession and the impact that has had on Caribbean economies.

The necessity to begin to look for alternative means of attracting foreign investments and foreign exchange has now made it a reality for Caribbean governments and indeed the Government of Barbados to look beyond the traditional economic sectors and look to see how we can empower particularly our young people to become entrepreneurs. I believe that is one of the pivotal areas that the University of the West Indies has got to focus on. That has become necessary because of a policy shift by Caribbean governments and certainly by the Government of Barbados.

There are numerous areas that call out for research intervention in this area of entrepreneurial empowerment. We need to focus on ensuring that all of the areas of current study, whether it is project management, whether it is in the area of the humanities or whether it is in the area of law, must begin to have a focus in relation to entrepreneurial activity. It has become a necessity and it has to become driven by new dynamic systems which I believe the University of the West Indies, because of its very rich history of innovation, is well poised to lead in terms of the academic research that is necessary to create the kind of dynamic systems that we need to put out there particularly for our young people.

We have to link national development to the areas of economic growth that are crucial if we are to get ahead. It means that our University of the West Indies now has to become focused on innovations in relation to its curriculum and that its curriculum must now be looked at in a complete different way than it was looked at before. We have, for example, to look at training needs within the Caribbean, which we have already begun to look at. Certainly, we have started to put in place studies to look at the entrepreneurial training needs of our people. What we have to do at the university level is to ensure that we can package our programmes that are relevant to specific training requirements as they are existing today. Beyond that, the University of the West Indies must lead the battle in relation to ensuring that we can have the kind of relevant training programmes that are necessary for the next five to ten years of development.

We recognise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that putting in place a medium fiscal strategy can no longer be done in a vacuum. These strategies must be dovetailed to the university's programme. The extent of the funding being

provided to the University of the West Indies must go through a cost benefit analysis to the extent that this funding redounds to the benefit of Caribbean economies. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there was at least one concern which I have in relation to the evolution of the University of the West Indies, it would be ensuring, as the Minister has said, that this great institution remains a regional project. I think he has said that because we have had over the past two or so years some developments occurring across the University of the West Indies where we have had each territory moving in the direction of creating individual campuses in specific areas. This has created a scare or a concern that perhaps we are moving away from the initial mandate of the establishment of the University of the West Indies. We saw it in relation to the decision by Jamaica to move towards the establishment of a law faculty in Jamaica amiss growing concerns from Barbados where the law faculty has always been situated.

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Hon. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that while we recognise the importance of adhering to our obligations at the University of the West Indies, that it is in the vested interest of this Government and certainly the Governments of the Caribbean to ensure that the University of the West Indies remains a regional institution. We have benefited from that, we have seen the benefits to regional integration.

Sir, being a former student of the University of the West Indies, I can certainly attest to the fact that the shared collision of young men and women in one particular location, whether in Trinidad, Jamaica or Barbados, that shared experience has assisted us to become better Caribbean citizens. Certainly, I would not want to see a University of the West Indies evolving in a way that prevents young men and women from getting together within the context of a campus to share experiences. Many of these persons who have had those experiences have gone on to become leaders in their respective fields, many of them have become Prime Ministers and members of respective Parliaments across the Caribbean; many of them have become entrepreneurs who continue to move across the Caribbean space; many of them have become skilled artisans in so many areas that are required within the evolving new Caribbean that we have to insist, particularly when we plough our scarce resources behind the University of the West Indies, that a precondition is that the University of the West Indies continues to have a regional focus and that it does not loose its 'Caribbeanness' and its Caribbean focus.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also believe that as a Government we have also to work with the University of the West Indies towards making this institution a truly international one, which I think will redound to the benefit of all Caribbean economies. Sir, the University of the West Indies is a mature product, it is a product of which we all ought to be proud because across the world, you would find not only professors but also students who have had the benefit of being associated with the University of the West Indies. Sir, we have now got to the point where we need to catapult this institution into the international arena. Sir, it has started to happen, I certainly have to congratulate the Cave Hill Campus. As it currently stands, the Cave Hill Campus is not the same campus at which I attended, there are many more halls of residences. When I was there, we had only the Sherlock Hall, we now have many more halls of residences and we have seen a complete transformation of the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus. Sir, at that time, I was President of the Guilds, with Minister Todd as part of my guild and so he understands the environment that existed then. Minister Todd can readily see the transformation that has occurred over the past ten or so years at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to work with the various campuses to evolve a model by which within a very short term the University of the West Indies can become and can boast of being a truly international university. Sir, that not only requires the specific Government allocations in relation to the area of marketing but we have to expand our campuses, we have to have the residential facilities at the various campuses by which we can accommodate international students. I am told that at the Cave Hill Campus there is a renewed and continued demand from across the world for places at the University of the West Indies. We have to match that because what we have not done well is to market our educational product sufficiently to the extent that it can become a prime earner of foreign exchange for economies such as ours.

Sir, by making the University of the West Indies a truly international campus can achieve that because with that would come a number of students, both regionally and internationally, who obviously will bring foreign exchange for tuition and living expenses. They will also bring their families. Sir, once we evolve this project correctly, it would have the potential of addressing some of the financial needs of the University of the West Indies and freeing up some of the moneys which are currently allocated by Government to the University of the West Indies. These moneys can be used in other areas of economic and social development. Sir, I think the sooner we embark on that model the better it will be for us as regional Governments.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development has been thinking about this but as a Government, we recognised that is a key

area in which the new University of the West Indies must be involved and with our assistance. Sir, there is no real hardcore separation in terms of the University of the West Indies and Government, the University of the West Indies operates with the assistance of Government and that has been so for many years. Therefore, the partnership is real, whereby the Government obtains significant benefit by means of having a very highly trained work force. I think the second project we have to do is to evolve the concept of regional technical and vocational institutions because I believe that the area of technical and vocational enterprises is what the future is about. As you know, many of our youngsters are involved in technical and vocational endeavours, many of them are now into the computer age. Sir, I think I must give credit to the Cave Hill Campus where they are seeing an increase in the number of persons who are attracted to the sciences. While that is true, we have an opportunity to give real meaning to technical and vocational education and instruction by evolving a number of regional institutions that could train our people across the Caribbean.

Sir, the future of Caribbean economies, in my view, is going to be based on creating a new type of entrepreneurial class of individuals. From where would that new type come? It has to come from our young people. Sir, our young people would have to drive that process and we have consciously to create the systems within the University of the West Indies to create that entrepreneurial class that will feed and be engines for future economic and social growth across the Caribbean. That, in my view, is one of the key areas of focus for the University of the West Indies. We have to identify and we have identified that as a key need and already the University of the West Indies has begun to respond to that as a key initiative that we have to follow.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of other things that the Minister mentioned, which I certainly need to solute, is the question of the national development scholarships and special awards which this Government will continue to support. Sir, this is key because not much focus nor attention is given to national development scholarships, in terms of what they can do for national development. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not aware if this model has been followed across the Caribbean in terms of national development scholarships but certainly in Barbados that particular avenue, which obtains outside of the mainstream area of academic funding, is a key social intervention by a Government, where a Government can say that, in relation to these key areas, we will focus on ensuring that our population can have national development scholarships.

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MR. S. A. LASHLEY: Sir, that particular avenue, which obtains outside of the mainstream area of academic funding, is a key social intervention by a Government, where a Government can say, that in relation to these key areas, we would focus on ensuring that our population can have national development scholarships.

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

MR. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, I think this is an area where we have the opportunity to carefully connect that into what programmes too the University of the West Indies is following. It is the key to our national development and we recognise that as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing, I would also like to say that one of the things we can do to further advance the National Development Scholarship is to link it to the evolution of a National Youth Service. I say this because we have to find ways by which the National Development Scholarship, in terms of the next tier of National Development Scholarship, can be used as an incentive for young Barbadians to become involved in a National Youth Service which we, as a Government, are on record as saying that would be the next stage of evolution for the current youth service, where we have a National Youth Service. Sir, that service can also be used where youngsters, who are involved in the National Youth Service, can be awarded by credits when they apply for other areas of tertiary studies whether in relation to the pure academic or in technical and vocational studies.(15:52)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am glad for this opportunity to contribution to this debate on this Resolution on this institution, which continues to be at the cutting edge of regional, economic and social development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to close by saying that we, certainly, owe the University of the West Indies a debt of gratitude and the continued support by means of large amounts of money, millions of dollars in the University of the West Indies is not by chance. It is based on a recognition of this Government of the importance of continued support of the University of the West Indies, particularly at this time when we are focused on ensuring that we have a population that is not only trained by that is equipped with the relevant tools to take us forward as an emerging developed country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those words, I want to signal my support for this Resolution.

(15:53)MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

MR. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, ...

(15:54) MR. SPEAKER: I am sure that your contribution will be just as valid.

MR. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to lend my support to this very serious Resolution that is before this Honourable Chamber. Sir, I will not be too long but this Resolution affords me the opportunity to pay tribute to who I would consider one of the foremost architects of compensatory education and training programmes in Barbados. Sir, I am speaking about not other person that the late Dr. Bradley Niles, who was a tutor of the Extramural College located in the Pine, next to Parkinson Secondary School.

Mr. Speaker, on I am looking at Dr. Bradley Niles contribution to compensatory education in the communities across Barbados, particularly that of the Ivy and also of Pinelands, to which he was associated with the (15:55:20).... Club and also the Pinelands community. Sir, here was a man who would take very ordinary poor children under his wing and teach them what I call the skills for life. Those that came out from school uncertified, particularly from Parkinson Secondary School, he would provide that kind of necessary education for them to survive in life.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I think this Honourable Chamber should note that after a child leaves school, you now have to prepare them for the world of work. You would be surprised, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that even up to today there are a number of children throughout Barbados still after leaving school cannot even properly conduct themselves at an interview and some of them cannot even fill out an application form for work, and Dr. Bradley Niles knowing these deficiencies, perhaps, with a number of children coming out of school in the community, would take these children and teach them and give the necessary skills to survive in this world.

Mr. Speaker, one interesting feature that I remember is that a number of young men from our community had got scholarship to the United States of America but in order to fully attain that scholarship those persons would have to sit something called the SAT programme and Dr. Niles took these young footballers and basket-ballers and taught them and eventually they passed the SAT programme. Sir, he did this not during the normal hours of his work schedule but he did it as a contribution to the community that he came from.

Mr. Speaker, the communities of Pine, Wildey and the Ivy were so much appreciated of his efforts in terms of his contribution to the compensatory educational programme that a letter was written to the University of the West Indies asking that the School of Continuing Study that is located in the Pine be renamed the Dr. Bradley Nile School of Continuing Study.

Mr. Speaker, it would be interesting be so many people see so much but so many people observe so little. Sir, I am saying that because if you pass through the precincts of the Pine, you would see the ordinary poor persons that are going to the School of Continuing Study and getting what I called their part of this compensatory educational package.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that Dr. Bradley Niles is one person that we should honour and remember. Therefore, I am using this Honourable Chamber to call on the Principal of the University of the West Indies, Professor Hilary Beckles, and his Committee, to seriously consider renaming the institution, what we call the University of the Pine, the School of Continuing Study, after Dr. Bradley Niles. Perhaps, there is some technical area that we do not know anything about but if that is not possible, then a bust of Dr. Niles should be placed at the entrance of the School of Continuing Study, in the Pine.

Mr. Speaker, incidentally, when Dr. Bradley Niles died, a number of people from the community were at his bedside and I would like to say this. I remember one of his last words was the hope that we continue to push the whole programme on continuing education, especially in our communities.

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Mr. H.. LASHLEY: I am saying that, now, because I feel a sense of compassion now that he has gone, but also recognising at the same time the work of Dr. Bradley Niles.

Sir, we must always aspire. All of us have dreams. Dr. Martin Luthur King had a dream. I believe all of us in Barbados have a dream of some kind, but sometimes I seriously believe that Barbados could become the most computer literate country on the planet earth. Barbados has basically set out a programme of community technology education. Inscribed is the knowledge that every household in Barbados, in my view, should have a computer. Every child in Barbados, in my view, should have a lap top computer.

It is interesting to note that the United States Embassy in a recent announcement, said that Barbadians were probably the most computer literate because you have to apply for your visa online. Out of all the nations in the Caribbean, Barbadians are the ones that are most and regularly applying online for their visas. We have to set ourselves lofty goals. There is no doubt about the standard of education in Barbados. I think, perhaps it is the highest

for any so-called country. I believe that we should always be moving towards the next step.

Sir, against that background I should also like to pay tribute to Professor Hillary Beckles of the University of the West Indies for his creativity, his ingenuity, and clearly his imagination. He too had a dream like Martin Luthur King. I remember him making a statement that he would like to see every household with a university graduate. I too believe that is very possible. It is very real. I really believe that it is something we should ascribe to.

Perhaps, when the legacy of Professor Hillary Beckles is written, it will be written about an educational development, an institution that was primarily thought of as one of serious academic training and academic knowledge. Professor Hillary Beckles has changed that notion a bit by the implementation of the Error Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination. This is primarily an Arts centre.

At the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, it must be noted that Arts is foremost among the curriculum. At the university there is a vocational school in the Arts Programme which is no longer a vocational school in the Arts Programme, but a regular programme that is part of the curriculum.

Sir, I am saying that when you go to the University at Cave Hill as a casual visitor, or you go just to pick a lime, one could not help but see the tremendous physical development at Cave Hill. Out of all of the three West Indies universities, Mona, St. Augustine and Cave Hill, not that I am taking a bias position, but Cave Hill certainly is the one that is the most physically attractive, the best infrastructure and certainly this has redounded to the credit of Professor Hillary Beckles.

Sir, when we look at compensatory education, perhaps sometimes we tend to follow and honour the traditional way of education, but sometimes we have to go outside of the box. We have to look at other programmes. How are we going to deal with the new challenges that face us in this global sphere of ours? Perhaps we have to look at new techniques that our young people are using. Air brushing is another technological methodology for development. Also to help other persons to develop their business.

I certainly believe that CBC television has a critical and crucial role to play, in relating the right type of information and education to our young people. There is a serious need for more primary school educational programmes of a local nature on television in Barbados. Against that background St. David's Primary School is shared by three constituencies, Christ Church East Central, St. George South and St. Michael South East. There is a very strong lobby of public opinion that St. David's Primary School, and I am saying this to the Minister, should be named after Sir Courtney Blackman's father. I am hoping that the Minister obviously will consider it.

I am saying that because we have a habit in Barbados of recognising the worth of persons when they are long gone and saying nice things about them. Here is an opportunity that we could also pay tribute to a man that older persons, like in my generation, could certainly give a lot of credit to.

Sir, I am also pushing that Parkinson Secondary School, when the renovation is completed, that it becomes a centre of cultural development in Barbados. I will say why. I really believe that the school hall should be converted into an Arts Centre. After all, when you look at the fact that a number of outstanding Barbadian artistes, singers and performers, went to school at Parkinson Secondary School, the idea of establishing Parkinson Secondary School as an Art Centre is necessary.

Sir, Darcy Boyce our main technical person in Barbados went to school at Parkinson Secondary School. In fact, he developed the craft of drama at Parkinson Secondary School and did a number of productions, which I will speak about at Parkinson Secondary School. Rodney Grant, the CEO of the Pinelands Creative Workshop, one of the best choreographers that you could find in Barbados went to school at Parkinson Secondary School. Earl Warner also went to Parkinson Secondary School. I believe that the Hall at Parkinson Secondary School should be named after Earl Warner. I am say that because Earl Warner was the foremost Director in the Caribbean of drama. Earl Warner directed the Wine of Astonishment which was written by Earl Lovelace. The Wine of Astonishment was used on the CXC syllabus. It was one of the best memories I would have had during time watch children from all the secondary schools who were doing English Literature on the CXC syllabus coming to Parkinson Secondary School to watch that production and take notes for their examination.

Sir, the Wine of Astonishment gave those persons sitting that exam a clearer view of the Spiritual Baptist Movement known back in the 1940s as the shelter. It was done also in Trinidad and directed by Earl Warner at St. Agustine, and also at Mona, Jamaica.

Sir, Earl Warner has passed but the book by Earl Lovelace, The Wine of Astonishment, is one of the best novels that has been written by any contemporary writer in the Caribbean.

Also, the work of Anthony Hinkson, in my view, is still the best script writer in Barbados, who resides in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Housing, I believe. He is one that should be noted. Here it is that we

have, in terms of education, our friend, the Honourable Member for St. James North, both of them were contemporary teachers at the Garrison Secondary School.

Sir, when I look at the work of Anthony Hinkson, I must remember that he wrote...

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House A65B, Sequence 30, 4.10 p.m.

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: When I look at the work of Anthony Hinkson, Sir, I must remember the fact that you wrote a number of serious educational scripts that won top prizes at NIFCA and the Esso Drama Festival. Bulldozers, which dealt with a very serious social problem in Emmerton, how the people were bulldozed and moved away from their environment in Emmerton and moved to Clapham. It was a very moving experience because at the end of that production, many people were crying when they understood the effects of relocation and the impact that it would have had on the community of Emmerton.

In fact, the Mighty Gabby made it a classic song. It was voted the best song of the Century in Barbados that was "Emmerton". Sir, I am looking at using drama as an educational medium for development.

Sir, you also have Victor Clifford who is a teacher now at Parkinson Secondary School. Victor has been the best actor in Barbados. Tony Thompson would dispute it but Victor Clifford has been the best actor in Barbados for decades.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: In terms of characterisation and really bringing the emotional ism to the character. There is nobody in my view that could interpret a character better than Victor Clifford but that in itself, Sir, is a methodology of education in a very informal setting. Sometimes, we have to look at using these techniques, Sir, when you look at developing modern educational techniques. They are Victor Clifford, Tony Thompson, Claremont Taitt, all outstanding actors that use their craft to teach and to educate persons across Barbados.

Then, Sir, there is John Collymore who is another top actor in Barbados. I am putting a case in this Honourable Chamber as it relates to education as a compensatory methodology for learning and development at the community level. Sir, to prove my point, I am using individual persons who would have excel at their particular craft. Also John (Foo-Foo) Walcott, you could not talk of a better exponent of the craft of using education as a tool for learning and development.

Sir, I would hope that the Honourable Minister because I am quite sure that he has earmarked the Parkinson School Hall for refurbishing and redeveloping and I am hoping that it will be renamed after Earl Warner and hope all the persons that I have talked about be entered into the Parkinson School Hall of Fame, so that the children themselves would be able to identify with the cultural icons that were schooled at Parkinson Secondary School.

