
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning Honourable Members, this Sitting of this Honourable House continues. Honourable Members when the suspension was taken last evening we were on Order No. 6 and with that we shall now continue. The Honourable Member for St. John.

ORDER No. 6 (RESUMED)

Mrs. M-J. M. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of these proposals but before I do so I wish to say a warm and hearty good morning to the good people of the parish of St. John who have chosen me to be their voice in this Honourable Chamber and did so, so decisively some two months ago.

Mr. Speaker, one of the joys of modern-day communication is the ability to stay in touch with friends, family and loved ones on an instantaneous basis. No matter where you are or what are doing, you are able to stay connected especially through conveniences such as Messenger, whether it is Window Live, Black Berry Messenger, Skype, Facebook or Twitter. Through these conveniences, together with other forms of modern communications, you are able to know what is happening in countries as far-flung as Miramar. It is against this backdrop that I found myself wondering yesterday just how some of the Honourable Members on the other side consult and interact with people outside of Barbados. Ever since the start of this debate, I have been left to wonder whether they see Barbados as an island unto itself or as part of the global village impacted upon by its environment and circumstances.

I make this point, Mr. Speaker, because in listening to several of the presentations from the other side, I am left

to wonder where they have been living and with whom they are interacting. They do not seem to be in touch or in tune with anyone living in the eastern Caribbean or the wider Caribbean for that matter. They do not seem to be locked in discussions with families and friends in Europe, Asia or North America. Had the Honourable Members on the other side been speaking to relatives in New York, London, Canada or Tampa, they would not be taking such ostrich-like positions in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, how could you speak to hardships in Barbados without comparing them to the realities in neighbouring islands and other countries of this western hemisphere? When I speak to my relatives and friends, I hear stories of circumstances similar to those outlined by the Minister of Finance right here on Monday. I hear the hope of conditions improving but of challenges brought on by circumstances not entirely of their making.

Honourable Members on the other side speaks to these draft Estimates totally unappreciative of the tone and content of similar draft Estimates elsewhere in the region and around the world. Where else in the Caribbean have they heard of draft Estimates reflecting what they are demanding of this Minister of Finance? In which countries with which we do business have there been a set of measures this past year that did not reflect the gravity of the economic conditions under which we operate?

These Estimates must be viewed, Mr. Speaker, against the backdrop not only of what they contained and proposed but equally and perhaps even more important within the context of what they shield Barbados from. These Estimates, Mr. Speaker, proffer jobs security. It tells each man and woman working for the Government in this country that his or her job would be protected. They proffer the retention of social services. They tell each senior citizen, disadvantaged and less fortunate person that all the benefits and opportunities that this Democratic Labour Party has fought for over the last 30 years will be maintained in spite of the ravages of the global economic

recession. They speak of the retention of health care benefits, the maintenance of a regime of concessions in the agricultural sector, enhanced terms and conditions of employment for workers and expanded facilities for sports. I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central mentioned that the track at the stadium would be resurfaced, much to my joy. They speak to the development of the cultural industries. These Estimates, Mr. Speaker, seek to afford Barbadians the quality of life to which they have become accustomed. Few other Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure anywhere else in the Caribbean or the world guarantee such in this global economic environment.

As we speak this week, the earthquake and tsunami in Japan and its environs is being ranked among the most devastating natural disaster known to modern man not just because of the loss of life and the physical infrastructure but also because of the economic impact on other global economies. Already there are ominous signs in respect of the automobile industry and we are getting nervous about the nuclear melt-down.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates must not be seen in isolation. They form part of Barbados' continued response to a global threat that has already crippled economies small and large. They give us hope of weathering another challenging year and of sustaining the gains we made through the ages.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to appeal to Honourable Members on both side of the Honourable House to stop playing politics and let us reflect on how fortunate we are to be able to offer the people of Barbados a package such as this in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. We are a small island state bereft of many natural resources. There has been no reduction in health care or health services. In my view, this is a plus in this day and age. There has been no increase in the cost of education or a reduction in access to education at any level, that is a plus. This package does not envisage a reduction in the very admirable and aggressive house building campaigns embarked upon this Government. Again, Mr. Speaker, that is a plus. The Minister of Finance did not speak of increase bus fares, of a reduction in public transport services or a re-imposition of fares for school children. Again, that must be a plus.

Mr. Speaker, when we speak as lawmakers in here we must not merely seek to score cheap political points, we must also enlighten and educate our constituents to the advantageous position that we in Barbados find ourselves in 2011 when few economies around the world can boast or at this stage embark on many of the social programmes that we have instituted and enshrined here in Barbados.

In analysing these Estimates, I can visit the people of St. John and assure them of the retention of the services to which they have become accustomed. Mr. Speaker, in this particular package I can point to a specific budgetary allocation for a polyclinic that will be built in St. John. Mr. Speaker, although the polyclinic is going to be built in St. John, I noticed that the Opposition has taken to talking about a polyclinic in St. James, so it is clear to me that the Opposition has a penchant for making polyclinics political footballs. Mr. Speaker, I can point to resources being allocated for the resumption and commencement of work on several roads in the constituency of St. John. These are efforts which I acknowledge and appreciate.

The Minister of Finance is reflecting in this package an awareness of an appreciation for the issues of concern for the people of St. John. Clearly he is signalling that he cannot address all of our worries at once but no Minister of Finance has ever been able to do that, not even in the glory days of the 1990s when things were plentiful and we had programmes such as EduTech, GEMS and Greenlands. Of course, in more recent memory, the

\$750 000 million on a prison.

Mr. Speaker, if money could not be found back then to do what the Opposition is calling for now, how realistically can this Minister of Finance in this economic climate bring such to this Honourable House at this time? The Opposition says the package offers nothing new. I say the package removed nothing that we already have and what we have is quite a lot, in the context of the environment in which we live and operate today.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance does not appear to me to be politicking, he is taking Barbadians into his confidence and levelling with them. He has set for the situation as it and has told us precisely what he can do and what he cannot attempt in the upcoming financial year. That is the type of honesty and straightforward approach that we need from the Minister of Finance in this economic environment. We do not need any sugarcoated language, we do not need any promises that cannot be fulfilled. Barbadians want a Minister of Finance who will tell them as it is and that is what this Minister of Finance has sought to do.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition sat on this side for 14 years and promised much but for the ordinary people of Barbados they delivered precious little. All this balancing of books and attainment of economic targets means nothing to the people of St. John and many constituencies in Barbados because their lots were not improved nor enhanced under their watch. Sir, everything is wrong today with what this Government is doing but children are travelling freely on school buses; children are gearing up for summer camps; persons are continuing to access free

drugs and high quality health care from the State's institutions; farmers are continuing to benefit from a range of concessions and fiscal incentives; education remains free and accessible from primary to tertiary; houses are springing up in every nook and cranny; small contractors are being given a piece of the action; the words cost overruns are no longer in the lexicon of Barbadians. We are getting value for money in every cent disbursed by this Minister of Finance, the tender process is alive and well once again,

we are getting what we paid for and we are paying for what we receive.

Mr. Speaker, my wish is that we stop the one upmanship in this Parliamentary debate. Barbados needs all hands on deck at this point, and the images of doom and gloom, as painted by some on the other side, are not going to help the situation. We are sending very mixed and confusing messages to the youth of this country, when in desperate situations such as these we cannot agree to work for the good of the country. We asked them to pursue courses in conflict resolution but every week in here we are lawmakers cannot agree on a single strategy for moving this country forward. The slightest most inconsequential amendment to legislation causes us to draw a line in the sand and in my view that is not our remit as Parliamentarians at this time. Mr. Speaker, general elections are due constitutionally in less than two years, until then we have a duty to work together to make Barbados the best it can be. That will not be achieved by our drawing a dividing line between us.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, they are the best that can be done under the circumstances at this time. It is that message that I will be carrying to the people of St. John, as I interface with them over the coming weeks and months. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. John for a very comprehensive presentation. It was a very visionary presentation. Sir, I must say that we expect good things in the future from the Honourable Member for St. John. I believe that people of St. John will be well-served by their representative.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Michael North-West for his presentation of the Estimates on Monday and for presenting a clear picture and a clear overview of this country and of the economy and of the way forward for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to submit, as has been said by Honourable Members so far, particularly from this side, that the stark reality is that as a Government we have been

able to maintain jobs in the public sector and the fact the Honourable Member for St. Michael North-West said and is projected that there will be further growth in the economy, I believe that we are on the right track. Mr. Speaker, there is evidence there is a return of investors' confidence to this economy. We could speak to the number of projects, both local and international, that will soon be started. In fact, I can recall the project at Foul Bay. I understand that the investors are ready very soon to start that project, that will generate further jobs and stimulate activity in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that in these trying economic times we have been able to provide that safety net for the weak, the vulnerable and disadvantaged in this country. Sir, as was outlined by speakers before, including the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, a path has been outlined for the provision of social services for that disadvantaged, vulnerable and dependent group in society.

Mr. Speaker, I have responsibility for housing and lands and the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown had mentioned the role of the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission in terms of assisting that particular group and also providing title for perspective tenants in the urban corridor.

10.22 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, I have done some research and I am of the firm belief that we have to make a very serious attempt in terms of providing title to prospective land owners, particularly in this country, and particularly those who fall under the Freehold Tenantry and Purchase Act. Sir, I am of the view that when we look at the amount of prospective tenants in relation to those who have the urgency to get their title to land...

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, as you know, as an attorney-at-law, particularly where that tenant cannot find his landlord or cannot find the true owner of the land that he applies to the Registrar through a Form 2 Notice to get his title, where that person cannot be found or the agent of the landlord cannot be found. Sir, my research reveals that there are more than between 500 tenants and 700 tenants who submitted their notices over the years to the Registrar and are still awaiting title to their lands. Sir, the question must be asked, what strategy we should put in place as a Ministry of Housing and Lands to empower those prospective tenants. Indeed, we have set out a strategy and, in relation to the investigative work, we have decided that work surrounding that particular prospective tenant or prospective tenants who are entitled to their land, that we should gather that evidence promptly, that we

should have the necessary surveying work done as soon as possible and, of course, that we should provide the payment of subsidies in the shortest time possible.

Mr. Speaker, of course, we have to liaise with other agencies, that is, we have to speak and discuss solutions with the Commissioner of Land Tax so that we can obtain validations in a timely manner and, of course, what we have in the Ministry of Housing, we have created a special project team to seek to eliminate the backlog of these files.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is sometimes disheartening that I can, up to date, be looking at a file - I am sorry that the Honourable Member for St. George North is not here because he had mentioned tenants in the Glebe area that are waiting their title but, Sir, when I peruse the file, that file was knocking around since the 1980s. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that if we are serious about empowering and enfranchising tenants that we must adopt strategies that we can have title moved in a speedier way between the agencies and, of course, the landlords, in some instances the State is the landlord, and that we have all these agencies together and working hand-in-hand so that we can really and truly move quickly to the path of empowering and enfranchising tenants.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have said that there are a lot of Barbadians living on Government owned tenancies and private owned tenancies who are unable to get their titles to the land. Sir, what we have recognised is that the prospective title owner, that owner does not know of his rights under the particular piece of legislation to access his rights and, secondly, in terms of a private tenancy because in Government-owned tenancies any kind of representation, be it legal or what, the State provides for that but in private owned tenancies then the prospective tenant has to seek legal services and, in some instances, the Government provides surveying services but the cost sometimes of getting the legal services would prohibit him from getting further advancing his rights, or asserting his rights under the particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, that is why on Sunday, we embarked on a public education exercise to speak to the residents in St. John and, Sir, it is not only limited to St. John because we intend to go throughout Barbados and to speak to persons who would have their rights under the Act.

Mr. Speaker, I did an analysis of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and I have particular difficulty with Section 5 of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, which is an amendment putting conditions for a particular person who lived on land for a number of years after February 1, 1990, but he has to fulfill certain conditions (1) he has to assert his rights and (2) he must show that there are substantial improvements to the property. Sir, substantial improvements under the Act means construction in stone,

brick or concrete of a dwelling house or part of a dwelling house and includes the construction of water borne toilet facilities. Sir, I am saying that I have come across some instances in which some of these tenants fall outside of these two categories (1) they fail to assert their rights (2) they cannot provide Affidavit evidence that they have provided substantial improvements and what this means is that the private landlord then asserts his rights and that person would have to move off the property and, Sir, I have come across substantial improvements in a number of the files. Sir, when I look at some of the files, some of the prospective tenants decide that they are finish with processing their rights, that they would properly have to seek legal services and, Sir, the matter then dies a sudden death.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that with our strategies in terms of going out there, educating Barbadians of their rights and speaking to them in the communities that we would have this backlog...

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Sir, it is interesting that we could have this backlog of 500 cases, 600 cases or 700 cases in files that we now have to process to enable Barbadians to own a piece of the rock. Sir, we know the importance of getting title to land because families can use that as security to obtain a loan either to educate their family or to improve their property and that is why it is so important in the Minister of Housing and Lands that we have set about strategies in order to facilitate the speediest transfer of titles to Barbadians.

Sequence 3

Mr. Speaker, even in terms of vesting, you will be surprised to know that London Bourne Towers is not vested in the National Housing Corporation as yet. London Bourne Towers is not vested in the National Housing Corporation. Sir, Deacons is not vested in the National Housing Corporation. Sir, even that as far back, what does that mean?

Sir, in relation to houses that were built in Six Roads between 2004 and 2006, this administration had to come Parliament and vest the land in the National Housing Corporation. What happened, those tenants were paying an occupancy rent to the National Housing Corporation and requested their conveyances time and time again and their cannot get them. We understand the delays, but I am saying we have a great opportunity to empower Barbadians but I have a concern in relation to the delays. That is a why I mentioned the fact that we have the Glebe, St. George. There is a file, around since the 1980s, I have the file here. There is correspondence between agencies, Ministers and

to this day in 2011 we are processing that file, tenants 'applications who were entitled to their lot under the law.

Sir, I can mention a lot more vesting, Deacons, and Ferniherst are not yet vested in the National Housing Corporation. Sir, when I became Minister, Ivy was not yet vested in the National Housing Corporation. Only recently Ivy was vested into the National Housing Corporation to allow the transfer of title to the tenants. I want to respectfully submit that once there is a programme that allows Barbadians the opportunity to get title to their land, we as a Parliament and also as a Government should find it easier to facilitate that process so that we get the titles into the hands of ordinary Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, we know that access to land and housing is important to every single Barbadian. We came to office and decided that we will allow those persons living in the units to have title once they qualify in terms of the 20 years living there and have paid up their rents. We decided that they will pay minimum legal fees. We have had some challenges relative to that programme. I am saying that again we will be going to those tenants in particular areas, I do not want to mention them, so that we can tell them that extensions without Town and Country Planning approval will inhibit the process of titling those units to tenants living in them. So far we have been able in Christ Church West, I think it is Bonnets, to complete that area in terms of the conveyances. We have been able to give some conveyances in Haynesville. Sir, we have now prepared the Cabinet Paper to vest the units at Deacons, Ferniherst and Rosemont in the National Housing Corporation. Once that vesting is completed, given the fact that in that area we do not have the extensions, as particularly in other areas, then we will be able to easily transfer title in that area.

Sir, we have decided to dedicate a special project team to deal with that programme, and we have decided to look at terms, because in some instances given the fact that you will have a large number of conveyances, to take some strain off the National Housing Corporation's legal team, and probably seek to outsource some of that work so that we can have the title moved in a speedier fashion.

Sir, in terms of our programme, we have been able to provide housing for ordinary Barbadians, prison officers, police officers, general workers, maids and clerical officers at most of the sites where we have completed houses. Sir, I want to state that we have recently received permission to building units in the Infilling Programme at Pine and Wildey. Of course, Cabinet has only recently instructed that we construct units at Haggatt Hall, St. Michael, in the urban corridor, to provide more housing for persons in the urban corridor.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to announce to this Honourable Chamber that our Loans Programme at the National Housing Corporation is still working. I want to say that during the period April 2010 to March 2011, seventy loans were approved and Barbadians can now utilise these loans. Sir, with the loan from the facility they can employ their particular contractor in whatever area, whether it is in their community or outside of their community to provide more jobs for Barbadians.

Sir, I have no difficulty with the Estimates as presented by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West. I have decided that the concern which I raised and as I said from the outset, if we have these numbers of Barbadians sitting and waiting for years and there is a facility present to fast track their title, we must utilise whatever resources we have to give them their just right so that they can make that important contribution to this country.

Sir, I am saying that in terms of this particular year, we will be starting construction very shortly at Lancaster 1 and Lancaster 2, and also Parish Land, St. Philip.

Mr. Speaker, the infrastructural work is more than 98 per cent completed, particularly in Lancaster 1, Lancaster 2 and Parish Land, St. Philip. I have said, even in relation to Parish Land, St. Philip, where we are building 122 houses, we built in that development a commercial area to provide opportunities for those living in the development or outside of the development, or those living in surrounding districts so that the small businessman, the small retailer and the hairdresser can have one of the shops, particularly in Parish Land, St. Philip. I believe it will fit in well with that development.

Sequence 4

Mr. Speaker, amidst all the talk from the Opposition we are sticking to our mandate of creating a just society, empowering and enfranchising the poor. Sir, we believe that we are on the right track to social and economic development.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. G.W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter for bringing a sense of seriousness to these Estimates. I must say that I have been in the House for more than 20 years and his presentation was easily one of the better presentations, if not the best presentation on the Estimates and any financial matter that I have heard while I was here. I think the substance of his contribution is such that it has

been captured extensively in the media and if you would make a comparison between the contribution which has been made by the Minister of Finance, one is left to wonder who really knows the business of the economy of this country.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance in his presentation obviously was in a quandary because he recognised that the Estimates certainly do not connect with the policies of the Democratic Labour Party. As someone who has been in his chair for a very short period of time, I would not want to indict him too much. He has created history by being the first Member of Parliament anywhere in the Commonwealth, who has never been a spokesperson on financial matters and who has not been qualified in this area to become Minister of Finance and when you listened to his presentation, it was fairly apparent. Of course, there was a lot of enthusiasm by him in the manner in which he presented those Estimates.

Mr. Speaker, if one would look at even the parts in his presentation which were lacking, a man who as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was instrumental coming after the former Minister of Foreign Affairs Dame Billy Miller, with respect to the European partnership agreement, the Estimates certainly has not been prepared to take advantage of the European partnership agreement. I cannot understand how a man who has been very closely connected to the European Partnership Agreement, who was a signatory to it could come in here and you could have Estimates and those Estimates are not prepared on that premise.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance was in a quandary and it was fairly obvious. The Democratic Labour Party made a number of promises and they could not deliver and he found difficulty so his strategy was the first quarter of his presentation to blame the Barbados Labour Party for everything. The second quarter of his presentation he sought to blame the economic position in Barbados on the international recession. The third quarter of his presentation, he actually blew the trumpet of the Democratic Labour Party and in the final quarter, obviously, he was ashamed to admit the failings of the Government.

Now, I do not think the Barbados Labour Party has anything to worry about in terms of the sound management of the affairs of this country in the 14 years that we held office. Unemployment the lowest levels ever and we left a surplus on the current account balance which has literally been blown by the Democratic Labour Party so there is nothing to be ashamed about.

I must compliment the Honourable Member for Christ Church West in his presentation for itemising in detail, the numbers of matters dealt with by the Democratic Labour Party which had nothing to do with the

international recession, which has caused us to be in the position at we are in, at this point in time but the tax gouging by the Democratic Labour Party and the introduction of certain measures and certain policies, which, obviously would make our physical position a lot worse, the introduction of the Constituency Councils. I am yet to understand what is the purpose of the Constituency Councils.

I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central in his presentation speak about the Summer Camps, which was more or less an apology for the Democratic Labour Party instituting these measures when he was speaking about the cancellation of the Easter Camps and the fact that many people do not attend those Camps. The Easter Camps are the ones that are most popular and it is fairly obvious that it is a climb down from the original position, if you are talking about summer camps.

Sir, on the question of blowing the trumpet of the Democratic Labour Party, I could not believe it when the Minister of Finance spoke to the question of containing job-loses, maintaining the exchange rate to the Barbados dollar as achievements. No wonder I was here and I was watching the Member for St. Philip West. I do not know if he was on his cell phone and he was actually responding to certain things that appeared on his cell phone but throughout that presentation the Member for St. Philip West was just shaking his head, repeatedly, nonstop. He could not believe what he was hearing.

The Minister of Finance instead of admitting his weaknesses of the Government in that final quarter of his presentation, and indicating that he was ashamed to admit their feelings, sought to lay blame on others for the Government's handling of CLICO, and could not actually admit the tardiness of the Democratic Labour Party administration in dealing with the matters pertaining the OECD. I hope that he would be able to tell us when he gives his winding up speech what is the position with respect to those Treaties that have been negotiated with other countries but have not been ratified by the Treaty partners. Also, give us some explanation why Barbados has been identified as a country to be uncooperative and lacking in transparency and one from which it would be difficult to get tax information.

ESTIMATES - House A87C, Sequence 05, 10.52 a.m.