Perhaps, Sir, it brings me to another very important area of education and that of the production that was done called, "Snakes and Grasshoppers". Interesting enough, snakes and grasshoppers. Sir, I want to say that was a production that focussed primarily on the whole issue of HIV/AIDS. Sir, people understood it better under the theme of Snakes and Grasshoppers. I am happy to see that only a couple Opposition Members are in their seat, because obviously, they would pick up on grasshoppers and we do not want to go down the line of grass hopping because that would introduce a different discussion in this Honourable Chamber.

Asides.

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: I am in a good mood, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, you would remember that I said that we see so much and observe so little. We have been contemplating and looking at how we could deal with the problems within the school system but yet we have two outstanding examples, Sir, that are working for our youth in the secondary school framework. The whole aspect of it is whether we should let this remain as it is or we should look at coeducation but I want to set two outstanding examples of schools which are doing well and they are not coed. They are the Springer Memorial School, which has an outstanding track record in athletics. Strange enough, they do not have a facility where they could train. They have no playing field. They probably have to walk over to Blenheim but it is an all girls institution and they are doing outstandingly well, not only in athletics, Sir, but if you even look at academic achievement, they are doing well.

Then, Sir, on the opposite end, you have St. Leonards Secondary School. They have the highest pass mark in Spanish every year consistently, they have a 100 voice male choir.

Asides.

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: It is and institution of extreme discipline like the Springer Memorial School, so then you really have to examine the fact of the practical

achievements of these single sex school. Sir, in our time coming up we focussed a lot on discipline. Maybe, we have to look at the existing models of achievement within these two secondary schools.

I am saying, perhaps, to all of the children who would have just sat the 11-plus Examination that some may not get to Harrison College and Combermere, the established Schools according to the tradition in Barbados but these other schools that I am talking about, are even offering better extracurricular activities, one. Sir, two, they are offering the same opportunities, although I believe that there is a great advantage in some schools. I do not believe that Parkinson School is on the same equal in terms of the quality teachers that they would get, as opposed to Harrison College. I am not a fool and I see what goes on.

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

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: Sir, what I am saying that within the whole educational standard it is how you adapt and equip yourself.

I am happy to be a proud student of Parkinson School. I spent 1½ years at Parkinson School, more time out than in but the fact of the matter is that because poverty had impacted so greatly on your living at that time that you had no other choice than to go to work and support your family.

I am saying, Sir, when you are viewing education, education must always be seen as a positive pathway out of poverty. It is the key. The Mighty Sparrow had a classic which said:

"Children go to school and learn well, Otherwise in life you would smell hell,

Without an education in your head,

You are better off dead."

Sir, we have to keep passing on these positive messages but we cannot rely only on the introverted school educational system. It now has to spread out into the communities and therefore, as I began by complementing the works and worth of Dr. Bradley Niles, I will end by doing the same thing because the Bradley Niles model of compensatory education in the communities across Barbados should always be recognised.

Sir, I am saying that we need to have more Bradley Nileses, more people who have excelled in their particular fields of endeavour going back into the communities and offering this kind of programme.

Sir, as I wrap up, I just want to say that we seriously going to have to give, at some point in time in our development because I believe that in the Caribbean is one of the few remaining Third World countries that still have the 11-Plus Examination in place. Across Europe and North America, there is no such thing as an 11-Plus Examination. There is always a system of equality within the educational system across North America.

House A65B, Sequence 30, 16:20:12

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Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Barbadians in my age group have cherished and hallowed the whole aspect of an 11-Plus Exam. In my time, I had to write two examinations. Sir, it was a horrifying experience because you were under, as "Tom" Clarke would say, the mantel of yoke of colonialism. Sir, we had to learn some strange things in our time; "Mr. Mike went to school on a bike" and "Twirly and Twisty". I could not understand it, and say God saved the Queen at the same time. I grew up stupid under the Union Jack.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development would have some challenges. He clearly understands it as a black African nationalist and as a very reformed individual.

Mr. Speaker, I really want to thank you for your patience and indulgence in my presentation in this Honourable Chamber. I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged. The Honourable Member St. Michael East.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution. It is critical that this Resolution in respect of the University of the West Indies Enhancement Project be seen as non-partisan.

Sir, I want to start my contribution by saying that the University of the West Indies must play a critical role in helping Caribbean governments to achieve the Millennium Goal on Education. Sir, if I start by looking at BCA, we must believe that education is the key to the achievement of individuals social well-being and peace and that ignorance and illiteracy are obstacles to the development and construction of a democratic society. Sir, that is one of the key factors that is critical if we are truly to reach the Millennium Goal.

Sir, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is pushing their programme on education to ensure that at least we must believe that education is key to the achievement of all individuals social well-being and peace and that ignorance and illiteracy are obstacles to the

development and construction of a democratic society, that is what B stands for. The C: We must be convinced that education for all is a basic human right and that it should be entrenched in our national Constitution as a demonstration of our commitment to the deliberation of our citizens from the shackles of ignorance and illiteracy.

Sir, the A: In acknowledging our singular and collective responsibility to the well-being of human dignity of our citizens through quality and equitable educational system, we pledge ourselves to the fulfillment of the Millennium Goal on education, which is critical. Sir, that is why I used the letters BCA. Persons who thought that BCA means the Barbados Cricket Association could not understand.

Sir, the University of the West Indies must play a critical role in helping countries in the Caribbean to achieve these objectives. Sir, successive governments come here year after year and vote lots of money for the University of the West Indies. Sir, when we look at what is happening or at the amount of money that is spent on education, we must ask ourselves, are we getting the returns for the money that was spent. The answer throughout Barbados would have to be a resounding no.

Sir, what we have to do is to put all of our heads together and come up with ideas and solutions to the problems that are existing. Sir, those problems would not be solved by teachers in the classroom, those problems must be solved by each and every individual in society if we are to make a better Caribbean society.

Sir, what is happening in Jamaica is not just an off chance. If you look at the percentage of persons who goes on to tertiary education or at those persons who have the basic primary education, the level is extremely low in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. We are kind of fortunate in Barbados to have a higher level but I am not convinced that we have reached the level that we can feel comfortable and so we must do more to have basic primary education for all. When we have the solid foundation of basic primary education, then we can see it being transformed right throughout the system where we can see the true returns for the tertiary education and the amount of money that is being spent.

Sir, I am calling on the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development to pay particular attention to what UNICEF has said in respect of the Millennium Goal because the world as a whole is concerned about this whole question of education. It is not only a Barbados or Caribbean thing, it is the world so much so that they are speaking about the Millennium Goal and the various aspects of the Millennium Goal. Sir, the one which is critical is reaching the one that is for education. We must recognise the role of teachers and educators and encourage the development of quality teachers in order to achieve education for all.

Sir, parents and parliamentarians must play their part as well in order that we can have education for all. It is not about dressing the child and sending him or her off to school and that is the role of the teacher, it is not that. When that child returns home, the parents must assist.

Sir, what is happening is that we are having a high level of dropouts at the tertiary education level, therefore we must look carefully to see what is the problem. Are the children at age 16 and 17 really ready for tertiary education? Sir, the University of the West Indies must play its role now in doing a survey or a study to assist parliamentarians and the society at large to see what is the true problem there. This transformation from secondary to tertiary education is wreaking havoc in our society and we are having too many dropouts at the tertiary level. You go on to the Barbados Community College and there is this level of dropout. You go on to university and people are missing classes.

Sir, there should be some level of accountability not only on the parents or the students but in respect of the teachers and the educators who would have monitored the attendance of the children to ensure that the money that the Government of the day is spending on education is not wasted. It should not be looked at only in a sense that if they do not come, it does not matter to me because I will receive my salary; no. We should play a greater role to ensure that if we are truly to get value for the amount of money spent that all hands are on deck and all brains and hands and feet are put to the plough in order to achieve full education for all.

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His Hon. K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, the University Enhancement Project not only enhances Jamaica but when persons develop their product in Jamaica they can come to Barbados and expand on it, likewise Barbadians can expand their products in Jamaica.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Minister of Economic Affairs speaking about innovation, where he was saying that persons must become involved in projects that will be beneficial both to manufacturers and to the development of the country. I also heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West speaking about the agriculture sector where he said that needs to see more innovation within that sector.

Sir, it is critical that we as a nation and as Parliamentarians must not only be seen as persons who provide jobs for persons, we must also be able to guide them because it is not a situation where every person would be in a position to receive a Government job. Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. James North said, when persons come to you and you outline to them that a particular job is not available, they go away feeling disheartened, some may want to abuse you. If you were ever to try getting them into educational programmes to enhance their lives, some of them behave as though you are asking them to commit a crime, when all you are doing is trying to ensure that each person plays his or her critical role in society. Sir, the Mighty Sparrow had a song: "Without an education in your head, you might be better off dead." Sir, UNICEF speaks to education for all, all they have done is only to modify the language of the Mighty Sparrow.

Sir, we have seen it day after day as we go to our constituency office. When persons come to us seeking jobs and we inquire of them their skills, some people do not have any qualifications or skills and so they ask to be given any job. Sir, the time has now come where we must seriously reeducate our people to ensure that we have a better society and a better Caribbean. I am sure that if you recognise what is happening in Jamaica, we have to take note because they are our brothers and sisters of the Caribbean and I am hoping and praying that such a development does not happen in Barbados. Sir, as politicians we must not turn a blind eye to things that are wrong in our society, only to allow us to remain in this Honourable House, we must take a stand against what is right and against what is wrong in order to have a better society.

Mr. Speaker, I want to leave this Honourable House and the listening public of Barbados with a quotation from John F. Kennedy:

"I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we, too, will be remembered not for victories or defeats in battle or in politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit."

Mr. Speaker, I believe that education will assist us in helping our contribution to human spirit. With those few words, I support this Resolution.

Hon. John D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I want to join this discussion on the University of the West Indies at this time because there can be no more important debate in communities and when we raise it to the level of Parliament of Barbados the importance even strikes home more vividly. Sir, as I heard mentioned by contributors before, a number of us have benefited from the excellent work of the University of the West Indies. Sir, as we transition to a new phase of globalisation and global university - if I can use that term - we need to appreciate where we have to position our academic institutions.

Sir, Honourable Members on this side have made the point to include the consideration of education in Barbados and in the CARICOM community and the role that primary and secondary institutions play in this total developmental programme. Mr. Speaker, I want to go on record, I do not know if it has been said before but I think we have some real icons at the University of the West Indies whose achievements we need to speak into the records of Parliament. Sir, for example, the present Pro-Vice Chancellor, Sir Hilary Beckles is in truth an outstanding Barbadian intellect who must be commended for the direction which he has taken the University of the West Indies, from many great leaders before him. It is not like if Sir Hilary has taken it from nothing but he has taken an institution which had already been developed, to a stage of absolute importance and admiration throughout the Caribbean.

Sir, we have now seen the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, transitioned into a very large institution, where it is seeking to provide a multifaceted educational opportunity to all our young people. Indeed, the debate will go on as to where the educational role and the economic contribution really ends with the university. Sir, truth be told, many of the students who go into our university at tertiary level sometimes go there because there is no immediate opportunity for employment and so they continue into the tertiary system. They take advantage of the offerings in terms of the training that is being offered, they then move on. The old adage that education is a continuum is indeed apt.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that we continue to arm ourselves with the most modern tools, by way of education and training, and the university therefore is obliged to have this as part of its mandate. Sir, the expansion and contribution that we in Barbados continue to make to the growth of the university is not badly spent. As a matter of fact, probably not enough is being spent. The university would probably like to do a lot more and we would love to be able to say to Caribbean people that the university could offer even more opportunities. The point is that this Resolution today deals with just a small amount in real terms, of the cost of running our university. When we understand the overall contribution the institution is making, we then begin to appreciate how important it is that we stay on line, more or less, and make sure that Barbados pays its fair share. Barbados has benefited tremendously from an education system which is boasted all over the world. We claim a degree of literacy which many envy. I am not one who competes with that kind of data because I am not sure sometimes where the measuring

sticks are but I do believe that we do benefit from an intelligent community.

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HON. J.D.E. BOYCE: We claim a degree of literacy which many envy. I am not one of those who compete with that kind of data because I am not sure, sometimes, where the measuring sticks are but I believe that we do benefit from a really intelligent community. The Barbadian people owe a debt of gratitude to our leaders of the past, especially the leaders of the Democratic Labour Party who saw education as a primary pillar in the overall development of this great country.

Mr. Speaker, as we move on, the university has to demonstrate the flexibility and it has to be able to operate in an environment which allows students a number of options. Sir, no longer is it enough to just offer the classics, or even medicine, law and social studies but we have to develop a cadre of educational opportunities, and training opportunities, which will allow our people to be aptly fit to take their role in the worldwide economy as it evolves. I heard the Honourable Member St. Philip West made the point earlier that it is a training institution that we are talking about. We are not necessarily going to produce persons immediately to walk into a job of work the next day but we produce persons with a mind and a training that allow them to think through issues in a way that allows them to contribute significantly to these areas.

Mr. Speaker, as we contemplated the expansion of Cave Hill and, indeed, the expansion of the entire University of the West Indies, we look at the appropriateness of the offerings at Cave Hill - let us look inward for a while - to the Barbadian economic development and our needs in terms of our offerings in the tourism sector. We have moved away a little away from the strict industrial applications which were so importance under the Sir Arthur Lewis theories of development, et cetera, of 20 years or 30 years ago. We have moved now to a stage where it is easier, if you have the ability to sit on a computer at home and make money, and make a good living all over the world, if you know what the offerings are. Sir, you can buy and sell, you can trade intellectual property and you can move music and art around the world. Sir, it is a fantastic opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, gone are the days, for instance, when we took a photograph and we had to go through the slavish process of a dark room, nitrates and those kind of dangerous compounds. Now we take an electronic image and we transform it by way of technology and other relevant design programmes into a piece of intellectual art. Sir, it is these kinds of subjects which we have to teach. These are the kinds of topics which Barbadians have to become totally familiar with and be able to compete in the international environment in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to have the debates about our educational system, how it is treated and we will continue to speak to the question of the Common Entrance Examination, for instance, where the system actually separates some of our young people into different streams of educational opportunity and the debate must be had and the State must one day decide whether we need not provide adequate opportunities for all. Sir, even as we do that, there is the view that there still must be specialised schools for special achievers or those who we believe are shining lights. I believe that these things all have to be taken into the melting pot of consideration as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, one unfortunate development which I want to speak to in this whole educational system is what I would term this afternoon as materialism. I really think that we need to sit back as parents and leaders in our community and separate from the reality of training and education. We see article after article about disappointed children at 11 years, having done the 11-plus examination but not necessarily taking advantage or having the same trappings, the graduations, the fancy dresses and the limousine rides to special parks et cetera. These are the things which we need to balance in our consideration and in our development going forward.

Mr. Speaker, our educators will have to bear in mind, that is their task.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that the university has got to keep in mind because, to a large extent, they already provide the service but they have to keep in mind that their work must be out there in the community and relevant. Sir, things like continuing education, second opportunities and third opportunities for our people are absolutely important. Sir, as we develop our tourism product - I say “develop”, because they maybe a view in some mind that our tourism product is fully developed but I am not of that view. I believe that we are in a continuing developmental process with our tourism product and we need to teach service. We are not teaching service as servitude but service as understanding what makes human beings really satisfied and prepared to come back to an environment that they have experienced. Sir, sometimes, I think it needs to be brought forward as one of the subject areas that the university and our schools, our continuing educational colleges, places like our Hotel Training School, et cetera, have got to really get down to grips. They should bring in the experts and they should bring in the sociologists to explain to our children, and our students that it is not servitude that it is service, that when you say, “Thank you”, “Please come back”, and “Can I help you?”, that it is not being a servant but it is actually what the human being

appreciates and really feels good about. Sir, it will continue if properly and fully developed, to distinguished the Barbadian offering from anything else that is being offered in the world.

Mr. Speaker, remember, the world is on top of these issues. The world offers service and it makes sure, even if they do not mean it that when you go away from their desks, from their vending kiosk or whatever, that the person making the transaction is totally satisfied about the offering being made.

Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to say is that as we contemplate the continued development of the university, as we contemplate the contribution that we, as a country, have to make to the funding of the goals of the university, we need too, to input with the university and share with the university some of the global indices which they must fervently attain.

Mr. Speaker, there is another area which I want to speak to before I take my seat that is the university participating now in the competitive global environment, participating in joint ventures with the State, with our Government. Sir, to my mind, this is a new venture in a lot of way and I think that the university must be commended for the efforts which are being made to join with different organs of Government and assist in a meaningful way and in a profit-making way to bring about the kind of...

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Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: ..with different organs of Government and assist in a meaningful and a profit-making way to bring about the kind of infrastructural or economic solutions which we look forward to. Remember, this will be a way of the university also making money, helping to pay its way and not necessarily being dependent on State financing.

We have to, as a Government, work with the University in developing the correct criteria, under which they can participate in these kinds of economic activities that the Government takes part in.

Sir, take for instance the Department of Engineering in Trinidad. There is no greater learning institution in terms of road designs, et cetera, and the problems that we grapple with on daily basis in Barbados and all over the Caribbean. Why should we not be able to procure services from the University of the West Indies, at rates which must be of necessity more attractive in our developing solutions for our road works programmes?

Our transportation systems continue to be challenges. We do better than a lot of places around the world, but the point again that we want to make is, the University has the basis of which a total programme of participation and cooperation can occur, in which the same funds which we eventually have to pay to consultants and designers can be appropriately apportioned to the University for its contribution.So the model has to be fully developed and it has to be tested so that it too can be used to the benefit of our people as a whole.

I want to also speak to the University and sport. Again I want to commend the University of the West Indies for the effort that they have made in trying to bring about some kind of solidity to what is happening in Caribbean cricket. I have not spoken often about cricket but I share the disappointment of many Caribbean people with the performance of our present cricketers.

In the University of the West Indies programme, the little bit I hear about it is, we have the makings of a solution which will allow our cricketers, our young sportsmen, to take advantage of an education opportunity, at the same time developing and honing their skills in serious cricketing competitiveness. I believe that is one of the directions that will help to bring West Indies sport, in particular West Indies Cricket back to the fore.