This is a very serious matter because the Barbados Labour Party Administration had done a lot of work in the offshore sector under "Tom" Adams and Sir Harold St. John and it would be a pity of that work comes to nought as a result of the negligence of this Administration in that regard. I dare say that notwithstanding the fact that it might be a little climb down if Government has to adopt a

bipartisan approach in this matter, I think the former Minister of Commerce is certainly a person who can be called upon to liaise with Government and who would certainly be able to assist Government in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, it is with respect to CLICO that I find the Minister of Finance's approach somewhat damning in the sense that he sought to blame the Opposition and the media for highlighting what happened at CLICO. CLICO must be considered a serious issue. I have not spoken much on this particular issue in this House. I am one of those persons who has suffered as a result of what is going on at CLICO Holdings. My contribution might be somewhat small but I can say that altogether with my connections, it is about \$40 000. In addition to that, I represent clients who are being told that they will be paid sums as small as \$90 over a ten-year period and hope for the best later on. Mr. Speaker, that is ridiculous. I believe that whatever has transpired in the past - we have a new Minister of Finance and a new Prime Minister - that this is a matter which deserves serious attention.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to leave anything out with respect to what I have to say in terms of CLICO Holdings. In this respect, we should look at what the Trinidad Government did when this situation first broke. In Trinidad, you have CLICO's shareholders and policyholders amounting to the population of Barbados, over 250 000 policyholders. Since the problem first broke in Trinidad, there have been two examinations, one of which was carried out by a former Minister of Finance and the other by a firm of chartered accountants. There is currently a Commission of Inquiry headed by a British Queen's Counsel looking into the dealings of CLICO in Trinidad. At the end of May 2010, the bailout had cost the Government of Trinidad and Tobago \$2.4 billion with more to come. In November 2009, the insurance rating agency, the equivalent of Standards and Poor's, delisted CLICO Holdings for its failure to provide financial data. At the same time, British American Insurance was declared insolvent. The Finance Minister, who was the Finance Minister since this whole episode broke under the Government that was recently elected, has been meeting with the CLICO policyholders group in Trinidad to agree on a formula for providing relief to the near 250 000 persons who have invested in CLICO and British American. Mr. Speaker, despite all of that, we in Barbados have done practically nothing. Over half of a billion dollars is owed to policyholders and holders of the Executive Flexible Premiums Annuities (EFPA). An Oversight Committee, with little or no teeth, was set up in 2009 by the Cabinet but that mandate came to them in 2010. The Committee was highly critical of the behaviour of the Board of Directors of CLICO, the Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer of the company. The little success this Government can claim has to do with the sale of CLICO International General Insurance Company and CLICO

Mortgage and Finance Company. It is important that the public is aware of these facts.

Mr. Speaker, CLICO Holdings has not issued audited financial statements for 2008, 2009 and 2010. This is a breach of the Insurance Act 1996, Chapter 32. The deficit on CLICO's statutory fund went from \$30 million in 2005 to over \$100 million at the end of 2007. Employees and agents have been leaving CLICO since the Supervisor of Insurance has stopped it from selling new policies. Both the late Prime Minister and this Prime Minister has given assurances to investors that their funds are safe but yet nothing has happened. Investors cannot be comforted by words alone.

I would have thought that the Minister of Finance in his presentation would have dealt at length with this particular problem. In Guyana, The Bahamas and Belize, they have settled their CLICO problems and we have not. Why has the Barbados Government been so slow in appointing a Judicial Manager for CLICO International Limited? These are matters that certainly concern the investors of Barbados in CLICO Holdings.

The benefits of appointing a Judicial Manager involve the conduct and management of the insurance company economically and efficiently. If this fails, obviously the Judicial Manager would report to the court. These are actions which should have been done long ago. Such actions would have avoided funds being taken out by the company by certain officials according to the Report of the Oversight Committee.

There were breaches of the Insurance Act related to an order of the Supervisor of Insurance not to sell new policies, failure to present up-to-date audited financial statements and have them published in a newspaper, failure to deal with the deficiency in the company's statutory fund and failure of the company's management to be transparent in its actions and to be accountable to the policyholders and the holders of EFPAs. The time for action by the Government is now. I thought that it is important that the investors of Barbados fully aware of what is happening in detail in other parts of the Caribbean, be aware of the fact that the Government is doing absolutely nothing and this matter with CLICO is being allowed to drag on.

Mr. Speaker, this is consistent as I said with the Government being on what we refer to as on auto pilot. What is happening with the Government reminds me of a person who is on a hike and he is the team leader, the only person who knows exactly where the hike would end. The team leader disappears and a new team leader takes over but that team leader does not know the terrain at all so you have that hike being divided into two groups, one led by a person having the appearance of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South with connections to the Honourable

Member for St. Michael North West and the other being led by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

House A87C Sequence 6

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, who was shaking his head throughout the presentation of the Estimates, obviously has some new direction of where this hike should lead but he is overruled by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North-West, because there is a hike to a place named Hell. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North-West indicated that the road to hell is lined with good intention and so all the Honourable Members of this group follow, furthermore, the hike ends nowhere, so they are back to the same position in which they were when they started.

Sir, this is like the Democratic Labour Party in these Estimates because when you look at their capital works programme... Sir, the capital works programme in 2001 is the same place where it was. As a matter of fact, it has not even as advanced as it was in 1981, under the Tom Adams' Government. Sir, this is systematic of a political party who made a series of promises and has lost its way. Therefore, having lost its way, the first 18 months have been occupied with an onslaught on the lower income group, with even bicycles being taxed. Their next 18 months were concerned with attacking the middle class. Sir, the measures in the last budgetary proposals are testimony to this because they went throughout the length and breadth of Barbados at the time of the elections talking about cost of living, cost of living, cost of living being the major problem. Sir, obviously the middle-class was the major group was targeted, they made the middle-class believed that a number of things would have been done.

Sir, if you look at the housing programme, you look at the promises made by the Democratic Labour Party:

- (a) duty-free cars;
- (b) duty-free concessions;
- (c) establishing a homeownership revolving fund for public sector workers;
- (d) providing interest-free loans;
- (e) appointing public servants with five year's service who are first-time homeowners;
- (f) establishing a fund which will be capitalised with an initial injection of \$40 million.

Sir, nothing has happened. In addition to the fact that the promises have not been kept to that group in the second 18 month, look at what has happened with respect to the

allowances, entertainment and travel. You have a situation where this group is now more disadvantaged than they were during the time of the structural adjustment, in terms of the percentage reduction in their earnings. I have people in my constituency whose salaries have been reduced by as much as \$1 300, yet in their attempt to woo the middle-class, the Democratic Labour Party, at the time, spoke to the increase tax deduction of mortgage by a further \$10 000. Sir, the Democratic Labour Party has put increased taxation by a further \$15 000 and make the middle-class believe they would have a reduction of

\$10 000 in their allowances. Instead, not only have you taxed them, you have not correspondingly given them the \$10 000 that you claimed you would have given them.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five minutes in which to conclude.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, that is the way the Democratic Labour Party has treated the middle-class of this country. Sir, in the final 18 months they now have to deal with the upper-classes. I think that the Democratic Labour Party quite rightly recognises that the attack on the upper-class will now amount to an implosion. Sir, this implosion, however, has occurred and this is the reason we have these Estimates. Sir, these Estimates bear no reality to what the Democratic Labour Party said their policies would be. It bears no relationship to the Manifesto.

Mr. Speaker, if you would look at the housing again, when they speak to 2 500 house spots for sale to middle- and low-income earners in the first term of the Democratic Labour Party Government, even if they had not been able deliver the 2 500 house spots, at least they should be able to tell us they have assisted small contractors in the construction of a certain number of those homes. Sir, this, they cannot even boast. Further, all of the promises they made have not been kept. Sir, nowhere in these Estimates have they addressed the promises they made, both on the political platform and in their Manifesto. Mr. Speaker, they cannot keep tune with their Manifesto.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing is that the Cabinet of the Democratic Labour Party have made what I would refer to, from time to time, as instant policy and that instant policy is not even reflected in what we see here in these Estimates. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, is the one who is most guilty. Sir, only yesterday the Honourable Member spoke in this Honourable House and true to form he was very consistent in giving his instant policy, which are not reflected in the Estimates.

Sir, the Honourable Member said that St. Michael School will have a sixth form from the next academic year,

a statement he made on the Floor of this Honourable House.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has not yet spoken in this debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is correct, the point is upheld.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, who is famous for making instant policy, said on 12th December that St. Michael School will have a sixth form from academic year September 2009. Earlier, the Honourable Member indicated that Christ Church Foundation School would have a sixth form from next academic year. Sir, nothing has happened.

Mr. Speaker, again on 31st January, the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development has said that 2010 will see the first set of students receiving the Barbados Certificate of Secondary Education and that the certificate would be similar to a American High School Diploma and would add a new dimension to the local education system. Mr. Speaker, that has not come to fruition. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development then mentioned that plans are afoot for the establishment of a new rehabilitative facility for disruptive student, an institution which will house between 100 to 150 students, in an environment specifically designed to bring about a transformation in children who thrived on being disruptive. Sir, there was nothing of the sort.

Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the first assault on business persons, the Honourable Member even sought on 15th December to have the registration of teachers... I believe it would be a preliminary for the Minister of Finance to impose the \$750 fee.

11.12 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wind up.

Mr. G.W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, no where in these Estimates have I seen any thing which would advance the causes of the people of St. Andrew. If you look at the Scotland District and the Scotland District Authority, one would have thought that provision would have been made in these Estimates to deal with the problems of land slippage in the Scotland District area and there is nothing. Sir, even though the legal framework for that Authority has been put in place before we came to office, there is absolutely nothing for the Scotland District in these Estimates.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates certainly do not reflect what are the clear policies of the Democratic Labour Party Government and there are certainly not the type of Estimates that we, on this side, can support.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

Dr. the Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this Estimates debate and, at the outset, would want to lend my full support to these Estimates and to congratulate the Minister of Finance on his presentation and also thank him for the allocations with respect to my Ministry that I intend to put to good use.

Mr. Speaker, given time constraints, I am not going to attempt to get into new policy initiatives and new regulatory and administrative provisions with regards to the industry division or that of the small business division. I will spend the time that I have concentrating on the agricultural sector in this country, trying to define that sector and to analyse that sector in terms of the constraints to that sector and what my Ministry will do with those funds allocated in regards to dismantling some of the constraints to the agricultural sector.

Mr. Speaker, the evaluation is going to be done by looking at the domestic constraints, as well as the regional and international constraints, that hindered the development of the agricultural sector in Barbados and I will spend my time looking at what we intend to do with respect to the BADMC and the line Ministry in resolving some of those challenges but, Mr. Speaker, we need some context and it is necessary, therefore, to look at some of the history regarding the agricultural sector so, Mr. Speaker, we ask ourselves what it is that we know. We know that the agricultural sector was the backbone of economic development in Barbados around the middle of the 17th Century to the late 19th Century and, Sir, we know that even as far back as 1946 that the agricultural sector and the subsector of sugar production alone contributed 38 per cent of the GDP of the country as well as 55 per cent of the foreign earnings to Barbados. Sir, we also know that the agricultural sector rhythm was set to the cultivation of sugar during that period with alterations of non-agricultural sugar production.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that the sector was diversified during that period by the introduction of a fishery division as well as that of the development of a livestock industry in the country. What else do we also know, Sir. We also know that sugar production back in that period was defined largely by exports under a system of preferences and quotas with respect to the United States of America and the United Kingdom and also later on with the European Union after the ending of the Cotonou Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that while the development of the non-sugar sector was mainly for domestic consumption, we also know that there was a period of time when there was an institutional mechanism in Barbados in the name of the BMC that piloted the exportation of yams, eddoes, potatoes, pumpkins and the like.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that between 1950 and 1970 that we had an emerging manufacturing sector and tourism sector and, as a result of that, by 1990 that the economy of this country was, therefore, a fully diversified economy. What is the evidence of that, Sir, to support my position. Sir, looking at the 2000 data, when one disaggregates the growth domestic production in Barbados and looks at the contributors, in 1999, services contributed 78 per cent of the gross domestic production in the country, industry contributed 16 per cent of the GDP and the once mighty agricultural sector only contributed 6 per cent of GDP during that period of time. Mr. Speaker, these numbers have not changed significantly over the last 10 years and that is the reason why today the Barbados economy and its subsector evaluation gives the sort of diversification pattern that we now have.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to zoom in a little bit more specifically on the agricultural subsector and look at its specific contribution during the period of time 1992 to 2009 so as to underscore the points that there are debilitating constraints to the sector. Sir, in 1992, the agricultural sector's contribution to GDP was 5 per cent; in 1994, it fell to 2 per cent; by year 2000, it was about 6 per cent and around 2008/2009 it is still averaging about 7 per cent or thereabout. Sir, having this information, it now becomes even more important for me to further look at the agricultural sector and disaggregate it into its subsectors. (8:00) Therefore, I am going to analyse them from 1995 to 2009 in relation to the quantity of produce and also to the dollar value.