Sir, I said all this to say how much I think that we as a Parliament have to appreciate the vastness of the work that is done at the University, to say why all of my colleagues unreservedly supported the Resolution. Though it is not a lot of money that we are talking about, it is $2.75 million. It is part of a massive prgramme of investment in the people of the Caribbean, all ages and stages which must be continually committed to, it must be continually appreciated for what it benefits us, and it must be continually spoken about, critically or otherwise, so that those who direct policy at the level of the University can appreciate that there are observers, and there are communities out there who are affected by what they do and how they do it, and therefore must be listened to.

I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this discussion this evening, and I commend this Resolution to this Honourable House.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the House. Just a minute please.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be suspended until 5.30 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

16.00 p.m.

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House A65B, Sequence 35, 5.19 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Honourable House is resumed.

Honourable Members, when the suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 4 and to that we will revert.

The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity to contribute to this very important exercise, in relation to the debate relative to the loan guarantee for the University of the West Indies for the purposes of the expansion of the facilities of the university, particularly the construction of a Chancery to house part of the administration of the University of the West Indies at Mona.

House A65B, Sequence 35, 17:20:14

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Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Honourable Members would have obviously made quite significant contributions to this debate as well it should be because you would have heard repeatedly throughout the debate, Mr. Speaker, the amount that Barbados not only contributes in terms of a dollar value to the education sector in Barbados particularly to tertiary education but equally as well the amount of emphasis as a nation that we have placed in the whole education sector as a major plank in our modern-day post-independence development strategy.

Indeed, it has not escaped our attention on either side of the House that Barbados' success relative, if you could call it that, to many of our neighbours and equally as well to other developing countries the world over has been predicated on a strong commitment to the creation of educational opportunities, the construction of an extensive educational plant and the solidification of the education opportunities which have been made available to many Barbadians both old and young. This has served our country extensively well and we have done, I think, as a developing country exceedingly well among nations in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we have much to be cheerful for because as you would have heard many of us in here, perhaps upwards of 90 per cent of us, have had the opportunity to visit on and receive university education at Cave Hill, Mona or indeed at St. Augustine for those who would have gone there to do some of the more technical subjects and disciplines.

What we feel, know, understand and believe about the role which education plays in the development of a society cannot and should not be devalued within the community not now and certainly not in the future, therefore I think it is important to again reiterate the position of the Barbados Government as has been the case for successive governments. I believe that we would have our divide philosophically on some issues and we would have our divide practically on some issues but I think that we can resolve to determine that in spite of our partisan divide on issues that successive governments since independence have made their contribution to the development of the education sector in Barbados and ought, I think, to be congratulated for ensuring that in spite of whatever crises we go through, economically, socially, politically or otherwise, that education, along with health care, remains the major plank of our development model. Mr. Speaker, I therefore think that we should take a bow for it. This Parliament, which down through the years have voted almost literally billions of dollars to support this well-coordinated and extensive education plant and project that we have in Barbados, should take a bow in that particular regard.

Sir, when we start to speak about tertiary education, we know that a debate such as this must connect with certain realities within which we exist. We have grown a university campus from a very small base at the Harbour Road and through Cave Hill to the extent now where we have seen almost a full-fledged totally inclusive university campus offering disciplines that 10 years ago even we would not have imagined that we would have reached that stage. For example, we have a Masters' in Cricket Studies and a Master's Degree in Integration. They are now offering Bachelors' Degrees in Psychology. Sir, we have really come of age, I think, as a university not just in terms of the physical infrastructure, which is as splendiferous as one could imagine for a campus, and has really filled out very well even in terms of its academic programme. Indeed, the faculty of the university has diversified, I think, to the extent where we now have a significant proportion of PhDs teaching in the university. Certainly, when I was a student at the university more than 20 years ago that was not always the case, not that the teachers who taught us were incompetent. I remember with much pride the teachings and tutelage of the late Wendell McClean who

never had a PhD but who was recognised as one of the foremost authorities both in the lecturing of economics and certainly in the study and practice of economic as a discipline.

Sir, that is not to reflect poorly on them but to say that today we have some very young and vibrant members of faculty, some of whom would have been there with me at university and others who came after who have now risen to the extent where they are part of the faculty of the university and are contributing to the continued development of both teaching and pedagogy in the society but also contributing to modern socio-political and economic thought and cultural thought within our society. This has, I believe, created a serious frame for us to look to the future in terms of what we want our university to be and how we want it to contribute to Barbados' development.

I believe that we have come in stages to the extent where the university having emerged in a post-colonial society to largely contribute to the development of a vibrant and competitive academia. Indeed, it has contributed to the expansion of what we call in the Social Sciences the modern-day intelligencia in Barbados to undergird and support the expansion of a modern and vibrant middle class in our society buttressed in large measure by the policies of the Democratic Labour Party and successive Democratic Labour Party Governments and other governments as well.

The University has been a major contributor to that expansion that has allowed Barbados to separate itself to the extent where we now can boast of having created a cadre of highly trained professionals who have been able to work with us either wittingly or unwittingly, but I believe wittingly, to the development now of Barbados to be seen as a modern-day services economy offering professional services in a number of areas in medicine, law and engineering, the traditional professions, in teaching, in accountancy, in tourism, in political science and you could go down the line.

Mr. Speaker, as Barbados repositions itself either by tutelage overseas or by deliberate policy domestically to become a services-based economy and looking towards the vistas of the international economy trying to integrate into this most competitive aspect of global economic modelling, it is important that we have a university that can contribute significantly to that pool of talent which the world is looking for and to do so in a significant way.

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Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Sir, I take the example of India. India, only 15 to 20 years ago, was almost a basket case economy, it was an economy in which there were many hundreds of million of poor people. Sir, the economic and social development planners in India took a decision that they would invest heavily in secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education to produce professionals in certain areas. They looked at the teaching profession, they looked at the technical professions such as engineering and they looked at computer science. They determined that not only would they develop their economy internally by increasing the ratio of university graduates in technical areas but that they would also export those skills to the rest of the world.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at Barbados, for example, in our Queen Elizabeth Hospital, you could see evidence of India's determined and deliberate policy planning to train highly skilled technical services and to export those services overseas. If you go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, you would see a lot of Indian nationals who have come here qualified in the very critical skills, not just general practitioners but very specialised skills to work either in the general practice of the hospital or as consultants to the main hospital. Sir, that is the case for many of the countries not only in the Caribbean but in this hemisphere.

Mr. Speaker, it might not be popularly known in Barbados, for example, but India exports perhaps on a net basis, the highest amount of computer programmers to anywhere in the world. Most of what was happening in the Silicone Valley, United States of America, is being underwritten by Indian talent and talent out of places like Japan, Singapore and other places. Sir, India took a deliberate decision that they were going to modernise their economy internally, based on the production of very highly skilled people in the technical areas, they also determined that they could export those services to the rest of the world, to receive tremendous benefits to their Gross National Product from remittances and so forth.

If one looks at any of the major regional United Nations Economic Agency Reports or any World Bank International Monetary Fund Reports, one would see that countries like India, Vietnam, Singapore, even here in the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic have had remittances from their nationals living overseas as one of their major foreign exchange earning sectors. It is something that we have to consider when we talk about expanding and deepening university education. Sir, the point I am making is that when our planners, not only at the political level but at the technical level in terms of education, sit down to consider what type of economy Barbados wishes to develop, what type of areas of business we want to go in to, how many people we need to have trained to go in to those areas, how many people we need trained for both the

domestic and external markets. Sir, we negotiate trade agreements, and as a former Minister of Trade, as someone who has worked in that area for a number of years outside of Government, I am familiar that most modern trade agreements today are heavily predicated on services. We do goods, we do agriculture but at the end of the day, everybody wants to get to the talk of services because they know that is where the major contribution to the growth of new and emerging industries and sectors within an economy is likely to take place.

Sir, you could only sell so much goods to so many people but you can sell endless amount of services. I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church South spoke about sitting at a computer, that is service too, you can sit at a computer and sell your services all over the world. Sir, for example, there are teachers in certain countries in this hemisphere who sit at a computer and sell English classes to non-English speakers in other parts of the world and make tremendous amount of money doing it. You can get notes on the internet, you can even have an essay written for you if you were lucky enough to find the right website. Sir, you can purchase almost anything, you can even purchase a degree from a degree mill, though I would not advocate it.

Mr. Speaker, when we are speaking about planning, we want to see a close and well-articulated perception and connection between what is happening in terms of what the university is doing and what the wider society is doing as well. Sir, it is only for that reason that I make the point because when one speaks about the university, people always feel that you are attacking the institution. We are not attacking the institution, that is not our role, our role is to celebrate the fact that we have a good university and that we want the university to get better but that what must happen is that there must be no disconnect between the university's thinking and the country's major, social, political and economic planners and where they want to go. In other words, it is not a case of the tail wagging the dog, it is a case of both of them together sitting down, understanding what are the major development challenges facing our economies and devising programmes aimed at addressing those issues.

Mr. Speaker, some while ago, I had the privilege of delivering a lecture somewhere and I made the point about the training of people in management studies. I know it did not go down too well with some people but the point I was making was that not that we do not want to have people trained in management, if everybody in Barbados could get a degree in management, I would be happy for them. Does that serve the interest of the development plan which we want for Barbados? It does not and it cannot, so when we are talking about university admissions, programmes are always popular, people like programmes by how they sound. When I was going to the university, it was popular to do economic, people like to do economics because it sounded like a bigheaded subject; people wanted to do Law, of course, everybody could not get into the Faculty of Law, so they used to fall back on Social Sciences. It sounds good for persons to boast of being a manager and to have a degree in Business Management. It sounds good for persons to boast that they would be in charge when they graduated.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that in our system of commercial enterprise it is actually more likely for you to become a manager with a degree in Economic or Accounts than it is with a degree in management. Sir, that is a fact. Sir, that is not to dissuade people from choosing what they want but we have to sit down and systematically plan how many people we want, how many graduates we want to produce in Management Studies. Should we be producing scores of people in Management Studies, yet hearing the accounting profession complaining that there are not enough people in the area of accounts.

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HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Should we be producing scores of people doing law, yet hear the economic profession complains that nobody wants to do economics and that they are not producing any pure economists out of the university any more?

Should we be speaking about innovation and new technical industries?

Should be a leader in solar technology but yet not seeing the throughput in terms of graduating amounts for persons in technical areas?

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Yes, you have to plan it. Not a centrally-planned economy as in socialism...

Asides.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please speak to the Chair.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the Honourable Member Christ Church South...

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House.The Honourable Member is talking about a socialist

planned economy and he needs to tell us if he is advocating a planned economy and if the Democratic Labour Party really believes in this planned economy that he is talking about. If not, he is really misleading the House.

MR. SPEAKER: No point of order found. Honourable Member, please continue.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, he knows better than that. We have passed that stage. We are not talking about a centrally planned economy. We are talking about an economy that is properly planned, that is what we are talking about, with a proper development strategy, underwritten by training in the appropriate areas. Sir, that is what we are talking about. Sir, the issue here is this, and I am not afraid to say it. Sir, people get afraid to talk about the intervention of the State and we have been tutored now for the pass 25 years by the Breton Woods institutions that the Government and the State should not participate in economic planning, that we should just stay idly by, watching as the market unfolds and corrects itself. We have learnt, painfully, so many times over but in this last dispensation, we have learnt painfully, to the extent that millions of people have lost their jobs and their livelihoods because the State refused to exercise its interventionist role, when necessary and timely, to ensure that we protect the interest of those in the society who cannot fend for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that it makes no sense voting $400 million or $500 million in education if, at the end of the day, the throughput does not serve our developmental purposes to the extent that we want to serve it. It is not just enough to say that we are just training people, so let us be happy. We have one person in every household having a degree and I would be happy if every person in a household had a degree but I want that degree to relate to the developmental objectives of the society because, Sir, that is how it has to be done.

Mr. Speaker, even as a service economy, we want to export services. Sir, we have to ensure that the services we develop and train can develop Barbados first because, Sir, that is important for us.

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

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Thank you, Sir. Understand what I am saying. We will continue to invest in the university and do so heavily. I was happy to hear the principal speaking recently at a function about the restructuring which would come to the university. I am happy for that because I think the university needs to be restructured in many ways. I know that the Minister of Education has been speaking about that for a number of years and this is not new. Sir, even before he was a Minister, he was speaking about changes that need to be made at the University of the West Indies.

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point that I am making is that our planning, in terms of our national development planning, and our university planning must go hand in hand. Sir, that has to happen. What happened in the Asian Tigers, what happened even in the United States of America, what has happened in Brazil, China and India is not happenstance. They sat down, they looked through the vistas of time and decided among themselves that 50 years from now, or 40 years from now, the type of economy and society they wanted.

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Have you been listening to me, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I believe you have been.

MR. SPEAKER: I have been listening.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: I wish the Honourable Member for St. George North would listen. I am saying that they sat down and planned this. Sir, Singapore looked around them and said that Japan is likely to be a major information technology giant, that they have Taiwan and others around them and Singapore decided that it would put their skills in developing micro chips to service the computers produced in Japan. They decided they did not want to produce the computers that they wanted to produce the micro chips, and that they wanted to have the best possible port in that part of the world to carry all of the goods that Japan made to the rest of world. (17:47) Sir, that is the type of planning that we need to do in Barbados and in the Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that when we, as a Government, invest in education that is what the Democratic Labour Party is thinking about, that is what we are hoping to achieve and that is what we are working towards, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I hope that, again, as we get the opportunity to discuss other parts of the educational system that we can understand that proper planning and preparation prevents failure and, therefore, we believe that it is time that kind of consistent and serious planning takes place in this society, as it relates to tertiary education and its contribution to the development of this society.

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

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

MR. A.D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Sir. Mr. Speaker, I will not delay you for very long. I just want to make a foreign exchange comments. (17:48)

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Mr. A .D. BRAWAITHE: ...for Barbados to go forward in the 21st century, it cannot go forward without a strong university, and it cannot go forward without a university that respond to the changing requirements of our country.

Sir, we heard earlier, for example, that it was all nice and sexy to have a degree in Management and Economics, but the reality is, with our changing trade dynamics, we need to look and see what we require and the university needs to work with us. If we are to be a services economy, having a degree in Management, for example, may not necessarily enable us to export the technology that we want to do. We will have to be more creative.

Sir, if I can put this in as simple a manner as possible, in this day and age, being able to cut a piece of cloth and call yourself a designer may not be as relevant in terms of harnessing your creative energy, unless you are able to understand, how to copyright and to export your services. That is what I mean in terms of the university, its respond with programmes to train our people, and offer opportunity to train our people and enable them to think beyond the present boundaries.

Sir, when I went to university I must admit that I was probably limited in my thoughts, in terms of what degree programme to do, because people thought that law was the thing. I am saying that in this technological age, we need now to re-engineer the thinking of our people if we are to progress as a country and certainly as a region. That is the parochial side of it.

I have to say that I remain like others concerned about the standards of the university. I am not going to spend a lot of time on it because I do not want to appear to be negative. I think that even Professors as the universities itself have recognised that there is a difference in the type of student entering the university today, than to say the student in my time and the early 1980s. Maybe, it has to do with the level of maturity. We recognise that in today's day and age that the average age is 19. There is a school of thought that it is not a bad thing if we encourage more of our young people to take a year or two off to go to work, so that they can make the transition from secondary to tertiary, but certainly, there is a bit of concern.

Sir, I can relate a story that was given to me recently by a lecturer at the University. He told me that recently he was in one of his classes and he apologised for having to go five minutes over, and one of his students said to him that he can go five minutes longer if he desired, but he will be leaving at 12 o'clock, which was the scheduled time for completion. Now that is the difference in terms of the psychology of the students.

In my day we would not have thought of saying to one of our lecturers, well you can have an additional five minutes, because we would have been happy to have the additional five minutes to see what knowledge that could have been bestowed upon us. As I said, it is a difference in psychology of our students, and we have to actually see where we are going in that regard.

Sir, I will also say that the University is actually a reflection on our educational system as a whole. If we criticise the University for the standard and the type of students we are seeing coming out of the university, certainly it is a reflection of the students that are going into the university. I say, therefore, that any examination of the university as a whole, any examination of the University in terms of the students that come out of the university, and in particular when we look at any weaknesses, it is a reflection of the weaknesses of the students going into the university. So we cannot take them in isolation.

Sir, a simple illustration is, I remember - and I have said this before - in 1982 when I went to university having to do a "Use of English" examination. The passage I had, I could not believe it was a real passage taken from a paper of a student. Sir, as I said, that is a reflection of the type of student going into the university. It is a reflection of our educational system as a whole. I would say that we will have to look at our system wholistically, not just as any weaknesses at the university.

Sir, on the regional level I am a bit concerned about the University as a whole. As a Government we have to look at what we are spending, not only at the university of Barbados, but at the University as a whole. I am concerned that the University seems to be splitting. If I am incorrect, maybe someone who has greater knowledge can enlighten me. What I am seeing is - maybe it is a case of demand and supply, in which case we have to see what adjustments have to be made. I am seeing, for example, in the Faculty of Law, that Jamaica wants to have its own Law Faculty, Trinidad wants to have its own Law Faculty, and Barbados then would have its own Law Faculty, which would obviously mean that Guyana would then say they will have their own Law Faculty. Sir, if it is a case of demand, that is why every territory wants to have its own Law Faculty, then so be it.

Sir, what it does, in my eyes, it certainly weakens the Faculties and certainly weakens us as a region when we look at the University as a place that will foster and

enhance integration. It goes beyond that. We see also in the area of medicine that Barbados has now established its own Medical Faculty. We know that Trinidad is going in that direction. So soon the University of the West Indies, as we know it, will in fact be indeed three separate and distinct Campuses, where everyone will do what they desire and what is suppose to be in the interest of their countries, and that concerns me.

Even though we are doing a guarantee to the University of the West Indies, which will enhance the property in Mona, and even though I do not have a problem with the guarantee, I am saying that we need to look at where the University is going wholistically, to ensure that in fact it is still serving the purpose that it was established to serve 60 years ago, we understand that. We understand as a region and as a country the importance of education. I am saying that the University that my friend from Christ Church West Central, the Minister of Sports, mentioned in terms of the university that enabled him to interact with different persons from the region that you and I know about, that may be a thing of the past if we continue down the road we are going. So that concerns me.

Sir, the other point I want to make is that we as a country need to look at, which has as much to do with tertiary education as it has to do with us in terms of where we are going, is the area of offshore institutions. I know that in recent times Barbados has received more inquiries with respect to offshore medical schools in particular. We have seen the success of these schools in Grenada. The University of Grenada, I believe, started as a small offshore medical school. We have seen the success in St. Kitts, which I believe has about two schools at this point in time. I believe Antigua also has a couple.

There are opportunities for Barbados which we need to exploit. We need to place the correct mechanisms in place between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, if applicable, and Investment Barbados, if applicable, to ensure that there are clear guidelines for anyone who wants to come to Barbados to establish a medical offshore school - I do not like to use the word offshore, but that is how we will refer to it for now- in fact, there is a clear guideline that would enable anyone coming to these shores who want to establish such an institution to know what is required, the time-lag required so that they could get their institutions off the ground.

Sir, such institutions are not a threat to the University of the West Indies. The students who will be coming to Barbados, assuming that we go in that direction, are students who would not now go to the University of the West Indies. The teachers who will be coming to Barbados will be teachers who will not now be going to the University of the West Indies, and the spinoff for Barbados, which was said by the Leader of the Opposition, which I want to endorse, will be areas like providing housing...

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House A65B, Sequence 40, 6.00 p.m.

Mr. A.D. BRATHWAITE: The spinoff for Barbados which was said by the Leader of the Opposition that I want to endorse, would be in areas, Sir, like providing housing, transportation, communication and food. The spinoff to the economy, we are talking about student-tourists for seven or eight months a year. I am saying that this is an area that as a Government and as a people, we should put our energy behind and exploit these opportunities.

Sir, I look forward to us as a Government addressing this area. As I said I know of at least three enquiries recently and I look forward to the Minister of Education taking the lead in terms of ensuring that there are clear guidelines. I know that his mandate is not necessary revenue generation because, Sir, you know I am always saying that I am interested in any area that brings revenue into this country. This, Sir, is an area that clearly to me, brings revenue and direct benefits to our country and therefore there is no reason why we as a country should not be embracing it, Sir, and ensuring that we are not left behind.

Sir, the reality is that right now, persons are leaving the USA, and going to India to study. They would rather come to Barbados, which is three to five hours away from home than fly to India. They would rather come to our country, Sir, they would rather come to the Caribbean as a whole. There are vast opportunities her for us, Sir, and I am saying that we need to exploit them.

Sir, as I said, I am slightly concerned about the present direction of the University, not direction in terms of where they are going in terms of the courses. I am concerned because I am feeling that we are reaching a stage where Trinidad wants to do what is best for Trinidad, Jamaica wants to do what is best for Jamaica and needless to say, Sir, Guyana would do what is best for Guyana and then Barbados would have to do what is best for Barbados. Sir, if that is the direction we are heading in we need to look back at the whole premise on which university was funded and the importance to us, in terms of having such an institution for us to grow as a region.

If it means that it will cost us more in terms of the cost of education, in the region, Sir, to keep the University of the West Indies in the West Indies functioning so that we have students from Jamaica coming to Barbados and students from Barbados going to Jamaica and St. Lucia, et

cetera, if it means it will cost us more, Sir, I am saying in closing that is a small price to pay for us to continue growing as a region.

With those few words, I thank you for allowing me this small intervention, Sir.

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

Hon. R.D. JONES: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have listened to the contributions to Members on both sides of the House and I recognise that Honourable Members generally have supported the Resolution before the House and used the opportunity to extend their thoughts on education and generally more on tertiary level education specifically and I am thankful for their intervention.

On this side of the House, I was quite pleased with all of the various interventions. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South who had deplaned from a governmental responsibility out of Vancouver was able to bring along with him a mental flight which allowed us to really regale ourselves in the extent of his understanding of tertiary level education in Barbados and for that, I applaud him. I know that travelling through, even though we are part of this eastern time zone, so he was not disoriented in any form, so I want to give him thanks.

We have spent nearly a whole day looking at this Resolution in light of the unfolding dynamic of the University of the West Indies and other tertiary level institutions within the West Indies or the Caribbean space. We also took an opportunity, and I believe that was done by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East to remind us that the Barbados Labour Party Government had a project called the University College of Barbados and the Honourable Member sought to link that particular project with the question of not only efficiency but seeking to expand access to thousands of Barbadian students who wanted both to access the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. When I speak to the Barbados Community College, I am including in that, the Barbados Hospitality Institute which is a division of the Barbados Community College.

I did not see in any of the documents which I perused when I became Minister, the infrastructural process, or the reshaping of the schooling model which would have allowed for those numbers, or the access to take place. What I saw was the mad pursuit to have a domestic university. I believe that was not necessarily the kind of the approach which we wanted to follow at the time. We have asked the technical people, under careful guidance, for a rebranding and a reenergising of those post secondary institutions in Barbados.

We created out of the UCB concept, the Higher Educational Development Unit (HEDU) which was charged with the responsibility of creating the synergies among those four institutions, which I mentioned just about a minute or so ago. I can repeat them. The Barbados Community College (BCC), Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP), Erdiston Teachers College and the Hospitality Institute which, referred to as the Hotel School, where certain functions and processes could be amalgamated for more effective and efficient use of resources.

Therefore, under the Smart Stream project we have located at Howells in the HED Unit all of this Smart Stream facilitation. We brought on board as well a complete, wide area network, so all of the technologies which would make them synergistic, so that you would not have necessarily to expand the library offerings beyond what is currently there, or maybe for new areas but where they can share library resources across the entire space. Sir, that project is continuing and unfolding. I believe in maybe four to five months time, the country will be told what would be almost the new phase and the new focus going forward with those institutions.

We know that we have called on the Erdiston Training College to step up to the plate and they have done this. They have done it quite well because we know we must have trained educators to carry the agenda forward. The University of the West Indies has told all of its professors that it is all well and good to have a Masters Degree, Ed.D., Ph.D. or whatever qualification and believe that you can teach, that you can impart knowledge but you also now have to come in with the kind of pedagogical orientation all gain it in the University of the West Indies as they currently are to be able to teach. The university recognises that it had coming before it a younger cohort of persons, who were leaving secondary and post secondary education institutions, who were still dependent on the kinds of teaching methodologies that were present within those institutions. Therefore, the shift from tutored learning to self learning would take a bit of time.

Therefore, some students going to the University of the West Indies had some difficulties in the adjustment but with persons who were able to take them through the transitional phase, had to be trained as teachers, understanding pedagogy to take them over that difficult phase of their lives. I know that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East would talk about the University College of Barbados.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: These institutions at the post-secondary level will continue to evolve. They will move from certificates to Associate Degrees to Degrees in the applied areas that are so vitally important. The Honourable Member for St. James North spoke to those applied areas and the extent of the earning capacity of persons within the applied areas.

We have gone to the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and have established a 16-classroom village to bring more students into the areas of interest and the areas of needs in the Barbadian society. We know that beyond the knowledge industry, the manufacturing industry, the light industry, the heavy industry and the technology industry, there is a demand for environmental-friendly applications and environmental-friendly areas where persons are now into the aesthetics, cleanliness and cosmetology. Young women and young men are taking care of the heels so that the heels no longer cracked because of the build up of dirt on the back of your feet because you do not wash it properly. They go to the podiatrists, manicurists and all of those. People are looking after their health. They are going to persons who do massage therapy. They are going to the physiotherapist. We are going to all of those individuals to make us, if it is possible, live longer.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: There is nothing wrong with that. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, as someone who practices looking after the teeth, the mandible and the maxilla and things like that, would understand these things. You no longer have persons walking about Barbados with what you call 'riders' or the teeth all spaced out. You are into the kind of cosmetic preparations that are important within the world.

Mr. Speaker, you could be working as an lawyer, an engineer or whatever profession, job, task or occupation but you have to look good, you have to smell good, your hair has to be well groomed and you have to get your clothes custom tailored because that is the wave of the world. We can pretend that we come from some humdrum background and believe that is the fashion and that is the mode but then you becomes the odd man out. There is nothing wrong with being the odd man out but the odd man out should also look good, smell good and be part of the current dispensation.

Mr. Speaker, we are making changes to education generally in Barbados to impact in a dynamic way on our student population. We know or we recognise that the university has to continue to play a pivotal and critical role in the evolution of Caribbean societies and of domestic economies. They have to help us as policymakers to formulate a sensible model of development. It is not a model as stated by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West of talking towards services or being pushed towards what is called a services economy. It is a hybrid model which starts at the foundational base of any society where agricultural production sets the base for anything that we are doing.

Building on top of that is then taking the agricultural production, the horticultural production and the production of our seas, our ponds and our rivers and going through a transformation of whatever products are produced from those primary sources and creating new products to be used by human beings or by animals that are going to be recycled. It is transforming that into energy to help fuel... so you are using the offal and you are using grasses as part of the environmental-friendly enterprise but how are we going to do that. We are going to do that by true innovation and research or research and innovation. To me they are not separate and distinct, they are part and parcel of the same dynamic.

Those who went to BMEX and had a look at some of the brilliant work being done by local entrepreneurs and enterprising persons would recognise that those persons, sometimes with governmental support and sometimes without governmental support but with a very poor capital base are still able, through what my grandmother would have referred to as trial and error using the widow's mite, to develop and design a product through their own ability and strengths.

Mr. Speaker, if you add those works to the knowledge-based product which must be developed through education to work on these various applications, then we pipe into that whole dynamic what we call the people in the services, the tax specialists and the lawyers, and you might even type in real estate persons because somebody might need to buy a large complex or invest in a large complex, so the real estate person would be part of that dynamic. We are creating a hybrid as other societies have done. We are somewhat behind but I do not believe that we are that far behind that we cannot accelerate our pace of development. We are not to put our eggs in one basket or in one hat.

Mr. Speaker, I was speaking to the Honourable Member for St. Philip West a little while ago and he used a simple example. We have been producers of tropical products in the Caribbean for a long time. One product is the banana. For aeons what we have been doing with the banana is planting it, growing it, reaping it, eating it or selling it. We have not looked at the fibre within the entire plant or at the banana peel or skin. We have not turned the banana into a fine liqueur.

Mr. Speaker, we have not used the products that are provided by even sugar. We started out some years ago taking bagasse beyond using it to fuel the factories and developed a product that was glued together and was used in the ceilings and things like that. Mr. Speaker, rather than taking the experimentation to a further degree where that product coming from our factories and our fields could be used for making our furniture, we then abandoned that.

Mr. Speaker, we bring in a lot of furniture into this country out of press wood and we put a veneer on them and they go into people's homes and they feel happy until they start to drop out on the floor or until they get wet. We see the use of elephant grass in the development of a brilliant product at BMEX by Matrix Marketing. The finish is superb. That is innovation as a result of research. The university has to help us in moving this agenda forward.

One saw the development of thieves of the work at the Barbados Community College, the development of patents to sell that product. That is using knowledge. Knowledge is at the base of whatever we do. It is not the simplistic argumentation of the provision of service. A service flows from a solid knowledge base.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to sell what we refer to as offshore services or offshore business, it comes from a solid knowledge base of law, finance and other allied functions, management skills and backward linkages to the products we are selling. That is the model that we have to design and to develop. Within that kind of content, we will see greater value added and greater revenue flow particularly in the area of foreign exchange because that is really what we need in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we are a relatively open economy. We import a lot of our stuff but we do not pay for it in Barbadian dollars, we pay for it in foreign exchange so we have to create this kind of deep symbiotic relationship between all of the various facets as was mentioned by many, if not all, of the Honourable Members in this Honourable House.

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6.20 p.m.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, we have to understand the national vision. Sir, first there must be that national vision. Sir, as policymakers, along with the Social Partnership in society, we have to create that national vision under which all Barbadians must find room and shelter. Sir, as long as we do that, we then create the kinds of pillars under which that vision will be upheld. Sir, each of those pillars could be education with all its various facets, and a society that is basically free of crime and violence as another pillar.

Sir, it is not by chance that Barbados is seen as a good place to come because of our hospitality offerings, we have to maintain that, we have to ensure that some of the vagabonds in our country do not proliferate the space and give us a bad name because of the fact that not only are we selling hospitality, we are also selling a Barbadian brand. Sir, only yesterday I was reading the "Sun on Sunday." In the newspaper, there was a husband and wife who said that they were once robbed in Barbados but that they have returned to this country 50 times. Sir, they come twice a year, they said that they will always return. Sir, that is because there is a Barbadian brand with which they are comfortable. It is the hospitality that as Barbadians we offer without any one of us being facetious. When we say good morning, we say so genuinely. When I stop my car, not because that car has a H, Z or B numberplate but because I recognised I am in an advantageous position to let a driver come out, without quarreling or becoming angry. Sir, that is part of the Barbadian model. When I see someone and say good morning, how are you today, that is not because of mere sufferance but because it is genuine and part of the Barbadian brand. Sir, that is what the Honourable Prime Minister was speaking about in the Estimates sometime ago, the Barbadian brand which takes us as a people and showcase us to the world as unique persons with particular characteristics, which has been enforced and encased by the education which we have as a people, that is because of the investment that has been made over time, that is why the $128 million in economic cost and the other tuition fees for the students at the University of the West Indies is so important.

I know there has been a bit of mischievousness in trying to put fear into the hearts of Barbadians who want either to access university education or who are currently there. Sir, I state this evening at 6.25 p.m. that the Government of Barbados is committed and will remain committed to the provision of all sectors of education in this country, so that the US$2 750 000 million which will be spent on education this year will be the highest ever spent, even in these most difficult set of circumstances. Sir we fully understand that training, education and the provision of that training with the right kind of mix will catapult this country in what I call the great leap forward.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, as is being led by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, is critical to this enterprise. The Ministry of Trade and International Business is critical to this enterprise. The Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Health are important to this enterprise. The Ministry of Transport and Works is important to this enterprise because we need the networks to move goods and services around this island, we need to get them to the ports on time. If the port

is in St. Lucy, Christ Church of St. Michael, it is a total project that we have to embrace.

The University of the West Indies, led by Principal and Pro-Vice Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles, has made a great leap forward. Over the last five year it has brought on board areas of study that was facing pressure from the world of business and by students. Sir, to give a few examples, there is a M.Sc. in Banking and Finance and a M.Sc. in E-commerce. It is a massive area of growth. The financial institutions in Barbados have to be online, not only for the payment of bills or moving money from one account to the other but also providing merchant banking facilities. Sir, that is part of the whole total e-government enterprise and so you cannot hide away from this.

Sir, we must be able to go on the internet and be able to sell our speciality products where a person may only need two or three and our courier services, our post offices must be able to move that product that comes by way of... Sir, you get your money in your merchants account before the product even leaves its jurisdiction, because E-commerce only dwells in the arena of honesty and goodwill. Therefore, the University of the West Indies Cave Hill recognises this.

Mr. Speaker, there is also a M.Sc. in governance in Developing States. The Democratic Labour Party seeks to roll out a model of governance, starting at the basic foundational level of our communities. Some of the work has been done before through our Community Development Councils, now our Constituency Councils, where we have called on ordinary citizens of Barbados, some of whom are ordinary persons with or without degrees or certificates but who have a knowledge of what service to give to the communities from which they come. They want to work with people and the University of the West Indies says it will help in that enterprise or project. Sir, education is being brought to bear on the pursuit of good governance, let people operate where they are, to build their communities up and to recognise the potentials and strength of those communities.

Mr. Speaker, integration studies have been mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, including massive trade policies. We have talked about the General Agreement of Trade and Services (GATS), we are now talking about the Economic Partnership Agreement. We have to take advantages of these various trade agreements. We also have so many bilateral agreements across the world and more and more are being signed. We have to take advantage because our partners are taking advantage and therefore we have to have the specialists trained.

Sir, knowledge is power, we have to ensure that our intellectual goods and services get into those spaces. We have to have trained specialists in Labour and employment relations. We know that in order for production to continue unhindered, the workplace environment has to be a coherent and motivated environment and that wild-cat strikes and fractions to production should be eliminated therefore we also have a M.Sc. in Labour and Employment Relations. There is also a Masters in Social Work because there is still the poor and vulnerable, the dispossessed within our society who will need the enfranchisement activities of the State as part of that enterprise. All will come but all will not necessarily benefit in the same equal proportion as others because there are capacities limited by some psychological, emotional, spiritual or physical hindrance to them but as caring citizens we have, through the social welfare embrace, to take them through that journey. Sir, they must not be seen as a drag on the State.

Sir, part of the problem today - and I hate to say it, for example, in Jamaica, is that there is not a recognition of that wide social embrace by all sectors of that society to ensure that the poor, the disadvantaged, the vulnerable and dispossessed are also brought to the centre to benefit from the products, services and systems of the State.

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Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, in Jamaica, it is because there is not a recognition of that wide social embrace by all sectors of this society to ensure that the poor, the disadvantaged, the vulnerable, the dispossessed are also brought to the center to benefit from the products and the services and the system of the State. Sir, that is not a socialist argument or orientation, it is a humanistic argument that we must recognise each other as spiritual, physical, emotional being and as such, those who are stronger must embrace those who are weaker. Sir, that makes our society better off. Therefore, when we give, we do not have to seek the presence of the media to show the state of the person to whom we give as politicians, NGOs or CBOs within the society. Sir, when you give and you give in silence that is when it is most admired, that is part of the philosophy that is being spoken about by the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, MSc. in tourism and hospitality management. If we continue to develop our Barbadian brand, particularly in the area of hospitality, we have to equip the knowledge base of our people even stronger and even better.

Mr. Speaker, cricket studies. Sir, one would ask why there should be cricket studies. It has to be mentioned because cricket is almost central to us, as a people, with a purpose. It is part of the identity that we seek to find, as we seek to misplace the colonial masters with a product and a

brand of a product that is important. Sir, the 20/20 Cricket, if one looks at it, with its panache and its flavour, and hitting across the line, is an unorthodox talent and is a product of the West Indian person both in his personality and in his style of the game. Sir, we need to do better but what has happened is that they are persons who have looked at the West Indian product and have taken the West Indian product to a higher level. We have now to response with a knowledge base and a technique that would regain us our supremacy.

Mr. Speaker, when I saw Darren Sammy yesterday, as he hit across the line, because if you are looking for shots coached by anybody, Darren Sammy does not have it.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, are you still addressing the Chair?