Mr. Speaker, I now refer to the Economic and Social Report of 2009 and I refer to Appendix 1. Sir, we are looking at Estimates of Real Gross Domestic Product at Factor Cost, that is the negative of the inflator.

Mr. Speaker, for sugar production, 1986, the contribution was that of \$47 million but by 2008 that had fallen to \$13.6 million. Sir, with respect to non-sugar agriculture, the contribution was \$31.7 million in 1986 and with respect to 2008 it was essentially almost the same, it was \$35.7 million difference, that is statistically under the average and not a major difference.

Mr. Speaker, let me further go into Appendix II of the same document (9:16) and let us analyse now a little bit more in relation to food crop production and livestock production and, Sir, we can see that food crop production

back in 1990 contributed approximately \$35 million and we have made some improvement, that is, by 2008, we were up to approximately \$57 million. Sri, with respect to food crops themselves, we moved from \$34 million in 1990 to that of \$61 million in 2008.

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I will also continue to further evaluate the sector because it is important to understand what has happened in relation to the surge in domestic agriculture production crops. Sir, I am just going to pick a few.

In 1995 we were producing 817 000 kilograms of casava. That fell to 400 000 by 2008, but because of the economic crisis and Barbadians understanding the need to produce locally, that number jumped from 466 000 to 700 000 kilograms. So I am certain that we can bring the import bill down. I can also look at sweet potatoes, yams, onions and peanuts. The results are all the same. For example, sweet potato, production 1995, 5 166 000 kilograms were produced. Sir, do you know that by 2008 when the crisis was in its, 2007 is probably the best place to start, the production had fallen to 884 000, but as soon as we got into the crisis, by 2009, production went back up to 1 200 000 kilograms.

Sir, I am just trying to demonstrate the country's capacity to produce when it needs to produce, and what is critical now in the sector is for me to analyse the constraints necessary to be removed so that this sector can continue to grow.

Mr. Speaker, what are these constraints? The first and most significant constraint is the lack of a recent agricultural census data to inform a proper land use policy, and I will speak to that later; (2) the lack of a creative land use policy which must be used to inform amendments to the Physical Development Plan of 2003 and the Town and Country Planning Development Order, 1972, Chapter 240. What is urgent is the need to amend the Physical Development Plan to allow land use for development which takes into consideration land use when the appropriate technology is applied to make that land use economical and environmentally friendly, also amendments in relation to using criteria such as social and economic factors when they dictate. Sir, also amendments that also take into consideration the topographical characteristics of the area in relation to the decision to use that land.

Sir, most specifically, the sector has been impacted greatly by trade liberalisation, and the impact of trade liberalisation on the sector that still remains a major constraint is that of competition as a result of liberalisation and competition for market shares within the domestic market as well as the regional and international market. This is also coupled with the other elements of trade

liberalisation, that is preferential market access erosions as a result of trade liberalisation. Sir, the Rum Industry understands that well. The Sugar Industry understands that well. These are all part of the constraints that are critical.

Sir, what is also important, and is a constraint, the difficulty to access adaptation developmental aid, so as to effect production diversification as part of the public finances of Barbados and also from our developmental partners.

Mr. Speaker, what has also plagued the sector was the slow pace of diversifying its product production, in the face of declining markets due to the loss of preferential markets, and the development of a new global trade regime.

Mr. Speaker, another major constraint is that of the introduction of total factor productivity measures to all sectors of the agricultural production. That simply means the application of technology and knowledge to increase production through innovation and science. That is all it really means. Our sectors have been very slow to go in that direction in relation to the sector. Sir, what is important as another major constraint is not having a culture in this country of agro processing, and what is also missing as a constraint is a urgent need for an agro processing plant in this country. Sir, another constraint is the incentive regime system that we have, even though there are numerous incentives, and the farmers thank that Government and several Governments for this, many of those incentives are back-loaded and as a result of that, many small farmers do not have the money upfront to engage in the type of the introduction of machinery and technology so as to enhance their production, and we have to redress that by some new policy initiatives.

Sir, what is also important as another constraint is that of the lack of access to credit and effective management of the access to credit is a major constraint. I also say that my research shows that there is also a lack of market intelligence in the domestic market in order to develop the appropriate marketing strategy embracing small and large agriculturalists.

Sir, there is also the lack of a market intelligence regime in the regional market in order to develop the appropriate marketing strategy to penetrate CARICOM and also to penetrate the extra regional market. There is also some challenges in relation to the agriculture infrastructure at our port facilities, which themselves are hindering elements in relation to trade with respect to agricultural produce. Sir, this is a major one, that is the lack of affordable and reliable regional transport for agricultural produce. This is a critical constraint that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I will also speak to a system of sanitary and phytosanitary arrangements that are set under the framework of the WTO as well as the International Plant Protection Convention, as well as the International Organisation for Animal Health, and the Codex Alimentarius System that will help to harmonise within the region a SPS system. I would want to speak that later if I have the time, as Barbados is moving forward on that front, so as to help our exporters penetrate international markets with regard to the exportation of protein products from the country.

Mr. Speaker, my job as a policy maker is to create the framework to resolving the constraints I just spoke to and to identify the new legislative regulatory and administrative practices, to allow for dismantling those constraints. Sir, I may not be alive to see all of them rolled out, but what is important is to leave the framework in place, and it is my job to attempt to do that today.

Sir, how is this administration going to attempt to deal with the constraints. Let me go through them one by one. The matter of agricultural data - I have been in consultation with the Minister of Finance and also with the Members of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister, and we understand the urgent need for an agricultural census in the country. The critical need comes about because we are operating on agricultural data that goes back as far as 1989/1990.

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So we are using 20-year-old agricultural data so as to plan our land use policy, our physical developments as well as our provisions. Sir, that has to be corrected and as a result, we are committed to having an Agriculture Census Commission at the earliest possible time. The importance, Sir, of that agriculture census can be understood from these data.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados is 166 square miles and that is equivalent to 106 000 acres that is all we are. Sir, those 106 000 acres are defined in terms as arable and non arable so that 53 000 acres are defined as arable land. Therefore, around 53 000 is not arable land. Sir, the 53 000 acres that are arable, is used to plant sugar cane and non sugar agricultural products. The other 53 000 acres are what is used for golf courses, housing, roads, industry and the likes.

Sir, can you imagine that if you have a situation where you have 53 000 acres allocated to non arable or arable production, and out of that, Sir, 23 000 acres of that, is allocated to sugar production, then you are in fact talking about another 29 000 or thereabouts being allocated to non crop production but this information is based on 20 years ago. Therefore, the Town and Country Planning

Department has also estimated that in the 2003 Amendment that there was approximately 1 000 acres of arable land being taken out of agriculture into other activity. If that is a conservative estimate, then it means that we are talking about 20 000 less, in terms of arable land in 2010 but we do not know. We are shooting in the dark. Therefore, it is highly critical that we go out here and have this agriculture census developed in the interest of this country.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, also important, are the responses to the lack of preferential markets and the lack of the preferential market regime. The response, Sir, that a small developing country like Barbados can introduce, is that of adaptation. I would want to say, Sir, that this administration is forging ahead, Sir, in regards to doing three things in relation to the impact of trade liberalisation. We are forging it on, Sir, in terms of diversification with respect to those products that are mostly affected and I hope I have the opportunity to speak to the sugar industry as one where we are diversifying.

What we are also doing, Sir, is looking to increase capacity and efficiencies and competitiveness in regards to our sectors, as they attempt to compete in the international and the regional market and that is something that this administration is committed to, Mr. Speaker, but the whole system of market intelligence, my Ministry, in consultation with the BADMC, Sir, are engaging presently the FAO and the IDB, in regards to the establishment of a comprehensive ICT database that will blanket all agriculture production in Barbados.

Sir, for the first time if we get it right, we should be able to know on any month in this country how many yams are being produced, how many eddoes, how many turkeys are being grown, how many chickens, how many carrots, we should have all of the data coming into a central operating structure so that we can understand what the production quantities are on a monthly basis. Mr. Speaker, the BADMC is committed to working with the consumption side which would be our hotels, restaurants, supermarkets so as to determine what is their monthly demand for those types of products and we are going to put them together in that ICT database so that we can stabilise, Mr. Speaker, the production and the price of agriculture products in this country.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, that is how we can establish the linkages with respect to the manufacturing sector and the agricultural sector in Barbados and we are committed to that and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Tourism Development Act, that is going to be coming on stream very shortly, Sir, is going to

be critical in relation to forging those linkages institutionally because it has in it, a provision that prorates the quantities of domestic inputs used in their operations with the concessions that the sector gets. We will also make that type of adjustment, Sir, in relation

to manufacturing and the likes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five minutes more.

Dr. Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Thank you very much, Sir.

I think also, Sir, from its market intelligence side we have to look at the whole notion of the export thrust. The export thrust, Sir, in Barbados especially with respect to animal products has been compromised for years because the system of sanitary and phyto-sanitary arrangements were fragmented. They were fragmented in the terms of Legislation, regulation and administration and the fragmentation was between the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture.

In consultation with the IADB we are far advanced, Mr. Speaker, in the development of a National Agriculture Health and Food Safety System and we are far advanced in the development of a new agency which is known as the National Agriculture Health and Food Safety Agency which would have a new set of agricultural lab infrastructure that will bring our sanitary and phyto-sanitary system up to that of international standards, which are set under the rubric of the WTO and that of the other international standard setting agencies and that, Mr. Speaker, is a solution that is coming shortly.

Let me also speak quickly, Sir, to the adaptation with respect to the sugar industry and I think it is important. Mr. Speaker, sugar was seriously affected by trade liberalisation. The liberalisation issues involve competition from other sweeteners, loss of the US preferential quota and the preferential quota in the EU being eroded, as well as the price per tonne of sugar as a result. Sir, domestically, the rising cost of production per tonne of sugar is now costing us approximately \$2 800 to produce one tonne of sugar whereas we are receiving from the European Union, a price of about \$1 340 per tonne. That means, Sir, we are losing on every single tonne of sugar being produced, \$1 460 per tonne. Sir, the industry in its present form, given the loss or the erosion of preferential arrangements is therefore not sustainable. What are we going to do about this?