Hon. R.D. JONES: yes, Sir, I am speaking about this Resolution in the context of the university bringing on board an MSc. in cricket studies because it is a holistic enterprises and not minuscule enterprises that we talking about. Sir, we are talking about this as a meaningful enterprise within the context of university education.

Asides. (18:33)

Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, it would be an MSc. in Fine Arts. You already have a BA in Fine Arts from the Barbados Community College. Sir, you know what we need, we need to find time for relaxation, so we should go and listen to beautiful music, music that inspires and motivates not music that collapses us into despotic actions with the purchase of guns and ganga, not that kind of music. Mr. Speaker, not the music that makes us denigrate our women in the worse way but music that lifts us up, that takes our spiritual content to a higher height and lifts us up on the wings of a dove. Sir, that is what we are talking about.

Mr. Speaker, when we see our young people dance across the landscape, it makes us relax and be comfortable and say in our minds that our young people are beautiful. Sir, that is what we are talking about within the context of a university education. Sir, we are putting money in it and, therefore, we have to get as a people in Barbados and across the Caribbean the benefits of our investment.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about management studies. I know the Honourable Member for St. Michael West spoke about management studies but it is an important part of the agenda. We need the MSc., the specialisation in Human Resource Management and, Sir, competence must be part of that whole matrix.

Mr. Speaker, marketing management. Do you think you can just design a product and say, let it sell. You see those telemarketers what they do with a product that normally if you look at it on a shelve you would not buy it. Sir, they bring it alive. They tell you how this knife is going to be able to dissect this carrot with such finesse and then how to put it on the plate that you would eat it raw. Sir, that is marketing. Sir, it is not just management studies, it is marketing of a product to bring it alive. Sir, some people might refer to it as charlatan behaviour but it is not, it is a dynamic science of study (18:35:12)

Mr. Speaker, investment. What do we do with our surplus capital? Where do we invest them? Where do you get the best returns on those investments? How do we go into project development? There is a scarcity of good managers in Barbados, so we end up importing them out of the United States of America and out of England. We need them to manage the multiple and complex projects in this country, so where should they be educated? They should be educated right here within Barbados and within the Caribbean. Sir, the ABC Highway, when it was being widened needed project manager, not bringing in every foreigner that you can think about who might not know how to manage a project but conned his way or her way into the game. Sir, the university is responding to this particular activity.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, even though he has only visited me twice since I was in the Ministry of Education, when he comes in, maybe he looks at the documents on my desk even though they are in jackets, I do not know if he, from time to time, opens them. Sir, we have accepted, with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, that what you call offshore educational institutions will find a space in Barbados - offshore medical schools. I have had discussion with Professor Beckles and he said to let them come that we are already set up to function and cater to persons. Do you know how many doctors are needed globally? I do not remember the statistics but millions of doctors are needed worldwide to deal with the healthcare issues which are becoming very complex as human being evolve because maybe of lifestyle, maybe because of food, I do not know. I leave that for the scientists but I have my own views. Sir, I think it is as result of spiritual decay and stagnation.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Yes, spiritual deficiency, that is what I think it is. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East...

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, you know, I would really like to separate east from that part of St. Michael because all kinds of wise men come from the east. Therefore, understanding of the spiritual dynamics, within the context

of what I am speaking about, might be relevant to that.Mr. Speaker, eastern philosophy and eastern medicine taught us a long time ago but we are only now catching up in the western world with it. Sir, all of these things are part of this dynamic and the Honourable Member for St. Philip South would understand that.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we are constrained by the physical infrastructure. I do not think that any offshore facility wants to come and start from scratch. They want the structure that they can bring in their personnel to ensure that the structure is efficient for use. We have already gone through the model along with members of the Cabinet of looking at even the financial impact on the Barbadian economy. Sir, I have before me a request for the opening of an offshore secondary school because persons want comfortable space to study for their children. We have had in the past Barbadians who were part of first wave and the second wave of persons who migrated, who used to send many of their offsprings back to Barbados but that no longer obtains to that degree, but there is a person who has written and we want to establish a secondary school in Barbados for persons that we are bringing into this space. You could refer to it as educational tourism, if you want to so do but it is tourism in its widest expanse and it widest meaning. Sir, all of these things are before us but we are constrained by the necessary physical infrastructure. Sir, maybe with the Barbados Industrial Corporation, maybe with Invest Barbados, maybe with the Ministry of Housing, we can come up with a plan which would give them the space to operate.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing is that we have obviously to carry out the due diligence when we bring people. I believe that I could find 15 offshore medical institutions, some from the United States of America, some from India and other places who want to establish their presence here in Barbados.

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Hon. R.D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, the University of the West Indies will continue to unfold. It must continue to have public scrutiny because it receives public funds. Since it receives public funds you must open yourself to public scrutiny, but that scrutiny must be fair. That scrutiny must be just. What I, as member who sits on the University Campus Council and the Domestic Campus Council, I would ask the University of the West Indies, as agent for the wider universities,(1) to ensure that all policy makers have access to annual reports delivered within their package to them. (2) All policy makers have access, delivered to them, of the University's Strategic Plans.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I will seek to facilitate that.

So that when they seek to find knowledge beyond the face-to-face discussion, they will find the truth and the knowledge within those particular documents to help guide their discourse on these particular issues and matters.

Mr. Speaker, we have tried for a while to have a major discussion on education. We have only cracked the surface. I would expect that in due course we will have a lengthier discussion across the wider society beyond the work of ...18:41:26 when it did the studies, focus groups and community studies across Barbados.

Sir, therefore, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 5 – THE NATIONAL INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SECURITY (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL, 2010

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

Hon. Dr. E.R. Byer-Suckoo: Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to move the amendment to the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) (No.2). This amendment is one that has been referred to as the retraining Bill or the retraining account. The purpose of this Bill is to make provision for the establishment of an account for retraining unemployed persons, who have contributed to the Unemployment Benefit Account whether or not those persons have satisfied the contribution requirements to entitle them to receive unemployment benefits and related matters.

The Prime Minister in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals of 2009 is quoted as saying this:

"The importance of training and retraining cannot be over emphasised in an environment of job losses and recession. This is the ideal time for new skills to be required and for downtime to be used to enhance skills." He further added that"...economic recovery rest on the adaptability of our workforce, and Government is committed to expanding and extending training opportunities."

Sir, to that end, I have great pleasure this evening in moving this Bill. We heard mentioned today of a great leap forward. The Honourable Minister of Education spoke of the education and the work that is being done at the

University as a great leap forward. I think what we are doing here this evening is indeed another great leap forward.

This evening, I think it is quite fortuitous that this came on the heels of a day of debate around education, this whole concept of training and retraining. This is a time we have seen job losses, and unemployment. We know that unemployment is the single largest contributor to social disparities. We have seen that unemployment can undermine all of our social developments. We have seen in countries where the unemployment figures have skyrocketed, peace is threatened peace. It threatens our way of life, a way of life we in Barbados are very proud of. The peace and stability we experience here in Barbados makes our tourism product so attractive, that by and large tourist know that they can come to Barbados and feel comfortable just being able to walk on the streets.

Sir, one gentleman I spoke to on the streets, he was visiting Barbados for the first time, to do business with this country. Two things impressed him most. This was a gentleman who visited from the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, no less. He came to seek persons to work on that Cruise Line. Two things impressed him, (1) was the quality of our education, our literacy, how our people presented themselves and how they spoke, and that goes to the earlier debate this evening. The other was the fact that he was able to get up in the morning, go for a jog and then come back to his hotel, and did not in anyway feel threatened. That gave him a good sense for doing business with Barbados. That only supports everything that we have been saying abut education, about the package, and the brand that is Barbados. When we can package Barbados in such a way that even the investors feel comfortable with Barbados, then we know that we have pushed ourselves one step further.

As we face recession, there is a fear in every community and every society and country that recession leads to an increase in theft. When the unemployment increases it leads to an increase in violent crimes. That is why I know this Government has taken the right approach during this recession. We have focused on only on the economy but we have focused on individuals. We have focused on society. We have focused not families and on those things that matter most to individuals. Yes, jobs do matter and everything that we do is about that kind of security, but we have placed the emphasis on our society, because when we come out of the recession, and indeed we know it is inevitable. We know that we will come out of the recession, but we do not want that when that happens to have a society that is in pieces. We want to ensure that our society remains stable so that at the end of the day we have a firm foundation to continue to build on.

Sir, that really speaks to what this whole retraining exercise is about. It is about allowing us to plan far beyond the recession and for economic recovery. The recession or economic downturn, whatever you want to call it, is to my mind an opportunity for individuals and for businesses to take stock. To reassess themselves, reassess themselves as individuals, reassess their businesses, their business practices, reassess their goals, their ideals, their vision and where they want to go, and plan for the future. This is what Government has been doing and this is what many businesses have been doing. We are here today to encourage individuals to do just that, especially those individuals who would have found themselves now unemployed because of the fate of their employer, the difficulties in the business in which they are working. Some of them would have found themselves unemployed and we are encouraging them at this time not to...

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Dr. Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, some of them would have found themselves unemployed and we are encouraging them at this time not to throw their hands up in the air but to use this time for introspection, for reflection and to start to plan with a vision for going forward. Where am I, what do I want to achieve, how far have I gotten along that path of self actualisation? Maybe, I was not on the best path for me. Maybe I was not comfortable with that job in the first place. Sir, every negative presents opportunities for us. Those persons who are unemployed now we would urge them to look at what one may call, the silver lining behind the cloud. Look to see what this presents. See it as an opportunity and Government is committed today to ensuring that they can see it as just that, an opportunity.

We know that currently when persons are unemployed, we find that many people will go to the unemployment office and they will register for unemployment. What does not happen is that they all go to the National Employment Bureau and register for employment. Many workers actually exhaust the maximum of six months of unemployment benefit before they even start to look for work. I know there are many of us in here who can attest to the fact that we have met persons who are unemployed. We may find some job for them and we may say well, here is an opportunity. There are many people who would say to us, well yes, they want to work but not just yet, they still have an additional four weeks or two months of unemployment to collect. Sir, they do not look for employment until that six months is up and they do not even register at the Bureau until that six months are up.

What we also know is that the history of the unemployment benefit, too, has discouraged training. It has discouraged persons from trying to use that opportunity to train. We know that persons who were on unemployment benefits would find their benefits denied, if for example, they accepted a part time job and even if that job was paying less than the benefits to which they were entitled. If they signed up for full time training or for a study programme, and if they were unavailable for work, except for certified sickness, they would also be denied their benefits and, of course, if they were out of the island or imprisoned, they would no longer qualify for the unemployment benefits.

In Barbados, the whole idea of an unemployed person actively seeking work, runs counter to the perception that a long term solution lies in retraining. Barbados' Legislation has provided for the continuation of benefits, where a person is unemployed. This would have happened in the case, where the Director approved the training course but in practice, the Director had not approved any such courses so we found that over time, all persons who were seeking still to receive their benefits while they were unemployed, would routinely be denied their benefits.

We believe that, as I said earlier, this is a time that people should use to be trained. A lot has been said today about education and much of the same arguments could be used for training as well as all the benefits for the market and so on. This retraining account that we are looking to establish today by this Legislation, will actually see $10 million being moved from the National Insurance Office to the National Employment Bureau for the purposes of training persons who are unemployed. These would be persons who are not temporarily unemployed, not persons who have been laid off for two weeks or persons who are on week-on week-off or that kind of thing but persons who have severed their relationship with their employers. They are no longer permanently employed. Those persons would be required, not only to register with the National Insurance but also to register with the National Employment Bureau. They would go through the programme of counselling and training would be recommended for them in appropriate areas.

What would happen in those circumstances is that those persons, as they go through counselling, recommendations would be made as regards the client's personal interest and commitment, certainly, as regards to the National Labour Market needs, and that is very important. We have spoken a lot about where education fits into our national development strategy and certainly retraining must be seen to fit into a National Development Strategy as well. Therefore, persons who would come to the Labour Department, and the National Employment Bureau, we would take into consideration, the client's personal interest and their commitment, the National Labour Market needs, the actual assessment of that person's need and their ability to benefit financially and developmentally and, of course, whether this person is likely to find employment, either locally or overseas and the necessary training would be put in place.

It is proposed that training would be for periods not longer than one year as a general rule. Of course, there may be occasions where this can be extended but it is proposed that some sort of cap would be put on the amount that is also spent beyond that one year. But up to a year, persons who are unemployed would be able to seek training in the area that is decided upon and the training would be covered by this Fund that we are putting in place today.

During this period also, their attendance would be monitored so it is not a matter of saying well I will sign up for this course. I would not go but I would still collect my benefits. Their attendance will have to be monitored while they are on this course. What will also happen while they are on the course as well, they would have to develop a plan of action for employment. Now, this may sound scary to some people but of course this will be done with the necessary assistance and counselling. They will sit with the client and determine for them, help them to shape their goals, shape their future and come up with a plan for regaining employment, when they have completed that training.

The training will be provided in a number of areas but we are also cognizant of the fact that there are many people who are unemployed and do not even have basic education. Now, if they try to regain entry into the workforce, because they did not have that basic education to begin with, they may find themselves unable to do so. Of course, there is a lot of competition in the workplace now, and we find that even for the lowest paying jobs sometimes, we have persons who are competing for those jobs, who even have Masters Degrees from the University. This only reinforces the fact that we need to have our training and our post secondary education fit into a national plan. We have many persons who have acquired these degrees and cannot find work in their particular areas so they get to a point where they will say that anything you have, Sir.

Right now I even know a person with a Masters Degree who, would gladly take a job doing housekeeping or any work. One lady actually said that even if you put me to clean at the side of the road with NCC, I would do it. Sir, right now, it does not really matter about that piece of paper that she has in her hands as a degree. Sir, wants work, she wants money and she needs to be able to pay for her children. Of course, we know that eventually would come, the frustration of being underemployed, knowing that you have this degree but that all speaks to the

development plan and the plan for development of our human resources.

We know that the unemployment benefit lasts for six months. As I said there will be courses offered in basic education where that is deemed to be necessary, basic literacy and numeracy skills, computer awareness, and even IT courses, just aimed at providing a basic knowledge of the computer.

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Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: There will be courses in helping persons to prepare their CVs and how to present themselves for interviews and that kind of thing. There will be courses on attitude, deportment and those other skills apart from the literacy and the technical skills that an employer is looking for.

Mr. Speaker, in the instance that the training exceeds the six months for which they would have received the unemployment benefit, a stipend would be paid by the training agency after the period of the benefit has ended so that these persons will in no way be disadvantaged because they are doing training.

Mr. Speaker, we see training as very important. Training speaks to a person being able to meet their own goals and the goals of their families, that whole self-actualisation, where it is they want to see themselves. A young person who left school ten years ago without qualifications may have been eager to take the first job that was available even if it was at minimum wage but now ten years on may have a child or two or three children and that minimum wage is not what they would want.

Mr. Speaker, let us face it, the person who has just left school is perhaps a little excited even to get a few dollars but as the years go on they realise that on the present salary they are no closer to achieving a home or the goals that they would have envisaged for themselves when they were younger and so training is a way to help that person to get on track to achieving those goals.

We spoke of Barbados as a services economy. We know that as our workforce continues to improve itself through training and retraining that we will improve our competitiveness regionally and globally. Mr. Speaker, as we open up our labour market within CARICOM with the free movement of labour, I know that many persons do have some apprehension and even some fear about how this would affect their own job security. Mr. Speaker, again, training and retraining helps to improve that job security and would lessen their fear of nationals of other territories in the region coming in to Barbados to take away their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, if we afford Barbadians the opportunity to improve their chances, then that would lessen the fear and would allow us then to be able to integrate more freely with our Caribbean brothers and sisters. Indeed, when we see them coming into Barbados and we see that as threatening our positions, we are less likely to embrace them. Mr. Speaker, for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and the free movement of labour to really take hold, our people must not feel threatened by the whole process and so this is one way to ensure that happens as well.

Mr. Speaker, even as we spoke in the education debate earlier, we saw a culture emerging and we want to enforce this culture of continuous education. Our parents understood that we had to get an education if we were to improve our lot over what our parents had. Indeed, we see today that there are students who have been to school but they cannot see themselves doing any better than their parents did. They cannot see themselves acquiring the material things, for example, that their parent acquired. They cannot see themselves enjoying those finer things, may be even travel and things like that, that their parents may have acquired even though they went to school as they were told and got the education. Mr. Speaker, let us face it. It not enough now to just have that basic education that our parents would have aspired for us to have. We need to continually be learning. Professionals in every area understand the value of continuous professional education. Doctors, accountants, and I hope lawyers, are supposed to continually upgrade their skills, to retool and to keep abreast of what is current in their particular arena.

Mr. Speaker, the information that reaches the Ministry of Labour through their Research Unit has told us that we need to continue training and upgrading. This programme of the retraining of unemployed persons is really just a start because we know that these persons perhaps need that most at this time. Continuous labour market research and information surveys would guide us in other areas that we would want to continue with training. There will be continuous training of persons within the workplace who want to see themselves going up the ladder in their particular workplace.

The Ministry of Labour has identified areas of economic activity and other activity that they think would be vital to the long-term economic development of Barbados. Through the information that has reached them and information that they will continue to collate, they have been able to agree on skill sects that they think that the Barbados labour force should possess if persons are to achieve their maximum potential.

Mr. Speaker, certain keys areas were identified for the development of our economy and for the development of individuals in those sectors. Those areas include the cultural industries, tourism, agriculture, finance, international business and manufacturing. Those are areas that we have identified in the Ministry of Labour as key areas for economic activity that can make a vital contribution towards the long-term economic development of Barbados. We would have agreed on skill sects that the labour force needs to have in those areas so that those areas can be developed and individuals in those areas can achieve their maximum potential as well.

Mr. Speaker, as work was done on this retraining fund and continues for its implementation, several agencies would have gotten together to collaborate and to come up with ideas for this. This is an initiative of the National Insurance Office; the Ministry of Labour; the Labour Department; the National Employment Bureau; the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development; the Manpower Research and Statistical Unit at the Ministry of Labour; the training institutions, which include the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic; the Director of Finance; the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the TVET Council. We had a debate already on technical and vocational education and training. Those were the stakeholders who got together to ensure that this initiative could finally see the light of day.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that no idea happens before its time. This was something that was in its embryonic stage for quite some time. I believe that we have it today before us because it is needed more than ever. This is indeed the right time for it. We are preparing ourselves for economic recovery after the recession which, we are keeping our fingers cross, is not going to be much longer now.

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7.10 p.m.

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Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO: There are other initiatives going on to ensure this whole concept and retooling in the Barbados labor force, we know that the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development has been working and developing a strategic plan and a training plan. The idea of the National Vocational Qualification and the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications are all incentives to ensure that people see the value of training. Sir, that training was made accessible and appealing to persons so that they would see this is something they could do, to give themselves a better opportunity to move across the workforce and even to move within the region as well.

We have seen initiatives by Government to ensure that the unemployment figures are held at bay. Sir, again we would want to congratulate the Prime Minister for ensuring that unemployment figures in this country have not resembled the unemployment figures in other parts of the region or the world. We know there has been an increase in unemployment but the figures today are thankfully still much better, they are somewhere within the region of l0 per cent.

Sir, the initiatives, one of which includes construction work, has been in great part responsible for that, that would have been part of a stimulus package. Of course, we continue to look for employment outside of Barbados but we know that if we think things look bad here, we know that across the world things are looking even worse, so where Barbadians would normally have found themselves employed in the H2B programme, the non-agricultural programme in the United States of America, we would normally would have, for example, at Amelia Island Resort, in the vicinity of l75 persons being employed at that resort every year. Sir, Barbadians had developed a good reputation for themselves and were sought after in that area.

Mr. Speaker, to show that it has affected persons outside of Barbados... Sir. this is a point we are always at pains to make to persons who complained about not being able to find work quickly, we had to make the point that it is not just in Barbados but everywhere else. At Amelia Island Plantation they had advised us that they are not able to take any Barbadians because that particular resort has been faced with bankruptcy. We know their unemployment figures have increased so much so that they are mandated that any employment in their area must go to their locals first therefore they are not able, at this time, to take Barbadian workers.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to find work for persons in Canada in the Farm Labour Programme and in other programmes in Canada. Again, it is important that our Barbadian workers understand the value of presenting themselves, the value of a good work attitude and a good work ethic when they go overseas. What has helped Barbados, even in a time of recession, is that the Barbadian worker has established a good reputation for himself or herself over the years, so that employers would still take some Barbadians because employers like the work Barbadians have been doing, and so I want to encourage Barbadians to continue.

We have heard, for example, in agriculture, we know that Barbadians have not been keen to go after the work in the agricultural areas especially, for example, in the United States of America. We know that Jamaicans have been taking those jobs and for several reasons Barbadians have not been eager for agricultural work in the first instance

and then at the rate they pay for the foreign exchange in Jamaica, we know that is a lot more valuable for Jamaican, given the rate of exchange they have now, which is somewhere in the vicinity of Jam.$1 equals US$60. The Jamaicans have been presenting themselves in their numbers and also presenting the kind of work attitude in the agricultural programme in the United States of America, which is not appealing to Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, getting back just briefly to some of the programmes that we would be looking to offer under this retraining programme, there are several programmes being offered by the Barbados Vocational Training Board and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. There are many programmes that are three months, nine months and one-year in duration. At the Barbados Vocational Training Board, these programmes include air-conditioning, autobody repair, bobcat, carpentry, computer applications, cupboard construction, electrical installation, garment making and tailoring, household accessories, cookery, heavy-duty truck driving, horticulture, housekeeping, masonry, plumbing, screen printing, sign making, steel bending and fixing, skits jerry-loader and backhoe, tiling, tractor operation, upholstery and welding. At the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, there are programmes such as animal husbandry, accounts, technology, administration, catering, computer maintenance, crop husbandry, office technology, electrical wiring, electrical installation, esthetics, nail care and skin care, garment making, geriatric studies, landscaping and horticulture, maritime operation, painting and decorating, small engine repairs, tourism, craft, and upholstery. There are a range of programmes where persons can find themselves trained, so that they can have a better chance at finding an opportunity in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, this is a programme that is being done in collaboration with the National Insurance Office and the National Employment Bureau. It is proposed that as the retraining programme comes on board, that unemployed persons coming from the National Insurance would be referred to the National Employment Bureau and that they will have the counselling and training that is necessary for this to happen. The National Employment Bureau has already been working and putting things in place so that they will be ready to go with this programme, once this legislation is passed. We see it as being urgent, we see it as something on which we cannot wait much longer, that is why, though it is late in the day today, we are eager to have this out of the way so that we can get going on this programme.

Mr. Speaker, some arrangements have to be made in the Office of the National Employment Bureau and they have been identifying spaces so that they can at least get started but based on the response to this programme we know that it is likely that there will be need for some other arrangements to be put in place to house this programme. What is also been put before us is to make it more practical for persons who have to go to the National Insurance to register for unemployment that if not the entire National Employment Bureau but some desk of the National Employment Bureau were housed at the National Insurance or nearby, it would make it easier for persons registering for unemployment benefit on the one hand can register for the employment training programme.

Mr. Speaker, there has also been discussions about other types of the programme. We have seen the kinds of programmes that will be offered because our research has told us that it is these persons in the elementary occupations category who mainly go to the National Employment Bureau for assistance; persons who have been working as maids, shop and gas attendants, laundry workers, cleaning firms and home-helpers. These are the persons who have been going most often to the National Employment Bureau.

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Dr. the HON. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, training is something that we are proposing for all classes of workers, so it is proposed that at some point we would have to look at how we treat to those persons in other areas with professions and so on, who want to retool and who want to, maybe even provide some options for career changes. Of course, we know that as persons acquire skills as well, they increase their opportunities for entrepreneurship and becoming self-employed also.

Sir, that is indeed an option as we heard through the Ministry of Economic Affairs, especially in the area of their unit for entrepreneurship, that the area of self-employment is one that is being promoted. Certainly, it is a viable option for many persons and the idea there, of course, would be that persons, who are self-employed would still be reducing their dependency on welfare and the cost of unemployment. It would also be encouraging them to develop these businesses and even encourage underground business activities to become part of mainstream business, and focusing on the awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship and job creation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Ministry of Economic Affairs for that thrust towards entrepreneurship. I know also in the Ministry of Youth, the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme, they have also been for many years now promoting entrepreneurship for young people, again, providing the skills and the training that they would need in that area, the business development skills and so on. They have been seeing a number of people develop

their own, sometimes, cottage industries and also industries that have grown well beyond that.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of attending BIMEX this weekend and, again, we saw the creativity of Barbadians really coming to light and really shining in a number of areas from jewelry, dressmaking, sewing, soap making, furniture making, every thing, you name it and it was there. Sir, this is just to show that there is no shortage of talent in Barbados and no shortage of idea. We used to think that there were some people who were more creative, as a country, than others and certainly, more creative than Barbadians but we have seen the lie in that. Indeed, Barbadians are very creative and we believe also that this kind of economic recession can bring that creativity to the fore.

Mr. Speaker, we can see new industries emerging not only in the services economy but also we can see new skills, new crafts and new products emerging. Sir, we have seen all kinds of things this weekend at BIMEX and I was really proud of what I saw emerging, the packaging, the presentation and much of it was very classy, ready for market and it could compete anywhere with other products from other parts of the world. Sir, Barbadians are really showing what they are made of.

Mr. Speaker, as we promote training and we talk about the national development, through the labour market research, we will ensure that training fits into where we want to see Barbados go. Sir, the Ministry has been working closely with the Ministry of Economic Affairs to ensure that we have an understanding of what it is Barbados needs, not just for the presence but what Barbados needs to take it forward.

Mr. Speaker, for example, agriculture. There is a need to provide training in the area of agriculture. Sir, we should not think of agriculture in terms of labourers in the fields, operating the tractor, the backhoe and other implements but in terms of the science behind it and the technology that is involved in agriculture. If we can provide training, if we really want to see Barbados provide, if not for export, certainly, Sir, as we look to take our economy forward, we would want to ensure that Barbados can still provide its own food. We need that food security and, Sir, that has been said so many times before. What we would need to ensure is that even in the area of training, that training deals with the development of agriculture and the technology that is involved in using our limited land space and our limited resources. We are told that we are water scarce so using our limited land, our limited water, using the technology that we have to still be able to meet our food need because we have an understanding of the technology.

Mr. Speaker, even as we talk about National Development Scholarship and so, I hope that we can see the National Development Scholarship being awarded in those areas of agriculture and agricultural development.

Mr. Speaker, we are ready to go with this programme. We want to encourage those Barbadians who are unemployed because they have one year in which they can come and register for these programmes at the National Employment Bureau to take advantage of this training programme.(19:26) We would like to encourage Barbadians because there is this whole attitude of when you are unemployed, to sit down and wait until the unemployment runs out before you can go and do anything at all. We even know of persons on invalidity benefits and persons who are deemed disabled and cannot do any sort of job even if it pays them much less than what they get from National Insurance they are discouraged from doing any sort of work at all and of contributing in any way because they know that to do so, it will jeopardise the benefit which they get from National Insurance. Sir, that is a culture that we need to revisit as well but that is for another time.

Mr. Speaker, I have said that to say that we would like to encourage while they are unemployed to start to use that time to prepare themselves for the future and prepare themselves for work, not to just sit and collect the unemployment benefit that is coming to them, that they can train and be ready when our market opens up and when the job start to come they can even create for themselves an industry and start to reap the benefits once they have done this training programme.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I beg to move that this Bill for the National Insurance and Social Security be read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged. Yes, Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the Opposition does not have a difficulty in supporting this Bill. In fact, we agree with the Honourable Member for St. George South that we need training legislation, or we need to put a facility in place now more than ever. Certainly, the unemployment rate continues to be of tremendous concern. I have to say that I would have appreciated it, if the Honourable Member could have told us what the unemployment rate is. Her speech demonstrated either a reluctance to be specific or something else but, Sir, be that as it may, it is important that we move when we are ready. Sir, there are a few issues I would like to raise with the Honourable Member and I hope that to the extent that there are issues that I believe are presented on the face of Bill, it would be important for them to give them some consideration.

Mr. Speaker, it strikes us that under the mechanism that is set out here that the National Insurance Board continues to have a tremendous role in relation to the administration of these funds. Certainly, Sir, the Bill sets out that there shall be established under the management and control of the Board, meaning the National Insurance Board, so that this $10 million is going to be managed and controlled, not by the National Employment Bureau, but by the National Insurance Board and we believe, Sir, that is a built-in disconnect, which could serve to slow down, stymie and stand in the way of this administration being able to satisfy its aims.

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Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: ...but which could stand in the way of this administration being able to satisfy its aims. Sir, it is quite clear if you look at sub section (3)(b) it says: "They shall be paid and met out of the Retraining Account."

So there is an account to be maintained by the Board.

" (b)All reasonable expenses incurred in providing retraining courses approved by the Board..."

Sir, the point I am making, if we are really serious about hitting the ground running and having a Fund that will respond with some alacrity to the needs of the marketplace, then it will be important to recognise that the National Insurance Board does not have any built-in capacity to deal with the retooling and retraining. It is an Investment Board and the focus of that Investment Board, we know, is clear, but now to add other responsibilities to the National Insurance Scheme Board, it seems to us that really is not a practicable measure that is proposed.

The Honourable Minister said that the National Bureau will be an agency that will be responsible for doing that, and we would wonder if there is no mechanism available for the National Insurance Bureau, which has the responsibility, to deal with it in that way.

We are happy to hear it is contemplated that we will go beyond the artisanal-type employment. This particular recession in Barbados has caused people of all walks of life and with all kinds of training to be unemployed, and in some cases under employed. It would certainly, in my mind, to enquire of the Minister what about those people who have been thrown on the job market, but who have degrees and who have professional qualifications. I am happy to her that they are withing contemplation. I look forward to knowing exactly what kinds of measures are going to be made available to them, because the last thing we want to do, especially having spent the whole day talking about tertiary education, is to create a class of under employed people. Sir, that can reap as much emotional havoc on an individual as being unemployed, but at the same time the kind of retooling an individual with a tertiary education would need to do, would by definition be quantitatively and qualitatively different.

The Government is going to have to do some public relations on this, because when you read a long list and see Skid Steer, and Bob Cat and Individual Repair, individuals who have degrees and who are on the job market are not going to bother to read the fine print. They are not going to bother to read the rest. Therefore, if we are going to reach out to all of those Barbadians who are now on the bread line or at least on the unemployment line, it will be important to make this particular agency relevant.

We believe that $10 million can go a long way and we think it has the potential to try to turn round the unemployment rate in this country. We support the measure, but we want to know if the regulations are ready.

I believe it is fair to say that a lot of times we will pass legislation in Parliament, but there is a tremendous lag behind the Regulations that implements the policies we established. This Bill clearly states that the individual must satisfy the conditions in the Regulations, and the Minister clearly states, has in mind some criteria but until the Regulations come into effect, it will be impossible to disburse any of the funds under this, because the criteria will not have the force and recognition of law. So I wonder whether in tact the Regulations are completed and available, because it would be a dreadful thing to promise Barbadians that they will be retooling money and retooling opportunities, but yet still when they enquire they do not have the capacity, but capacity is another issue.

I think the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic offers courses in many of the areas that have already been outlined by the Honourable Minister, Bob Cat, Cooking, Housekeeping and so on. I wonder what analysis has been done to support retooling people in many of these areas, because when they are retooled - and I understand that there is a narrow window of time a year within which they can do the retooling - thee should be a reasonable or legitimate expectation of a job opportunity in the new area. I think that is a reasonable thing, but if we already have - I mean there are so many people who have done the Bob Cat course, I suspect that one out of every person in Barbados could operate a Bob Cat but cannot find jobs.

Sir, these things do sound very exciting but unless you have the statistical data to support it, we run the risk, in our view, of saying to people, came and retool these are the areas you can retool in, but once the retooling and

retraining is done and the individuals have other skills set, but no viable opportunities.

I would suggest that it would be an important thing for us to look at perhaps new and untried areas. This Government came into power a short while ago, and they found that the Barbados Labour Party administration had put in place a training programme on medical records. The Barbados Labour Party administration had trained a large number of individuals in the area of transcribing medical records and so on. This administration had the benefit of opening up a new and large enterprise, and proclaimed that particular area was going to be a ghost area. If that is still the case, then I would imagine that it would be reasonable to direct some of the retooling funds to the young men and women in that direction.

Sir, I am suggesting that it is easy to list 20 or 30 skills. Any skill a per has is good, but will it be a skill that will be required in the marketplace?

Mr. Speaker, in law, you will be very familiar, also the Honourable Attorney General, that when we do damaging cases we look at retooling, but implicit in retooling is the notion that the job which you are trained for you cannot do, but if you retool you can build on some of those skills that you have and add a few more, and perhaps find a job opportunity.

Sir, a person, who is a carpenter, to tell him to come and retool and go and learn how to operate a Skid Steer or one of those things to my mind is a bit fanciful. Certainly, as we have approached it in the legal profession, a carpenter, you can tell him to retool and study joinery, because there is almost a natural progression from one to the next.

Sir, it is clear that this is going to be a process. We support the venture. Anything that will bring job opportunities for Barbadians is going to receive the support of this Opposition, but we only wish to raise those few issues. The Honourable Member may see it as criticism. It is not intended in that way. I believe that there are questions that are reasonable for us to posit to the Minister. We want to know exactly how the Employment Bureau is going to be connecting with the mechanism of the NIS. We want to know if the Regulations are ready and if there are not ready, when they will be ready. Then we also have a few concerns about the notion o retooling. We have to look at it. We also have to bolster our decision to offer retooling in particular areas, by conducting the necessary statistical analysis which will be able to inform the areas in which we offer retooling, rather than just throwing out onto the Barbadian employment market another 300 Bob Cat drivers when there are no Bob Cat jobs to be had.

Mr. Speaker, those are our contributions to this Bill.

Madam PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

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House A65B, Sequence 50, 8.40 p.m.

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

Dr. Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a contribution to the Amendment of the National Insurance and Social Security Act No. 2 to bring into effect, Sir, the budgetary policies outlines on pages 49 and 50 of the Financial Statements and Budgetary Proposals of 2009, presented by Prime Minister Thompson.

I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, at the outset to appreciate the fact that this retraining fund represents one measure of a series of measures that this administration looked at as a mechanism or a tool that could be used in repeated responses to any recession that this country may have to face in the future. It becomes a tool, Sir, that is important if we have to face any other upcoming periods of recession. It is important to link the Retraining Fund with the other measures, so as to get an understanding of not only the fact that it is one measure of a set that are not only innovative but they are new and revolutionary approaches. The reason being that at no time, when the last administration faced a recession, did they bring in a Retraining Fund. Sir, at no time when the former administration faced a recession did they bring a Job Stabilisation Fund. Sir, at no time when the last administration was in office, did they bring the type of Tourism Relief Programme that we have brought.

Mr. Speaker, we also added to the Retraining Fund two other dimensions. One, the removal of having to seek Value Added Tax Clearances, National Insurance Clearances Certificates and Inland Revenue Tax Clearance Certificates from small business persons seeking employment. Mr. Speaker, two, we also moved to establish an expansion of the Unemployment Benefit as a mechanism that will work alongside the Retraining Fund. This has already been approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Policy and it already has the blessing of the Cabinet of this country. They are a set of measures that can be used whenever Barbados is in the throws of an economic crisis and that is why I would have to stand here today, Sir, and say that we are talking about a revolutionary set of approaches.

Sir, before I speak specifically to the details of that Fund, this must also be set within the context of the Prime Minister understanding the importance of the diaspora

project. All of these are responses to recessions, just as the Retraining fund is a response to the recession. Those responses are designed to have our diaspora assist us whenever there is a downturn regarding remittances et cetera, so I wanted to put that in context, Mr. Speaker, so that those persons listening to this debate could understand the importance of those series of measures and the Retraining Fund is just one.

I would have to also mention the early warning economic system that should be online very shortly as another measure that was designed to help Barbadians respond to any economic crises in the future.

The details of the Retraining Fund, Mr. Speaker, have been outlined by the mover of the Bill. I think that what is important for Barbadian to understand is that the Retraining Fund has been established as a special account that comes essentially from the unemployment benefit account. I also would want to say, Sir, that the unemployment benefit account has been effectively processed by the National Insurance, in addition to the Ministry of Finance to ensure that not only is there sustainability but we know that we are on a sound footing.