Mr. Speaker, this is the plan. This administration, Sir, has moved to form the Barbados Cane Industry Corporation. Under the management of the Barbados Agriculture and Management Company, the objective is to

diversify the numbers of products that one can get from the sugar cane plant. We are not going to be concentrating largely on bulk sugar alone. The adjustment to the industry would be that of converting the industry, Sir, to produce specialty sugars. Bulk sugar for domestic consumption, specialty sugars, specialty syrups, the creation of the capacity to produce electricity from the bagasse, to produce from the sugar plant, Sir, molasses for the domestic sector. What we would also be doing, Sir, is looking at other products like waxes, lignins and so on that can come from the sugar plant itself. Mr. Speaker, we are far advance in that arrangement towards the development of a multipurpose sugar factory.

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Mr. Speaker, we are far advanced in that arrangement towards the development of a multipurpose sugar factory. Sir, I would also want to say that this factory would have the capacity to produce electricity to the grid. That is the adaptation response that we are introducing in regards to the erosion of preferential markets.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the test was already done. The empirical evidence of its success was vested already in 1981 when the sugar factory of Foursquare was producing electricity for the grid in Barbados, so that bulk-share arrangement was already tested. It has also been done at the level of Portvale, so I am not going to get involved with the back and forth. The fact of the matter is that the empirical evidence of its success has already been shown to be so.

Mr. Speaker, knowing that my time is running out, I am hoping that I might get the opportunity to be able to delve into the other areas that I would want to speak to in terms of the constraints and the removal of the constraints in the other section of the Estimates presentation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged. Yes, Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this Appropriation Bill, 2011. Let me say that I once again consider it a pleasure to participate in this event, a very significant one because the Constitution of Barbados actually only requires the Government of Barbados where Parliament is concerned to do one thing, that is, to bring something called an Appropriation Bill. You have to do it as a Government. It is the only real requirement. There are other things that you can do. Of course, it speaks to other issues but without this exercise there is no Government really, that is why it is so important that we take this debate seriously.

Mr. Speaker, it is even, some would say, more important than the much more publicized Budget debate where of course because of national television everyone gets the chance to posture and all of the various political machinations but this exercise is of fundamental significance as far as our Government operations are concerned. It is also occurring at a time where we are seeing quite a bit happening in the global economy. We all know that economic norms have gone through the window now and we are dealing in very peculiar times, so the Democratic Labour Party Government now has a number of challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I want to salute the Member who just took his seat, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, for the manner in which he is grabbing this issue of agriculture and dealing with it. The truth is that when you tore away the veneer of the so-called economic growth during the 14 years of the Barbados Labour Party Administration, deep structural flaws have been exposed. Can you imagine an agricultural policy taking place with 1989 information and that Government was in power for 14 years? It was six years old when they got into Government and it would have been 20 years old when they got out of Government and still no current information. Sir, you start to understand, I am seeing it in tourism and more on that later, the deep structural flaws that are there that we have to deal with at a time like this. Mr. Speaker, I think that says it all.

Mr. Speaker, one of the themes that the Minister of Finance chose to lay in introducing these Estimates was one of efficiency. That really sparked something in me because the truth is, I think that if there is anything else that we should really strive to achieve at this time, it is to be as efficient as possible where Government expenditure is concerned. I think it is a significant achievement that the Minister, or rather I should say the Government, has been able to achieve, a reduction in the moneys allocated to public institutions from over \$675 million to \$619, which is about \$57 million.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: We are more disciplined in that regard. The fact that we have been able to do that and still all of the strands of those very important social activities that we need to execute as a people-centred Government are still occurring, I think, shows a great deal of discipline and responsibility as a Government. We understand what is occurring internationally and what therefore we have a responsibility for.

Mr. Speaker, one of the areas that used to concern us when we were in Opposition was this issue of debt. I do not propose, now that I am sitting on this side of the House, to hold a different view of debt. I believe that there is too

much debt. Barbados needs to reduce its debt because obviously it is a burden for the future generations and it is not fair that we should burden them with so much debt. Naturally, when we engage in debt, we say this all the time, it should be boosting capacity and not necessarily debt for consumption purposes. I therefore think that it is good to still see that these Estimates are aimed at debt reduction. In fact, there is a primary surplus on the net operating account. Mr. Speaker, I understand that it is a very small one just about 1 per cent of GDP but it signals that we are going in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, even when you factor in the debt-related expenses, the interest payments, et cetera, you are only at 6.8 per cent of GDP. Again, it is showing a good sign, albeit that some of us feel that it is a bit high, because we were over 7 per cent in the last financial year.

Sir, as we said in our medium-term fiscal strategy, we are going to pull it down over a period of time. We set a five-year period to pull that down and we are going in the right direction. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West mentioned supplementaries. This Government has been more disciplined than any where supplementaries are concerned. You bring a supplementary in here and you demonstrate where the savings is coming from. That is the sort of responsible manner that we are carrying out our Government at.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Peter presented a listing of the years and the deficits that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West ran, 2 per cent and 3 per cent, he exaggerated but he did not mention all of the off budget stuff that we had to bring to book. I wonder if we had to do the Prison under normal circumstances if we would be able to run those 2 and 3 per cent deficits. I know that he is going to jump up and say that is a capital matter and it would not be on the current account but do not tell me that you do not have some current account expenses in there. What about the Coast Guard Headquarters that we had to spend \$30 million repairing when we came into office? What about Tamarind Hall in the constituency of St. Joseph that is now of course called the Eric Holder Complex? We had to bring all of that to book, so I am not going to get carried away with those little games that the Honourable Member for St. Peter is playing. There are current account expenses in all of them that would be shielded, so it a little disingenuous to do that. In fact, it is disingenuous to do that as a former Prime Minister but it is not at all acceptable that you should do that as a practising Economist.

Mr. Speaker, at any rate, I want to once again salute this Government for being able to execute such discipline and yet still pull all of the strands together to have people-centred Government. For example, in health care, I am very happy to see that we are going to get the St. John Polyclinic

started and that is very important. As the Honourable Member for St. John so articulately made the point, they want to attack the concept of a St. James Polyclinic. Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear here. If it is that the Government of Barbados decides to invest more in primary health care and that means looking at our network of polyclinics, there is nothing wrong with that because that in itself could have a savings down the road. As it is, 40 per cent of the Ministry of Health's budget is going to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and 12 per cent is going to the Barbados Drug Service. That is over half of their money going to curative health.

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Mr. Speaker, if we do not start to invest more in primary health care, that can gallop out of control and so investing in our stadium and spending money to resurface the National Stadium so that it can be a boost to the National Sports Council and to the 63 disciplines in sport is a good thing. Sir, we are still getting that side of things done. I am looking forward to the education debate we will have here because in spite of the challenges, even though we are being disciplined, we are still not compromising what we have to do with the primary and secondary school plant, with new schools coming on stream and still giving the University of the West Indies all of the money it needs. Therefore, tertiary education is still being properly endowed in this environment. Mr. Speaker, we have clearly pulled all of the varying strands together and that to my mind needs to be saluted.

Mr. Speaker, the recent growth that we have seen in the economy has been attributed to improved performances in tourism. Sir, I find it very interesting hearing some of the commentaries last night. The Honourable Member for St. George North who decided to move away from marl fill and barber green and decided to take a foray into finance and tourism, made bedrooms and houses at Lower Burney, et cetera... Mr. Speaker, it is funny, the Honourable Member did make a profound point about tourism. I whispered to him that he probably would do a more effective job shadowing tourism more so than the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, because he raised the issue of financing tourists to come to Barbados. Sir, what the Honourable Member did not realise was that he is exposing his own political organisation, because it is this Government that in essence shut down the Best of Barbados programme, where as high as \$23 million in one year of the Barbados Tourism Authority budget was going to subsidising tourists coming to Barbados. Sir, we took a different approach and spent that money in a more general worldwide marketing approach. We looked at a network of airlifts possibilities and putting revenue guarantees in place if necessary. Mr. Speaker, it was actually a very good point.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party is in a spot of bother where this issue of tourism is concerned. A former candidate told me that we have been worked them into a silence on tourism and so from time to time the Honourable Member for St. Michael North has to remind us that he is still the Shadow Minister of Tourism. Sir, even his own Leader does not seem to have much confidence in him because he set up a committee... I cannot really call it a 'think tank' because I do not think much thought took place but the opponent for the Honourable Member for St. Michael West-Central, as well as the alleged opponent for the Honourable Member for St. Michael North and others apparently have come together to develop what is the Barbados Labour Party's strategy on tourism.

Mr. Speaker, they sent out an email. I opened that email on this contraption called an Ipad. It is manufactured by Apple Computers. The policy of the Barbados Labour Party on tourism took a half page of an Ipad, half of the half page was tom foolery and the other half was pale-faced lies. Therefore, I would not get too carried away with that.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North is under pressure within his own political organization, the Honourable Member constantly makes this point about the Caribbean Tourism Organisation and the growth rate that Barbados has relative to other destinations. Sir, Barbados is a 50-year-old destination. There are members of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation who have recently started tourism. Therefore, if you have 100 per cent arrival and a group of 30 people turned up, that is a 30 per cent increase in arrivals. You cannot compare all destinations and their growth rates. It will vary. Sir, capacity comes into question well.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to say to this Honourable House and to the country, if the Barbados Labour Party would like to talk about a rating, let us hear what the World Economic Forum had to say in its Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2011. Sir, the World Economic Forum is a serious 'think tank' based in Switzerland. Every year they have an event in the mountains in January in a place called Davos. If you see world leaders bundling up, putting on ear muffs, fur hats and wading through snow, just to become part of what the World Economic Forum has to say. This is a serious think tank.

Mr. Speaker, listen to what they had to say about Barbados. Barbados is ranked No.3 in the Americas in the issue of travel and competitiveness. It is 28th overall. Mr. Speaker, what is significant is that in 2009 we were ranked at No.30 and so we have improved during the course of this Government. It means that this Government is on the right track. How is this index composed? Mr. Speaker, the truth is that there are several sub-indexes.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: I will photocopy it and make it many times a document of this Honourable House. Let that be the least of your worries, I have told you and Honourable Member for St. Michael North you do not have to call around the Caribbean Tourism Organisation and go peeping under officers at the Barbados Tourism Authority to get information, you can get it from me. We all know from whom you got the information. You can have this.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that there are three components to the index. The first one is the regulatory framework, that means to say that the policies we are putting in place, the international community, independent people have looked at them and said that we are on track. The second sub-index is the business environment and the infrastructure. That, in itself, means that we are on track. Sir, the last sub-index is human cultural and natural resources. Sir, they are looking at what we are doing in an attempt to get the UNESCO rating for Bridgetown. They are looking at what we are doing with respect to getting a master plan in place. They actually said in the narrative:

"The country's affinity for travel and tourism with a positive attitude toward tourists and toward the value of tourism, the country is prioritising the sector to a high degree. The country is spending a high percentage of its Gross Domestic Product on the sector, while ensuring effective destination marketing campaigns."