Sir, this Retraining Fund would have not only access to the $10 million that was promised but we are also confident that those persons who would have access to their normal unemployment benefit for the period of 26 weeks, who would engage in the training, that after the 26 weeks of unemployment benefit has expired, they can then get a stipend to carry on their area of retraining. Sir, it is important to understand the reasoning for this.

Mr. Speaker, what is important in a recession, is that a recession represents excess production capacity in an economy. Therefore, because you have excess production capacity, it means that you end up with unused inventory that nobody can buy. Sir, because nobody can purchase our goods and services, you end up therefore laying off people. When you lay those people off, the persons essentially have recourse to our unemployment benefits. Sir, what we are essentially saying is that we are going to create a programme so that when you are laid off from your present employment, we would give you the opportunity to broaden your skill set, so that you now have the opportunity to engage in being trained in a number of different areas, so that you become much more marketable when the economy picks back up and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is a matter of trying to determine whether you may have had a Masters Degree and whether you have lost your job, or whether you are going to retrain for driving a bobcat. I do not think it really has anything to do with that. What is critical here, Sir, is that we are talking about those individuals whose skills are so limited that they are not as marketable as that person who has the first degree or the second degree. Therefore, in order for them to compete in the environment, they must have a broader set of skills that make them a whole lot more marketable.

Mr. Speaker, that is one of the reasons that the Honourable Member for St. George South would have gone, painstakingly, through that particular list. As you would find, Sir, that list outlines that it is not simply lower income persons but the critical element here is that individuals have an opportunity, while they are defined as unemployed, to be able to look to broaden their skills so as to make themselves much more marketable. I think that is a wonderful achievement and I support, most fully, Mr. Speaker, the amendment as it is now established.

With respect to the Regulations and the administrative procedures, I would say without a doubt that the National Insurance Board and the Director of the National Insurance have no problems whatsoever, Sir, with the way t he administrative elements are set up. The National Employment Bureau, in its relation to the National Insurance Board has no problem with the arrangements as they are so set up. Therefore, I can see no reason why the cordial and positive working relationship towards having this work as they would have worked in the past in many other situations that such would not continue to be the case. In fact, if my memory serves me correctly, they were of the opinion that this type of arrangement is very long overdue. I would want again to congratulate Prime Minister Thompson for his foresight within the Budgetary Statements of 2009.

I want to end, essentially, Mr. Speaker, by simply indicating that the Retraining Fund is one of a set of measures that were put in place to mitigate against the economic impact on those persons who would have lost their jobs. What is also of importance is that it is a tool that is reproducible so it is there to be used. Whenever there is a recession, it can be applied.

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Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: The same thing applies to when we established the Loan Stabilisation Programme where the National Insurance Office would have converted to a loan, the employee’s deduction over a five-year period at an interest rate of 5 per cent. That again, Sir, is another tool that could be used whenever you face a recession. The same thing would be true with respect to the Tourism Industry Relief Programme, the TIRP 1 and TIRP 2. It is a mechanism that can be utilised whenever we may have to face another recession.

My question to the Honourable Members on the other side is: How comes no such programmes were ever created by that former Administration when in power? It never happened in the 1982 economic crisis and it never happened in the 2001 economic crisis so how could they be critical of this Administration for putting measures in place that were designed to buttress and stabilise an economy in the face of a recession that is reproducible. Mr. Speaker, I think that the fact that it is reproducible is the most critical point of this whole discussion. In fact, we could leave it here for any other Administration to utilise as an affront whenever they are faced with an economic recession.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much, Sir.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this debate is very significant so even though the night is on us, I have to speak briefly on this matter. The Honourable Member who just sat said that these measures are reproducible and that they are measures for recessionary times. I am wondering if the Democratic Labour Party is saying that they expect the recession to continue for a long time. Mr. Speaker, if the recession is to continue for a long time, then these measures will not work because a Fund that was set up to give people a stipend... Right now, Mr. Speaker, unemployed persons get six months of relief. The Honourable Member must know that the unemployment insurance was created by a Barbados Labour Party Government in the 1980s to help redress some of the problems of the day so he cannot say that nothing was done. These were done during that time and persons received, I think it was, nine months of unemployment insurance.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Government should be looking more positively at how they are going to get us out of this recession. The Government was elected to find jobs for Barbadians and Barbadians are hurting. The Government must understand that there are people in my constituency, if not in theirs, who are hurting and hurting very badly so the Government cannot get off this. When they came to office, they found unemployment at 7 per cent, today it is 10 per cent and rising. The Government must understand that it is rising and rising very fast. We need the Government to get on the job and find work for Barbadians. We want the Government to find work in the construction industry and in the hotel industry. The Government must come to work every day of their lives to find work for Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, when we came to office in 1994, we said that Job Number 1 was jobs and we insisted that was our programme. We left persons working. Today, a number of persons are hurting. Mr. Speaker, this Fund will only attract persons who have paid National Insurance and after the six months is ended persons may get a stipend. I thought the Government was going to commit to say that they are going to extend the unemployment period. I think the Government would do better to expand the period to one year. My submission is that it would be better after the period of six months is over to carry out an assessment and if the person cannot find a job in that period... It is hard to give a man who has a family of five children a stipend of $24, $50 or $75. It is a hardship. It is bus fare and lunch money all over again.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that persons who now go to the Vocational Training Board receive $75 just by going to the Board to do training. The Minister can tell us if this still goes on. I know for sure that persons who opt to be trained in bobcat, masonry or in any field gets $75, that was so from the 1980s.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that the Government needs to do much more to get Barbadians out of this recession. I understand there is a problem. You cannot find work in the Canadian market now or in the hotel industry but there are other innovative means. The Government said that these things are revolutionary ideas. I do not see any revolutionary ideas in them at all.

Mr. Speaker, I must tell you that it would be better to put the money on on the job training and give the money to master craftsmen who would then employ some of the persons that they have across Barbados. In the early part of this last century when many Barbadians were out of work, money was put into funds for master craftsmen, money was given to the hotel industry and money was put into the restaurants to train workers so that persons were able to get training on the job.

I am of the view, Mr. Speaker, that this Fund will help only to create further hardships for Barbadians because you would only get a stipend. A person who is unemployed would get unemployment benefits for six months and now when that period is finished, he would get this small stipend. How could that suffice his family? It cannot pay his water bill. Once the water bill is off for one month, the water is cut off so how can he pay the water bill. It is the same thing with the light bill. Mr. Speaker, persons cannot eat properly.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that it is the job of the Government to find more revolutionary means of putting Barbadians back to work, it is the Government's job. The Government said to Barbadians in 2008 that they will have a better time. Barbadians expect that better time.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling on the Government to tell Barbadians how long this recession will continue. If it will continue beyond a six-month period, then the Government

has a job to extend the period of unemployment insurance to at least cushion Barbadians during that period because they are hurting. The Minister must understand that in our part of the world people are hurting. A lot of people cannot find work and therefore to just tell people they are going to get a small stipend is not good enough.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, in the dying hours of this day in which we had such an elevated discussion on tertiary education in Barbados, it is really a little disappointing that the Honourable Member for St. George North could really have delivered of himself the type of presentation which we have just had.

Mr. Speaker, let us start at the end. The Honourable Member wants the Democratic Labour Party Government by some measure perhaps of intellectual telepathy to figure out and to present to him and Honourable Members on that side when an international economic recession is going to end, which by the way may very well be going in for a second dip based on what is happening in the European economies, in Greece, Spain and Portugal, to the extent where the entire European economy particularly for the first time since its creation the Euro is under such significant stress as to be rendering the Euro to be virtually useless to that extent and the level of ambivalence from European Governments who can afford to intervene in that process to assist those countries whom might be affected by this problem.

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Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, we could not even tell him when the recession properly started, what we know is that they could not tell us when the recession had actually started. In fact, they could not tell us why it was that after telling Barbadians they were borrowing money from the international capital markets for a rainy day, why when it started to rain that the umbrella had no netting in it. Sir, we are supposed to tell them when the recession is likely to end. Sir, it is really amazing.

Mr. Speaker, I sat here not intending to speak in this matter, only to hear the Honourable Member for St. George North say that a fund established by this Government to assist persons, who might loose their jobs because of this recession, would create more hardship in Barbados. How could the Honourable Member not be able to collide even with commonsense in relation to this fund? It is as if the Honourable Member were walking down Broad Street, saw commonsense and ran in the opposite direction. Sir, in terms of the economic recession across the world, we have all said that this is a fund to retrain all workers.

Sir, one of the things we know about recessions, from practice, is that people who loose their jobs, particularly in certain sectors, may not be able to reenter once that restructuring has taken place within those sectors. They may not be able to reenter in those particular jobs within those sectors therefore you have to go in, retrain and retool those workers to assume entirely different positions within the economy when it opens up. We are not just training people for training sake, we are training them to reenter the job market with a skill, as they would still have the skills they had before; they would now have an additional and new skill. We are encouraging them to get additional skills which would make them even more competitive agents within the open economic market.

Sir, we are being told that this is a bad time and that it will create hardship. Sir, I am not happy to know that the Opposition believes that retraining workers in this country so that they will become more competitive in the global market is a matter which we as a responsible Government and country ought not to do. It has now gone into the record that the Honourable Member for St. George North, the chief economic spokesman for the Opposition...

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, I said that this stipend the Government is proposing to give Barbadians after their six month's unemployment benefit has ended, will create further hardship. Sir, the expectation will be great and persons who are accustomed to receiving $200 a week... Mr. Speaker, the Government has not said what the stipend would be but a stipend could only be a stipend.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, a stipend could only be a stipend. I am saying that this stipend the Government intends to give Barbadians will create hardship because persons would not be able to pay their light or their water bills, neither would they be able to eat. If persons in his constituency are able to eat, the Honourable Member can say so, I am saying that funds have been created before and the fact that other Barbadians have been trained and retrained is nothing new, people have been trained since the l980s.

Asides.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, it is really amazing, logic has escaped the Honourable

Member, even as simple as it is. How could you argue? Sir, this is simple. Sir, I have a little book home called "The ABC of Logic," which I am going to bring for the Honourable Member for St. George North because the Honourable Member seems to believe that because A+B=C, that C+B naturally should equal A. How could it be that the Honourable Member cannot understand or could say that this Government will take a person who has expired his or her unemployment benefits after the 26 weeks, who cannot find employment and therefore would not be earning an income, say to them we will give them a stipend - which the Honourable Member does not know how much would that stipend be - and he seems to believes that a stipend means small.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, the Honourable Member claims that he is an academic. Sir, the word stipend means small. Sir, the Honourable Member went into the realm of mathematics, the Honourable Member said that A+B=C, then B+A must also equal C. It only follows.

MR. SPEAKER: That was not a point of order.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I understand the Honourable Member's difficulty, the Honourable Member does not understand that you cannot go from a generalisation to a specific, you have to go from a specific to a generaliation. You cannot say that because you are going go pay a stipend... Sir, the Honourable Member should get the dictionary because stipendiary is relative.

Asides.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member cannot say that a man who is unemployed, who is not getting a salary, who does not have the prospect of immediately going back into the job market, his 26 weeks' unemployment benefit has come to an end, if he gets a stipend to go and retrain. How could that be a painful experience? If you do not want any person who might have lost a job in St. George North to receive the benefit of retraining in this economy under this Government, then let the Honourable Member say so and we will accept it.

Asides.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, that is when the period is up, that is when you say to the worker, if it seems as though your unemployment seems to be becoming a permanent status, we do not want that, what we want is to find a way to retrain you, so that you can reenter the workforce as a more competitive agent.

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HON. C.P. SINCKLER: What we want to do is to find a way to retrain you so that you can re-enter the workforce a more competitive agent. Sir, that is the responsible thing for a Government to do, yet the Honourable Member, at this dying hour of Government business in this Parliament, delivers of himself a most incredulous statement to say that this Government is irresponsible and causing harm by trying to retrain workers to re-enter the workforce. Sir, unions, universities, Governments, all agencies and institutions of responsibility say that the first thing you do with people who have lost their jobs is to retrain them, yet the Barbados Labour Party is the only institution...

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House (10:10:56)

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: The Honourable Member is trying to extricate himself from a difficult situation having boxed himself in. Sir, the reality is this, as the Honourable Member St. Philip West said, when given the opportunity in 2001, after the 9/11 experience, the last Government did not take the advice of the Honourable Member for St. George North and extend unemployment benefits for another six months. Sir, those people had to stop home without a cent to pay a light bill or a water bill. There was no retraining fund. There was no tourism fund. There was no write-off or delay in the payment of National Insurance to enable the employers to recover in a recession that was not as virulent as the one which we are going through at this present moment, so what is the Honourable Member saying?

Mr. Speaker, the reality of it is this. Sir, the Barbados Labour Party Opposition is shell-shocked because they anticipated and predicted in this very House, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that this economy would implode, that we were digging a deeper and deeper hole, a dark hole. The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter said in his Estimates presentation that it was lights out for Barbados, that it was the end, that it was Armageddon and having not achieved the prediction, they set about, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to launch an attack on everybody in Barbados, and something as simply as a fund to retrain workers is now being thought as a weapon that we are trying to say to people that they should get another six months and since we cannot give you another six months, we are going to carry you through the pain of giving you a small stipend, according to the member, who has now discovered what stipend means...

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: You had a dictionary? Well, do not call words that you do not know. In other words, that was a malapropism on your part and you taught English, imagine that? Sir, the Honourable Member now, having not had that to fall back on, is now saying that the Democratic Labour Party should not stand up and hold hands with workers in Barbados to find a way to encourage people to alleviate their own stress in these difficult economic times. Sir, that is unacceptable and it says to us, coming from the Honourable Member on the other side, that is what separates these two Parties, these two Parties in Government or in Opposition, that we are (20:15) philosophically about building up people while the Opposition is philosophically about building up its own power. Sir, that is really what it is about.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Sir, that is why we said that it is not just the economy, it is the society. Sir, that is why this is a responsible measure because, as you seek to restructure, to hold strain, to stabilise your economy, there are certain things you have to take. You give the businessmen some more incentives, you try to create more opportunities for them but they are workers who will get hurt in a recession. Sir, it is no cause of us, we came and found the recession, just as we came and found an empty treasury. Sir, Iceland, Greece,...

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Do you know that the United States of America implemented a similar retraining fund which the Obama administration fought with the Congress to be extended even further than what it was to deal with its unemployment problems. Sir, they did it but apparently it was not painful in the United States of America. They saw the wisdom of doing that but for the Honourable Member for St. George North, who get in here and tries to deliver these "coohoo" punches (20:16:37) and believes that nobody is listening because it is going out on the radio and then somebody catches it and say that the Government implemented a fund to hurt poor people when, in fact, it is the complete opposite, we are not going to allow that to pass in this Parliament. Sir, it is not going to happen. Mr. Speaker, Sir, understand what we are doing here. We are trying to stabilise this economy.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the prediction has not come true. The economic contraction in the economy, according to the Central Bank of Barbados has slowed to below under one per cent. Sir the foreign reserves have held their own and we have had to manage them, Sir. We have tried to cut back on wasteful expenditures in the economy much of which we came and inherited as well. We have had to bring to book a whole set of wasteful economic spending in this country, including the highway, which was overseen by the Honourable Member, when he was Minister and then he said that he did not know what was happening...

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House and I wish the Government would have taken the initiative construct another highway, it would help to employ people in this country. Sir, the Government did not take that advice and it brought construction almost to a halt. The Government has not followed the wisdom of that.

MR. SPEAKER: No point of order. Honourable Member, please continue.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, we tried to do what we could do in the circumstances. We came in and, again, we now have to deal with the prison, the legacy of the Barbados Labour Party Government, of $740 something million and a building at Warrens for $80 something million dollars.

Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do here in this Bill is to try to give, not a handout, but a hand-up to people in this country. We are extending our hand to people to say that we know they have been hurt by the recession but that we will not leave them out there to wallow after their unemployment benefit had run out, that we will try to find a path and build a pathway to progress so that they can regain their confidence and re-enter the economy as a more competitive and confidence agent of change and development within this society. Sir, for that we are to be castigated.

Mr. Speaker, if...

Asides.

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: I say "if" with boldness and without fair of contraction. If this Government is to be held guilty and sent to the $745 million prison for doing this on behalf of the people of Barbados, we plea guilty.

Mr. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House in relation to the prison. The cost of the prison is known. The Barbados Government has not spent any $740 something million on the prison. There is a 25-year loan...

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Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: The Barbados Government has not spent any seven hundred and forty something million on the Prison. There is a 25-year loan that has to be repaid and that is the figure at the end of the organisation period.

Asides.

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: That is why he is misleading the House. To speak in that fashion suggests that is what the Prison cost the Barbadian public, and that is a total inaccuracy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I find no point of order Honourable House. Please continue.

Hon. Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, even if we had only paid $245 million from the Prison, we could have taken off the $5 million off the $45 million and repair the bridge at Joe's River.

Sir, I am not getting side tracked. We know now that under the accrual system of accounting, the full cost calculated over the period of time, as soon as that deal is finished and incurred has to come to book. The reality is, every January this Government has to look for $30 million, $10 million of which we could have perhaps had the luxury of extending the unemployment benefit. We cannot do that if we are paying it to the Prison people. Let us go home in peace without having to be harangued in here by this kind of reversed logic by the Honourable Member for St. George North. Let us say to the workers, take up this opportunity as the Minister has said, retrain yourselves. It is not a matter of whether at the end of the day there are going to be 10 or 15 jobs to drive a Bob Cat. That is not the point.

I also heard the comment made that nobody is doing assessments. That is not true either. Assessments will be done on every single individual. That is part of the programme.

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

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, I am going to wrap up now. Thanks very much.

If it were not so serious it would be laughable to hear what we heard today in here from the Honourable Member for St. George North, but it cannot work. It will not be allowed to work, because we have to hold hands in this economy. The economy is stabilising. The fall which we took was a hard fall and we are not completely on our feet entirely yet, and we are still watching international developments in countries such as Greece and Spain. Sir, Greece, for example, with a huge debt to GDP ratio.

I remember when the Honourable Member for St. Philip West was preaching about debt to GDP ratio. Do you know that the brilliant economist of the Barbados Labour Party said, "Do not mind him. He does not know anything about economics." It is not how much debt you have, it is the type of debt. It is the structure of the debt. You may have a person who is 300 pounds but it might be 300 pounds of muscle.