Mr. Speaker, they are speaking about this Government and about what this Government has done. Let us understand, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to continue our efforts to impress serious independent observers and then we will take it from there. Sir, why is the international community and specifically this very important think tank waking up and looking at Barbados? It is because we are making the correct decisions. What I do not understand is why it is that every one in the Caribbean is looking at Barbados, every one is looking to see what we are doing, yet Honourable Member for St. Michael North is telling me to look at what the others are doing.

Mr. Speaker, Jamaica is now trying to get into Brazil. When I go to Caribbean Tourism Organisation meetings all of my colleagues are bombarding me, asking me how did I manage to get the Brazil marketing done, that they want to be a part of it. Sir, here it is I am being told to look at the Jamaican model but I do not know what vision the Honourable Member for St. Michael North has for his constituents in Eden Lodge and Grazettes but the Honourable Member needs to find out what the salaries are like for those hotels in Jamaica, because all this talk about the arrivals and so on, Jamaica had to sell its harbour to the Chinese Government, the world's seventh largest, natural harbour, the Kingston Harbour. Sir, Jamaica is in the grips of an IMF Programme, they recently had to restructure their domestic debt and holders of local Government paper

had to get a reduced interest rate and, Sir, the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Audley Shaw, had to go public with that recently.

12.02 p.m.

Sir, they have serious problems and yet we are told that is the model to follow. Sir, they are looking at us and we are supposed to look at them.

Mr. Speaker, St. Lucia is now starting a programme similar to the BFF programme where they nationals abroad and the diaspora will get involved. They are looking at us and we are supposed to look at them. Sir, I was in my office the other day and a Permanent Secretary from a Ministry of Tourism in the region was in there to collect the discussion paper document that outlines our approach to providing a White Paper and a Master Plan. When I recognised him, he said that his Minister just wanted to see a copy of the document. Sir, they are looking at us because we are supposed to lead.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados has always led and we have to continue to do that and, Sir, I will not take advice that suggests that we should do anything other than that. In fact, I am not taking any lecture from the Barbados Labour Party at all, especially on this issue of subsidising flight. We are aware, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot get to Barbados in a high speed train, a low speed train or in a car. You have to fly to get here. We have no national carrier, we do not own any aircraft, so we have to do deals with the airlines. What is the real position of Barbados and the use of taxpayers' funds in order to bring airlift to Barbados?

Sir, the Jet Blue flight that seems to cause so much consternation to members on the other side, when we did our analysis, we renegotiated downwards the revenue guarantee arrangement in December but our analysis showed that on the basis of the visitors that Jet Blue had brought and what we had spent, the return on investment (ROI) has been 23 to 1, so that Jet Blue flight has made complete sense. Mr. Speaker, we did a similar analysis on West Jet and that ROI was at 16 to 1, in other words, 16 times the spend that we invested we saw on it. Sir, as a rule of thumb, generally, we use 7 to 1 but in the case of these two flights, you can see how well they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, there is a revenue guarantee arrangement in place for the Dallas flight as far as American Airlines is concerned. We have not formed an analysis yet because these are still early days because that flight started in December but what I can say is that with the loads in the 70s we would probably not have to pay anything at all and if we do it would be a very negligible amount. The loads have been very, very strong on Dallas so we are not at all worried about that.

Mr. Speaker, I inherited a revenue guarantee arrangement where Condor is concerned, this is the flight that comes out of Frankfurt. I am hearing that they do not agree with revenue guarantee arrangements. Sir, I am not sure which Barbados Labour Party is speaking because I noticed that when the Honourable Member for St. Peter was speaking, he never touched this issue. The only thing he had to say about tourism was to introduce the world to a new concept, something called an intransit tourist. Sir, I do not know what that is because either you are intransit or you are tourist. Sir, that is absolute foolishness. You can have an intransit passenger, you are intransit going some place else but you cannot be an intransit tourist. Sir, if he is speaking about people that come here as part of the home-porting exercise, well, you would be a tourist but you cannot be an intransit tourist. Sir, I do not know what that was about. You know those visits to Jemmotts Lane and the honey and the lime with a little brandy, I do not know what is going on there but that was that side of the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, the other Barbados Labour Party now is saying that the minimum revenue guarantee arrangements are bad but Condor, out of Frankfurt, we inherited that and what we have been able to do is re-gig it and we have doubled our capacity from Germany...

Asides.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: I do not have an ROI on Condor but what I can say to you is that we have not had to pay any money to Condor because of the situation of the good loads that we have been having and we are doubling the capacity.

Mr. Speaker, fortunately for us as well, there are other providers of airlift out of Europe that we are negotiating with. We have concluded with TUI Airlines, so there will be a flight from Sweden from winter 2011 and I think that is good news. Sir, Scandinavia records very high per capita, it has a small population base but they do travel a lot and there is a history there. They used to have charters coming here before so having that flight running from November 2011 to April 2012 is a very positive development and, again, it vindicates our decision at trying to get more continental European business.

Mr. Speaker, we also negotiated with a provider out of Paris as well. Unfortunately, neither of those two arrangements will require minimum revenue guarantees and we are doing the co-op marketing which is the preferred route. We do prefer to go that route but sometimes we have to invest.

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

Hon. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, let me talk about the Gol flight, the Brazil flight that seems to be causing so many problems for the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, I am

convinced that they just want to see this flight fail because it would make the Democratic Labour Party look bad without understanding that it is important for our national development. Sir, every body can see that it is a good thing to have a direct link between your capital link and that fantastic country of Brazil. Sir, Brazil is the second largest economy in the western hemisphere, its GDP is greater than Canada and it is the third fastest growing economy in the world after China and India arrangement. Sir, it has all sorts of wonderful possibilities and yet we are constantly being told that it is a bad thing.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed the Honourable Member for St. Michael North changed his mouth slightly. He was totally opposed to Brazil but now what he said in here is that nothing with Brazil but you should have gone with a charter operation, so he is changing slightly. Sir, let me just say that is nonsense because having a charter operation, it would be a point-to-point service. Sir, when you have a partner like Gol with a network and you can get business beyond the gateway, so it is not only Sau Paulo/Barbados, it is people connecting from Rio, from Brasilia and from other parts of South America as well.

Mr. Speaker, as I speak to you, there is a group of journalists here from Argentina who are looking at the destination and who will return to report on it as well. There are all sorts of possibilities, there is Buenos Aires, Chile, Uruguay and so on, so it does not make sense to have a charter operator. You open your possibilities when you deal with a partner that has a network so, Mr. Speaker, this GOL Airline decision was a good one.

Mr. Speaker, let me make it clear, no \$200 000 was not paid to GOL Airlines for any reason in January because that is when the flight was making money. Sir, in December and January, the flight did well, and July last year as well the flight did well but there would have been some periods in there when, yes, we had to subsidise the flight but, again, we look at it as an investment and we have been doing the other stuff in terms of the trade shows with the hoteliers. We have hired a destination representative, there is a PR firm as well doing work down there for us, the VP for Latin America, Mr. Stokes, continues to do fantastic work, so we are developing that market, and it is going well.

Mr. Speaker, let me just add that it is not to the peril of the United Kingdom market which is the the other thing I have heard. Sir, I constantly hear is that we have somehow diverted resources from United Kingdom to Brazil but, Sir, that is not true. Mr. Speaker, we have more people working in that United Kingdom than when the Barbados Labour Party was in power. They had five people there and we have another two young brilliant minds up there to go and work to do sale calls and develop that market. Sir, we have split Europe off United Kingdom, so

we have a bigger staff concentrating on our more important market and, Sir, that is part of the reason why we have seen the growth returned.

Mr. Speaker, of course, the Minister of Finance told you about the \$6 million programme and I have already mentioned that we are spending more money pushing the brand of Barbados in the United Kingdom with more people than has ever occurred before.

Mr. Speaker, we now enjoy 12 flights a week from British Airways since March of this year. Sir, the Prime Minister and myself, wine and dine the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Willie Walsh, and I followed that up with a visit up there and we signed off on that and so we have the capacity of 12 flights a week.

Sequence 13

How could we be getting twelve flights a week from British Airways on top of the daily service of Virgin from Gatwick, two flights from Manchester on weekends, and I am hearing that we ignored UK. We have sponsorship on the Sports Line, Sky News, sponsorship of Sky Sports, at the Movies, there is a cooperative brand and an arrangement with the Harrods Department Store. There is, of course, the issue of Barbados Takes Over London, where we brand the taxis as well as have a concert. There is an arrangement with the Arsenal Football Club, and Brand Barbados is the official company that is partnering with the Arsenal Football Club, a very well-known football club. Of course, we are the only destination that is doing that, the Destination of Travel Partner of the Arsenal Football Club. Sir, we have not left out the United Kingdom, our most important market, and it probably explains why the arrivals are actually up from that section.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North mentioned about three or four times in his speech that January was a record year. I did not even have to say it. I am about to take my seat and the reason is very simple. I made a pledge when I took this office that I would not engage in that kind of exercise.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North would tell you there was a time when a previous occupant of this office, every time numbers went up for one month, he would have been in here the 1st February with ribbon on his chest and jumping up and with perspiration, shouting record year. I chose not to go that route. My job as a Minister of Tourism is to ensure that we can have several record Januaries, several record Februaries, going forward into the future. That is why I am also very happy to see that we have got the Master Plan Unit set up. We have had our Town Hall Meetings and we have also had a wonderful round table discussion with the young people of Barbados, and who have advised us on ways that we can take IT to

another level, the use of social video. They have also expressed their views on the need for more community tourism. I was very moved when I saw primary schools students sitting down advising us. We have to listen to these people. Mr. Speaker, that is actually where I want to end my presentation, the future of this country.

Sir, I mentioned earlier in the beginning of my presentation that we are very good as a Parliament sometimes at putting debt on the heads of the future generation. If we can put debt on their heads, we can listen to their ideas, as well, and try to craft things that make sense for them. That is why we are going to get that IT programme going, and that is why the community tourism elements that both the primary and secondary students told us is so important as we develop our blue print to take tourism forward in the next 20 or 40 years. That is what this Government is about. We need to be making sensible decisions now to carry us forward.

Sir, I have already said what I had say about the Barbados Labour Party, a disjointed bunch, and of course a leadership that seems to be retrospective, looking back all the time. I have already said that. We have a vision for the future. We have a clear plan set out for what responsible Government is about and we are not at all shirking from our responsibilities to the future generations of this country, those born and who are yet to be born.

Mr. Speaker, I support this Appropriation Bill, and I am obliged to you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Sequence 14

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this Sitting continues.

When the suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 6 and with that we shall continue.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this year with another set of Estimates that no matter how apparent it is that change is required in our financial affairs, still this administration presents the indication that there are high bound to presiding over an administration that seeks to maintain an undesirable status quo as opposed to demonstrating the flexibility and ingenuity for which Barbadians are known.

Sir, in the last year's Estimates, it was clearly established that we did not spend less we instead spent more badly. The last Estimates, Sir, presented a picture where we did not borrow less, we in fact borrowed more and spent it on the wrong things. I have always thought that Barbadians especially were keen not to follow the mistakes that they made in the past. These Estimates, Sir, as presented by the Minister of Finance causes me to doubt that perception. It is somewhat bewildering, Mr. Speaker, that again this year, the Government trots out their favourite mantra that Barbados is not an economy, it is a society. It seems to me to be a political baton switch almost, Mr. Speaker, a political slight of hand because it is easy to tell people, do not focus on the bread and butter issues, do not focus on that which supports our society's progress, focus instead on those intangible things. It sounds good, Sir, but the harsh reality that we on this side recognise but that on the Government side they fail to come to grips with, is that all countries are societies. There is not a country that is not a society and in fact, Sir, some countries are made up of multiple societies and as trite as that might seem, I would ask the Government benches to show us on this side or to show anybody in Barbados a society that has flourished as a society which was not resting on a foundation of a sound economy.

It is axiomatic, Mr. Speaker, that when one's economy flounders, that there is a significant ripple effect in what you consider to be your society. When your economy crashes, Sir, then your society also crashes but it is their mantra and we would leave them with it because my constituents, Mr. President, have been asking me and I know other of my colleagues have been asked by their constituents how is it possible to maintain a society, Sir, when the economic fundamentals are missing.

If the Democratic Labour Party administration held true, Mr. Speaker, to their mantra then it would be expected that these Estimates would reflect measures which go towards building the society that they so often speak of but what do we see instead. Mr. Speaker, instead we see increased joblessness. We see Estimates that are not designed to increase entrepreneurship, we see Estimates that are not designed, Sir, to increase employment but on the other side they say these are Estimates to maintain public sector employment.

Sir, what about the private sector? Where did those 10 000 plus jobs that Barbados lost in the last three years come from? What is there in this set of Estimates,

which is designed to increase the rate of employment in Barbados? If, Mr. Speaker, the Government held true to their mantra that they were building a society, then surely we would expect that the average Barbadian would be living more comfortably now than they were before. Surely, we would expect that cost of living instead of skyrocketing, would be on the decline. If, Mr. Speaker, the Government held true that they were building a society, then I think it would be fair to expect that instead of being met with rampant price increases that Barbadians would find themselves living a much more comfortable lifestyle than they are living now. What is it that we are being offered?

A good society, Mr. Speaker, in my submission is one that encourages volunteerism but the Government has crushed the spirit of volunteerism by paying every teenage child money for participating in summer camps. In years past they volunteered by their thousands but now, Sir, that element of our society has now also vanished. Again I ask, a society? Mr. Speaker, how could you be creating a society, working on a society when by the measures that they have brought to this country, they have imperilled university education for students. How is it, Sir, that we are now facing the prospect of having to pay significant user fees for healthcare. You cannot tell us that our administration focussed on the economy and that your administration is focussing on the society when in all that you have done, Sir, the Government has done nothing more than displayed reckless disregard for the day-to-day needs of Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, I got an impassioned call from one of my constituents who was born disabled. She was receiving a Welfare grant from the time she was a child but the Welfare Department under this administration, Sir, stopped her Welfare grant. Her only sin, Sir, is that she has two children. One would think, Sir, that having two children and being disabled she would need the Welfare assistance even more but this administration that is building a society, Sir, has presided over an arrangement that in the hardest of times, in the year 2010 a mother of two children who received disability from the time she was a child up until December last year, was thrown to the wolves. As far as that lady is concerned, Sir, the Democratic Labour Party is not building a society, they seem hellbent on destroying our society on the altar of political expedience.

Asides.

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: How is it possible, Mr. Speaker, that they could be building a society and show such disdain for one-seventh of Barbados' landmass called

the Scotland District? How is that possible, Sir? The roads are crumbling every day but yet still nothing is happening. I have personally written the Minister of Housing three letters to ask him to re site individuals from Surinam and those letters, Sir, have gone without action. Where is the society that is being built when houses are on the verge of collapse through slippage but these individuals are not even receiving an act of kindness on the part of the Government?

ESTIMATES - House A87C, Sequence 15, 1.47 p.m.

The Rural Development Commission vote and the Urban Development Commission vote were cut in these Estimates and what does this society has to show for it, another parade of feeble and ineffective Constituency Councils whose only contribution to the society is regular exercise for the Democratic Labour Party second eleven as they walk through, that is an event now, that is where we are in Barbados. A sensible community event is now something called a walkthrough, spending money to meet your Constituency Councils, that is what it is. The favourite of the Honourable Member for St. Peter is that project where they are walking around Barbados trying to find wells, that is what the society has been taken to.

It is nice, Mr. Speaker, to be able to sit on the Government side and feign interest and empathy with individuals. The true test, Mr. Speaker, is when somebody asked: What have you done for me lately? Mr. Speaker, scores of houses in my constituency receive significant damage during Tropical Storm Tomas. What has the Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs done for any of those individuals lately? Hardly a house in St. Joseph has received remedial work from any Government Department yet still we hurried to this Parliament and voted \$17 million to do repair work for Tomas, so we are now starting a new financial year. How much of that money has been spent and on whom? We have a Catastrophe Fund with \$13 million sitting in it. Where is the society that is being built?

Mr. Speaker, I urge Barbadians to reject that high-sounding mantra of the Democratic Labour Party. It is one thing to say that you are going to build the society but do not try to fool us. This Government talks it but this Government does not walk it.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of sectoral issues as well that require consideration. I would want to focus briefly on the international financial services sector. It is a sector that contributes, as we all know, over 60 per cent of this country's corporation tax. I believe that Honourable Members on their side would recognise that the reduction in income tax that we gave to Barbadians when we were the Government was a direct result of the significant

contribution from that financial services sector. Where is it today?.

Mr. Speaker, I sat with embarrassment when the current Minister, the Honourable Member for St. James Central, spoke about this most significant part of our economy. It is not often that an individual by speaking allows you to know that they are ignorant of the matter on which they speak. Mr. Speaker, I regret to have to say this but I believe that the Attorney-General also winced when the Honourable Member for St. James Central said that more and more local companies are being used as international business companies. I wondered at that and I thought that he made a mistake but he repeated it a second time. He said that more and more local companies are being used as IBCs. It would be good if I should just leave the Prime Minister and not explain to him what the fundamental problem with that is.

Mr. Speaker, an international business company is nothing more than a local company that has applied for and obtained an international business sector licence. You would begin to appreciate the embarrassment that I feel when the Minister does not even understand the mechanics of that most fundamental pillar on which the financial services sector rests. Mr. Speaker, it should not surprise us though because the same Minister spoke glowingly about international transport and we are going to be building this new cruise pier but he did not mention a single word about the major cruise lines that are pulling out of Barbados. If it was not for the newspaper today I do not believe that the Honourable Member for St. James Central would even have been aware.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the Ministry of Finance admitted it, that fundamental issues caught Barbados napping. Mr. Speaker, our financial services sector is under as grave a threat now or perhaps an even graver threat than it was in the last decade. Mr. Speaker, on April 10, in the year 2010, the United Kingdom passed a taxing statute that put Barbados, well it blacklisted us effectively, in a schedule as being one of the countries which is most non-compliant with tax information exchange practices. Sir, the penalty for that is that companies operating in Barbados would have to pay 200 per cent of the amount of tax revenue that is considered there under-reported by.

Sir, April 10, 2010 was when this statute was passed. I believe that the Minister was only aware of that particular fact when the Barbados Labour Party gave its Press Conference because one would have assumed that with that particular threat coming for our financial services sector that the Minister, the Honourable Member for St. James Central, would have risen up and tried to fight the United Kingdom on this issue. We have relations going back with the United Kingdom from the birth of this country. If we

cannot negotiate this with the United Kingdom, with whom can we negotiate, Sir? Almost a whole year has passed and companies in Barbados are operating under peril.

We also have the threat of the Global Forum. I ask you this, Mr. Speaker, in a situation where your principal industry is under threat, is it not reasonable to expect that the Estimates would demonstrate that additional provision is being given to allow you to fight off those threats? Mr. Speaker, when we came under threat from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Budget of the Ministry of Industry and International Business was ramped up so as to be able to allow us to devote resources to fighting that threat. Mr. Speaker, the Budget of the International Business Unit was increased by a mere \$5 000. Perhaps, it is because this Administration feels that by giving them \$5 000 extra, that is sufficient to meet the threat of the United Kingdom taxing statute. It is no wonder that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade recently said that in her view the private sector would have to fight off this challenge. I have never heard anything so absurd.

Mr. Speaker, when we were under threat by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Government felt it was our duty to stand in the breach between our businesses and between these countries and multilateral organisations and defend Barbados' sector to the hilt but what we see is an Administration that wants to abdicate that responsibility for defending our sector.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: On a point of order. I hate to interrupt the Honourable Member but he is misleading this Chamber. Sir, we have already indicated that we intend to amend the Income Tax Act. We have already indicated that we intend to bring regulations under the Income Tax Act. We have already indicated that we are going to have dialogue with the United Kingdom Government. The Honourable Member knows this.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, it is good for the Honourable Member to tell us what they intend to do but this threat has been looming now for a year and it is only now that they are beginning to demonstrate an understanding of the problem. Mr. Speaker, we will wait to see if that would solve the problem. I have to say that if that were the only threat perhaps we might not have needed to worry so much.

Mr. Speaker, the industry which is promoted by Invest Barbados has not been adequately promoted over the last few years either. How else could you explain Invest Barbados having \$14 million sitting idle in bank accounts?

Mr. Speaker, at the same time what do you see? You see the number of new companies coming into Barbados down, you see the amount of revenue receipts coming into the coffers down, you see no new instruments or offerings being brought to bear in the sector, yet Invest Barbados has \$14 million sitting in a bank account. To do what, I ask?

Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member rises on a point of order I would be grateful if he would tell us what it is this \$14 million is doing. Whom is it benefiting? It is all right to say that you are going to give them less money this year. Well, you might as well give them no money this year because they have not demonstrated that they were able to spend any of the money they had for the good of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, it is a known fact that when you are having economic difficulties, one way of combating that is to increase your marketing budget. During the recess of 1994, several Harvard reviews were done and many researched papers published but we have Invest Barbados with \$14 million in a bank account and not a penny is being spent, and the Chairman of the Board boasts of this. Mr. Speaker, it reminds you of that story about the man who buried his talent. That is what has happened in this case, Invest Barbados has buried its talent and so we have nothing to show for it. Mr. Speaker, in order to compete, in order to see our revenues back up, we must market, we must develop new instruments. It is no wonder that we cannot develop new instruments, when the Minister responsible does not even understand how the old instruments work.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados is in a very difficult position. Sir, it is interesting when you are living in what can be considered tomorrow's history. The risk and uncertainty surrounding these Estimates is palpable, you can feel it. We have unrest in the Middle East, we have oil prices increasing significantly, we have the stock market falling because of the tsunami and earthquake in Japan. Sir, all of these things are happening simultaneously and we have Estimates that do not reveal any understanding of the underlying international factors.