Now Standard and Poors downgraded people based on GDP. Sir, do you know what they have done to the Greek economy, they have the Greek economy, under the International Monetary Fund...

Asides.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Barbados Labour Party has always said that it was the structure of the debt. We never said that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West does not know anything about economics. We were telling him all the time that it was the structure of the debt. That is what we were talking about.

Mr. SPEAKER: No point found. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I am going to wind up. I am going to make this point about Greece because the International Monetary Fund has now encouraged Greece, like it encourage Latavia and Estonia to enter into agreements which are in contra distinction to the very problems they have. They have debt to GDP problems and they said that they are going to start their economic recovery by putting them in more debt.

The proposal which the International Monetary Fund has put on them is not one that stimulates growth fast enough, because the only way you can bring down debt is to pay it down, debt to GDP ratio, or grow your GDP. So if you stifle the GDP and grow the debt how can you solve a high debt to GDP ratio?

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Do you know they took that to the Argentines, Standards and Poors and all of them, and the Argentines economists said no, we are not going to pay it. Let us default. We will devalue the currency and show you how we are going to restructure the economy, and over a 10-year period the Argentine economy grew by 60 per cent. Sir, everybody is pointing at it now and saying how they came out of a basket-case example.

They said that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West did not know what he was saying, but we have proven that you ought not to listen to skeptics but you need to doctor debt, but you need to focus on what you know is right.

Sir, I will close with this. This is for the Honourable Member for St. George North, because I know that he is a lot more sensible than he pretends. Whenever the Barbados

Labour Party cannot convince people of their ideas, they turn around and attack them. They attacked Peter Wickham, sorry for calling his name. They attack Don Marshall. They attacked Dr. Estwick, Clyde Mascoll and now they are attacking the Governor of the Central Bank. Sir, I am telling you this. We have to stick to what we know is right for this economy. This measure is right for this economy and we will implement it on behalf and for the benefit of working people in Barbados.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: M. Speaker, in my short intervention I would wish to first indicate to the Honourable Member for St. George North, that a stipend of X dollars has to be greater than zero dollars. Therefore, clearly, the provision of the stipend in this arrangement after the 26 weeks of unemployment benefit has expired, that provision clearly would assist the...

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown is misleading the House.

We never said that the stipend would be below zero dollars. We always knew a stipend would be above zero dollars.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, that is no point of order. Please continue.

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I would invite the Honourable Member for St. George North to listen to what he just said, and therefore note the illogical line of argument. I am trained in Mathematics and Economics, so I am saying that it is clearly a logical, the line of argument being presented by the Honourable Member for St. George North. I invite himself to listen to himself.

Sir, if the Honourable Member admits that a stipend of X dollars has to be greater than zero, then he is arguing against what he said before. He has to listen to himself. Clearly the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West mentioned the fact that the Government in this measure is going to provide a stipend past the 26 weeks of unemployment benefits up to another six months would help the economic situation of these vulnerable families who are unemployed. Without the stipend you have zero dollars. So I am saying that the stipend is additional income coming to that family, plain and simple.

I am saying therefore the Opposition's slip is showing, the higher the monkey climbs, the more he shows his tail. The Opposition should desist, in my view, from opposing for opposing sake. Take the higher ground, and in the national interest support the Government where necessary.

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Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, in my view, the Opposition should desist from opposing for opposing sake, take the higher ground and in the national interest support the Government wherever necessary, when it is clear that we are seeking to provide some assistance to the vulnerable groups in our society. We should not be playing games with the livelihood of the people of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I would wish to add my two cents worth in terms of this measure, the fact that the Opposition has been focussing on jobs. I am saying that this measure also looks to empower these persons who are unemployed as a result of the recession for providing entrepreneurship as a viable career path, so that we must not discount the potential of this retraining and retooling exercise, empowering these persons to be able to open and launch small businesses. When you look at some of the skill sets outlined by the Minister, the Honourable Member for St. George South, Cupboard making, carpentry, air-conditioning, garment making, masonry, plumbing, you would understand that small businesses can develop from persons who garner these skills.

The Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic is offering courses in electrical wiring, catering, crop husbandry, small engine repairs, upholstery, nail technology and aesthetics, and the care of the elderly. I am saying that this Democratic Labour Party administration in the short time that we have been in office, has taken the bull by the horns and we have set up and provided a facility of several hundred thousands of dollars, which is under the management of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It is the Small Division based at Reef Road, where small entrepreneurs can get up to a maximum of $5 000 in terms of grant assistance, not in cash but in the provision of support, in the procurement of equipment, and tools that would enable these persons who garner these skills to be empowered to open small businesses and present them as a viable income path. Mr. Speaker, we are not just talking but we are implementing these far-reaching innovative programmes.

Sir, there is a clear ideological difference between the progressive approach of the Democratic Labour Party, and the reactionary Right Wing approach of the Barbados Labour Party. We are not seeking to create a dependency syndrome, where there is this mendicant approach and the persons in the society are so much dependent on the regime

in power for alms, handouts. The dark days of the 25 cents from the City Hall in Bridgetown have passed us. Mr. Speaker, even when you look at our Welfare to Work programme, the NEEP programme, where this Democratic Labour Party administration took scores of Barbadians who were on the Welfare role, and empowered them. We gave them a hands-up in terms of providing them with jobs in the Drainage Division, through the NEEP programme. This is consistent with our vision to uplift people so that they can fend for themselves and not become perpetually dependent on Welfare grants.

Mr. Speaker, this is part of the empowerment aspect of the philosophy of this Democratic Labour Party regime so that is why I had to speak because my mandate as outlined by the Honourable Prime Minister is to look seriously at empowerment and entrepreneurship, and small business development and competitiveness. This is our emphasis. We realise that the development of the small business sector is critical in terms of the speeding up of the recovery process so we are not just looking at a job. We are looking at empowering people to develop small businesses which can employ other people as they consolidate and expand in the years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very exciting exercise and all hands must be on board and within the Division of Trade Industry and Commerce. We have the BIDC and their Small Business Unit that will seek to incubate these businesses and give them the technical assistance be it in labeling, packaging, and so on, so that they would have a real fighting chance at success in their new enterprises.

Mr. Speaker, we assure the public of Barbados that this Democratic Labour Party is creative and we encourage Barbadians to follow us, as we seek to hold hands and really bring Barbados out of this recession.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Dr. Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Speaker, as I rise to wrap-up this debate I have an image. On television I would sometimes seea toy. I think they call it a magic ape ball. This ball that you shake, you ask a question and it gives you an answer. As the Honourable Member for St. George North spoke, I have this image of the magic ape ball. I am sitting here wishing that I had one because he has asked us to answer questions about the economy and how soon the recession will end and so on. I wondered if perhaps he had in his possession a magic ape ball because I do not know how he would expect us to have the answers to those questions. I suspect that it is late in the day. We have been here for a long time and I suppose he just really wanted us to get out of there and to get home, I imagine.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Speaker, let me just make a couple of points clear. One refers to a stipend, the stipend that will be paid for the training, The stipend, of course as ewe have consulted the dictionary so we now are clear that a stipend is a regular payment. It does not speak to the size of the stipend but let me just clarify for all those who are probably now terribly confused, having heard the interventions from across the Floor, that the structure for this programme is that persons who have registered with the National Insurance office will then register with the National Employment Bureau, where they will be assessed.

Mr. Speaker, if somebody asks how this research is done, it is research driven, it is driven by market forces, it is driven by the person's skills and interests. There is a science to it. These people at the National Employment Bureau are skilled in this kind of assessment but they will be assessed and then training will be provided for them.

Mr. Speaker, while they are on training and it is documented that they have been attending the sessions, they will receive the unemployment benefit that they would normally have been getting from the National Insurance.

Mr. Speaker, should that training exceed six months, a stipend will be provided, which is similar to what they will get with the Barbados Vocational Training Board but they will receive a stipend. They will not get the stipend while they are receiving the unemployment benefit. It will not overlap. The stipend comes into play after they have received the six months of unemployment benefits, then they would receive a stipend. This stipend, as I said, is similar to the stipends that would be paid by the Vocational Training Board.

Mr. Speaker, the retraining account is more than just providing a stipend. The Retraining Board meets the cost of tuition for persons who are having the training. We have always advocated that persons who are unemployed should look to retrain but, of course, this is a time at which they have no money so where they would have to forego training prior to this because they did not have that money, the cost of tuition will be met by this Retraining Fund.

The Legislation you would see at 3.(b) also says that all reasonable expenses incurred in providing retraining courses approved by the Board for the retraining of unemployed persons, will also be met. It says that the stipends then, payable to persons attending courses will also be met and expenses properly incurred in the administration of the account will also be met. Therefore, it is more than just the stipend. Persons are actually now in a position to improve their lot.

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Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: They are not going to be encouraged to sit at home and wait until the six months of unemployment benefit is up then to start to look for something. In those six months they will be positioning themselves to improve, they will be positioning Barbados to build as an economy, they will be positioning Barbados to be more competitive globally and they will be positioning Barbadians to be able to take advantage of opportunities in the region through the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. Mr. Speaker, this is all research-driven.

We have heard comments that Government must find work. I will venture to say as I wrap up, Mr. Speaker, that this Government has been responsible in providing solutions for persons who found themselves unemployed during this period of recession and continues to prepare those persons through other measures as we have heard and now through this one.

Mr. Speaker, I think that if you talk to any young person who is unemployed, it is more than Government finding work. I believe that the role of Government is not just to provide work, houses and so on, but to chart a future for the country and prepare a future for Barbadians. Added to that, Government must then prepare Barbadians for that future. Mr. Speaker, I think that is what this retraining account is doing.

As Government prepares a way forward, at the same time we are also preparing Barbadians young and old for the future. This is not exclusive to young people only, this is for persons who find themselves unemployed. It might be even more applicable to persons who are not young. Persons who are in their 50s who may find it challenging to compete in the workforce because of not having the skills, the training and the certification and so on when they entered the workforce, will now be able to take advantage of this opportunity. Mr. Speaker, Government is preparing Barbadians for the future that we are laying out for them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend all of my colleagues who have spoken and who have supported this Bill as well as the Members of the Committee that would have met to have this legislation prepared and to have everything in place. There have been many meetings on the regulations. Like the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, I do not foresee any problems with the regulations. They have been meeting and continues to meet so they are very clear on how this is going to go forward. Now that the legislation is here before Parliament I do not foresee any problem with having the regulations because the systems have been worked out so it should not be much longer now.

As I said, the stakeholders in this process, the Ministry of Economic Affairs; the Director of Finance; the Ministry of Labour; the Labour Office; the National Employment Bureau; the Manpower Research Unit; the TVET Council; and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, have been working together so that they have a system already worked out for this.

Mr. Speaker, we do not know when this recession would end. We are hearing projections, as we have heard this evening, that it may take another dip. Mr. Speaker, even as we do that, I want to encourage Barbadians not to be distracted by the clamour. One would think that it is just a few feet across this House that divides the two parties that are here today but the more I hear from the other side, the more I realise it is actually a great gulf that divides the two parties and the philosophy of the two parties.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure Barbadians that their future is being well looked after by this Democratic Labour Party Government. I would like to advise them to ignore the noise and the clamour from the other side and to continue even at this time to work with Government as we secure a future for them. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

On the motion of Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. J. D. PAUL in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee.

COMMITTEE

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make a little intervention in relation to Clause 1 in response to a query raised by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, which had to do with the fact that this account is being established under the management and control of the Board. The Honourable Member extrapolated from that that the actual retraining would also be the responsibility of the Board and he opined that the Board does not have the capacity to deal with that retraining issue.

Truth to tell, there are many funds established under the National Insurance Act. The National Insurance Fund is under the management and control of the Board. The Unemployment Benefit Account is also under the management and control of the Board and so too now is the Training Fund. The Board is not going to be responsible for the actual day-to-day management of the retraining. The Board is just managing and controlling the Fund. The day-

to-day management of the retraining exercises will be the responsibility of another agency, the Employment Bureau.

The second point raised in respect of this Clause has to do with the existence of regulations. Mr. Chairman, there is a plethora of regulations under the National Insurance Act and to the extent that these regulations are relevant to the operationalisation of this Retraining Fund, those regulations would be pressed into service. In the event that specific regulations are required to deal with this Retraining Fund, the Honourable Member can be assured that the relevant regulations would be put in place and with speed because the Government has already determined how the fund is to operate. If the existing regulations do not meet the requirements of that operation or the intended operation of the Fund, then with haste the Government will put the necessary regulations in place.

The third point has to do with the stipend payable to beneficiaries of the Fund. I believe that the Honourable Member for St. George North now knows what the word stipend means and we can now subtract that from the list of things that he does not understand.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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Mr. DALE D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to the Honourable Member for trying to bring some clarity to the murky waters that are obviously associated with this matter. Sir, I would like to suggest that the matter of regulations is not an "if" situation. If the Honourable Member would check the regulations that exist, he would recognise that the regulations referred to in this particular Bill are regulations which must set out the conditions.

Asides.

Mr. DALE D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, the regulations referred to in 30B.(1)(b) are regulations which are required as stipulating the conditions under which unemployed persons can access this particular fund, which is only now being created. Therefore, it is not an "if" regulations are required, regulations will be required but if that is my friend's response, then that is what it is.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO, 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 the Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) (No.2) Act, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government Business for this day's Sitting. With that I now beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 15 June, 2010, at 10.00 a.m.

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

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

8.55 p.m.

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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. *Order No. 5, opening speech.* The second-reading speech of Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo (about 890 words) follows directly on the heading 'Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George South.' in the source, with the Minister's name run into the first paragraph ('Hon. Dr. E.R. Byer-Suckoo: Mr. Speaker, I rise ...'). It is printed under the Speaker's heading as in the source. Please confirm.

Q3. *Order No. 4, Mr. H. F. Lashley's speech.* Part of Mr. H. F. Lashley's speech on Victor Clifford and John Collymore (about 350 words) appears under the heading 'Hon. M.A. LASHLEY', after which 'Mr. H.F. LASHLEY' resumes; the passage appears to belong to Mr. H. F. Lashley. Printed as in the source. Please confirm.

Q4. *Order No. 5, Hon. C. P. Sinckler's speech, about 8.20 p.m..* After Mr. D. D. Marshall's point of order on the cost of the prison, a passage of about 220 words is headed 'Hon. Dr. D.C. ESTWICK', although the Speaker then tells the Member he has five minutes to conclude and Hon. C. P. Sinckler replies; the passage appears to be part of Mr. Sinckler's speech. Printed as in the source. Please confirm.

Q5. *Order No. 5, speaker headings.* A recognition before Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick's speech is headed 'Madam PRESIDENT', and the seconder of the adjournment is headed 'SENATOR F. J. STUART'. Printed as in the source.

Q6. *Order No. 4, Resolution.* The Resolution gives the total loan as '$8 250 000' (US$8.25 million), but the Minister's statement of the terms reads 'The total sum is US$8 250 million'. Printed as in the source.

Q7. *Take-slips, Order No. 5.* One take-slip reads 'HA65B 29.40 p.m. Sequence 49', an impossible time (the next slip reads 8.40 p.m.), and another reads 'Seqeucme 44'. Printed as in the source.

Q8. *Order No. 4, Mr. A. D. Brathwaite's speech, about 5.48 p.m..* Mr. Brathwaite's speech breaks off at a take-slip after 'I just want to make a foreign exchange comments. (17:48)' and resumes with '...for Barbados to go forward', suggesting a gap. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 25th May, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with the Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair. The Speaker said the Minutes of Tuesday, May 18, 2010 were not yet available and would be deferred, and reminded Members of the vacancy on the Public Accounts Committee and of the membership of the Committee of Privileges. Hon. C. P. Sinckler laid the Annual Report of the Central Bank of Barbados for 2009 and half-yearly reports from the revenue earning departments of the Ministry of Finance, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Order No. 4 was the Resolution to approve the Government's guarantee of US$2 750 000, one third of a US$8 250 000 loan from the Caribbean Development Bank to the University of the West Indies for the University Enhancement Project and a Vice Chancellery building on lands adjacent to the Mona Campus in Jamaica, the other guarantors being Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. Moving it, the Minister of Education, Hon. R. D. Jones, set out the 17-year term with a five-year moratorium, said that Barbados was approaching 41 per cent access to post-secondary education, that the University served just over 40 000 students and would have access to over $128 million for economic cost plus some $30 million for tuition fees, and that there was no cut, while Jamaica had cut its provision by 33 per cent.

Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley said the Opposition supported the Resolution but noted that tuition provision had fallen from $34 million to $30 million; she recalled the Shorey Committee's recommendation that students pay 50 per cent of tuition, which her Party's Cabinet had not adopted, urged that tertiary education remain free, asked about the University College of Barbados and proposed a Joint Select Committee. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman, Mr. R. C. Eastmond, Mr. J. D. Paul, Hon. P. M. T. Todd, Mr. G. A. Clarke, who was given the opportunity by the Speaker to withdraw a remark about Mr. Todd, Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick, Mr. S. A. Lashley, Mr. H. F. Lashley, who spoke of drama as education, His Honour K. St.C. Best, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, Mr. Sinckler, who argued that national and university planning must go hand in hand, and Mr. A. D. Brathwaite also spoke. After Mr. Jones replied, the Resolution was passed without division.

Order No. 5, the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2010, was moved by Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo as the 'retraining Bill', establishing an account for retraining unemployed persons who had contributed to the Unemployment Benefit Account, whether or not they qualified for benefit, as announced in the 2009 Budgetary Proposals. Mr. D. D. Marshall said the Opposition supported it but asked whether the regulations were ready and noted the role of the National Insurance Board. Dr. Estwick said the fund would have access to the $10 million promised. Mr. Clarke argued that the stipend would cause hardship and that the Government should create jobs, and his repeated points of order against Mr. Sinckler and Mr. Todd were ruled not to be points of order; Mr. Marshall disputed Mr. Sinckler's reference to a '$745 million prison'.

Dr. Byer-Suckoo replied that the stipend would be paid during training and that unemployed persons would be encouraged to retrain during their six months of benefit. In Committee, with Mr. J. D. Paul in the Chair, Hon. F. J. Stuart answered Mr. Marshall's query on clause 1, both clauses passed, and the Bill was read a third time and passed. On the motion of Mr. Sinckler the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 15 June, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.