The Minister of Finance and others have been talking about the international economy for the longest time, everything is about the international economy. Where do these Estimates reflect any appreciation of what is happening in the international economy? Sir, instead what we have is an under budgeting for the University of the West Indies, under budgeting for the Transport Board and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and we have no budgeting for CLICO.

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Prime Minister has stated, and I think I want to

be very precise, the Honourable Member has assured policyholders that they are going to get back their money. Mr. Speaker, that assurance came from the Prime Minister, that the policyholders of CLICO will get back their money. Sir, we know that next year, 2012, obligations amounting in the region of \$300 million will fall due. We also know there is a significant likelihood that CLICO will not be able to honour those commitments but the Honourable Prime Minister has said that people will get back their money.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five minutes in which to wind up.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, various documents have come to light recently in relation to CLICO, and I am happy to make them documents of this Honourable House. Sir, one of these documents is a contract one page long made between Professional Financial Services Limited, made between an individual, whose name I cannot call, but who was the Chief Executive Officer of CLICO, and also CLICO as a third party.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, let me make an observation at this point. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North-West, when he spoke, made reference to the fact that the matter had been referred to judicial management. There is also the fact that legal action has been commenced. His indication was that the matter was essentially sub judicate. Honourable Member, that can be given a very broad view where it can essentially try to preclude debate on the given matter.

I wish to observe that the difficulty we have in these circumstances is that we have to balance the whole right of a citizen to a fair trial before the court. We have to balance the fact that we do not necessarily want what we do here to influence or to prejudice the authority of the court. We also have to balance that, however, against the right of Honourable Members to have freedom of speech. Honourable Members, I wish to remind you all that the whole question of freedom of speech is not to offer an opportunity to reveal the business of private members, members of society, nor to castigate members of the society, it is to enable us to carry out our function of doing the people's business properly.

Honourable Members, I am simply saying that to say that though the matter of CLICO is of sufficient public importance to allow me as Speaker to wave any right or question with respect to that rule, I would want Honourable Members to bear in mind these conflicts and to responsible in their statements with respect to that matter. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate your guidance, can I get my time back?

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, what we have today is a scandalous state of affair where the average Barbadian who has put money into CLICO cannot get it back out and the Minister of Finance is telling us to back off. I wonder if the Minister of Finance has backed off. We have seen the Minister of Finance at the races. Has the Minister of Finance backed off? Mr. Speaker, the issue of CLICO, which has a contingent liability for this Government to the tune of almost \$300 million which is going to have to be dealt with by this administration in the next financial year, is therefore a fundamental issue for this country and its economy.

Mr. Speaker, we are not going to back off because the individuals who put in \$5 000 and \$10 000 and who cannot afford lawyers are now going to be asked to wait until a whole judicial management process is completed. Mr. Speaker, those individuals have to sit idly by, while a company not under judicial management, CLICO Holdings, is being sued for \$6 million or \$7 million. Are we supposed to back off, when an individual who remains on the Board of these companies is suing for a total of \$10 million? Are we supposed to back off when the Minister of Finance has asked the Press to keep quiet but when we note that the plaintiff in this action is the Chairman of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation? I wonder how far are we going to take this backing off? Mr. Speaker, this Opposition is not going to back off because it is a fundamental issue, it is one that this Government has allowed to bedevil Barbados and Barbadians and for reasons of expediency, they choose to do nothing about it.

2.07 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I live in a neighbourhood, the same neighbourhood that the plaintiff is in and with my own eyes, the individual who is in charge of the judicial management is a frequent visitor to the individual's house but we are being asked to keep quite. Sir, justice is not something just like the society that they talk about, it has to be seen to be done and it does not benefit from empty platitudes from a bunch of cowerly individuals who do not have the fortitude and do what is right in relation to the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I may not be able to say it in here but truth will out. The Oversight Committee asked for documents and they were told they did not exist but now, all of a sudden, they exist and actions can be brought on them and the Government stands condemned because members of that Government knew about the existence of the very document and that cannot be denied. Sir, yet still Barbadians and the rest of us are being asked to back off.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates are here because they have to be brought here. We do not have to agree with them but by force of numbers they will pass but I will tell you, Sir, that we will not stand silence as greater and greater hardship is inflicted on members of this Barbadian society, the society that they pretend to love. There are issues that have to be confronted and if they do not confront them now, they will confront them later, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are suffering. The Honourable Member for St. Peter, his constituents are suffering and there is no promise ahead of them expect for greater suffering still. Sir, we object to that because Barbadians are not accustomed to it, they do not live in this society, in this economy to be bullied, push around and to be fed little titbits by Constituency Councils. They are entitled to their just reward from being a part of the society, Sir, and we intend to stand and make sure that they get it.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Prime Minister.

ESTIMATES

March 16, 2011

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

Mr. F.J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make what I intend to be a brief intervention in this debate on the annual Appropriation Bill, 2011/2012. This annual Appropriation Bill is being debated in accordance with the constitutional requirements of Barbados, Section 108 and Section 109 of the Constitution of Barbados which requires the Minister of Finance before the end of the financial year to make available to this Parliament Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the upcoming financial year and supported by an Appropriation Bill. Sir, this is the fourth occasion on which this Government is going through this exercise as a Government. We first did it just about two months after coming to office in 2008 and on that occasion we were told that the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill which we brought to the House were really not ours, that all of this had been settled before the General Elections and that there was nothing new, therefore, that we are just carrying out the policies of the predecessor administration.

Mr. Speaker, in 2009, we were told that the Estimates were all wrong and it was rather confidently predicted that Barbados would have come to an end before the end of the financial year. Sir, in 2010, even though Barbados had not come to an end, we were told that the Estimates for that year were also wrong and that disaster would result in the country as a result of them before the end of that financial year. Sir, that financial year has come

and passed and Barbados is still with us, thank God, and here are we, again, in the year 2011 debating the annual Appropriation Bill and, again, we have been told this year that what we have brought to House is all wrong, it makes no contact with the real needs of the society and that it spells disaster for Barbados if we go through with these Estimates. Mr. Speaker, there are always these apocalyptic utterances about the Estimates which we bring to the House and, therefore, nothing that I have heard in this debate has really taken me by surprise.

Mr. Speaker, I have said in this House before that necessarily and inevitably, an Opposition Party in these circumstances, and in the context of the Westminster parliamentary tradition, will have to find something to say and will invariably find something to say that opposes what the Government is doing on occasions such as this.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there was a 19th Century political writer, I think he has served in the British Parliament as well, Sir William Harcourt, who actually documented that the role of an Opposition is to oppose, and oppose, and oppose again. I have sat on the other side of the House and I have sat as an Opposition member in the Other Place and I know the routine through which you have to go. There has to be some kind of divide, real or imagine, to distinguish the Government from the Opposition, so in that context, I am certainly not surprised, and certainly not unhappy about what has been said in this debate up to now. What I am very happy about is that there has been no serious criticism of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure laid in this Chamber, there has been no serious objection to them. There has been charge of the Government that the standard of living or the quality of life of the people of Barbados will be adversely affected by anything contained in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure or in the annual Appropriation Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened very carefully. I listened to the lead spokesman for the Opposition on this Bill, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter and his was a learned disquisition on matters of debt, deficit, exchange rates and so on and, of course, how Government should be organised, where you should have Invest Barbados, where it should not be and where BAMC should be and where it should not be and so on but, in terms of standing up and looking Barbadians in the face and saying that there is anything fundamentally wrong with these Estimates, if he said it I did not hear it. Therefore I want to begin by congratulating him for his magnanimity on this occasion on cloaking his agreement with the Government in the learned disposition on the issues to which I have just referred.

H/A87C/2:17:56

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Of course, where the issue of deficit is concerned, as I listened to the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, I could not help but reflect that the more things change, the more they remain the same. It was on this particular issue that the Democratic Labour Party was formed. This was the issue that haunted the relationship between Errol Barrow, as he then was, and Grantley Herbert Adams, as he then was. Grantley Adams as the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party, at the time, believed that a Government should run a balanced budget. You should not spend more than you were earning. He was committed to it. The examples of housewives and how they behaved and so were used. Errol Barrow and his colleague, James Cameron Tudor, Errol Barrow fresh out of the London School of Economics and exposed to a different brand of thinking, and Cameron Tudor, fresh out of Oxford, where he did the modern great strike of Philosophy Science and Economics, viewed economic reality slightly differently. They both argued while in the Barbados Labour Party that you were not going to be able to effect meaningful economic advancement in the country by running a housewife's budget, that there had to be some measure of deficit budgeting, the deficit, of course, being made up by borrowing. When they could not convince the then leadership of the Barbados Labour Party, they broke away and formed the Democratic Labour Party and the rest is now history.

Since then, the Barbados Labour Party graduated to a level of understanding where it now accepts deficit budgeting, but the dispute now is over how large the deficit should be, but let me make it very clear. I certainly do not consider it to be any bit of abstruse or ethereal understanding that it is always dangerous to spend more than you are earning unless you know where the shortfall is going to come from. You do not have to be any economist to know that because that is good old housewifely commonsense, but in the context of public finance and public administration, Governments prudently set out to spend more than they are in fact expecting to receive by way of revenue. Of course, to make up the shortfall, either by increased taxation where that is thought appropriate or by borrowing, and that is how Barbados was transformed from a village to a nation by the Democratic Labour Party between 1961 and 1976.

Mr. Speaker, when I heard the Honourable Member for St. Peter lecturing the House on this issue, I was quite intrigued because, as I said, this is an old debate between the Democratic Labour Party's thinkers and the Barbados Labour Party, which has now moved from no deficit at all to how large the deficit should be.

We in the Democratic Labour Party have committed ourselves in our Medium-term Fiscal Strategy, by the year 2014-2015 to getting rid of the deficit by which we are now bedeviled. That is a commitment now. We do not control

the future. We do not control international occurrence, international events. It is a commitment which we are going to pursue and other things being equal, we hope to achieve it, but as was our founder leader, Errol Barrow, so are we still unrepentant products of the Keynesian revolutionary and economic thought. We accept the need for deficit budgeting if you are going to push these countries forward. That is our position, and there is going to be no resiling from that position. It has worked for us in the past. It is working for other nations across the world, and that is the economic philosophy to which we subscribe. There can be arguments over how large the deficit should be. The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter argues that a deficit of 2.5 per cent of GDP is manageable, and I have heard that said not only in this Chamber, but when I was in the Other Place between 2003 and 2007. It is not an argument with which I have any profound difficulty. I have profound difficulty with it though, if in the context of the worst recession the world has known in a hundred years, at a time when there has been sluggishness in the consumer demand, and when therefore there has been much slowdown in business, and in a context where the State in these societies in the Caribbean had frequently had to take the lead in driving the economic activity forward, that you can insist in these circumstances on the maintenance of a deficit of 2.5 per cent.

I beg respectfully to differ on that.

I know there used to be, in days of yore, in biblical days a Jewish sect called the Pharisees, and they interpreted observance of the Sabbath with the same strictness with which I am hearing this deficit debate being conducted today. Leading our Lord to ask, if your ass falls into a well on the Sabbath day, do you let him stay there because it is the Sabbath, or do you go for him and take him out and save his life? That is where we are today. We live in exceptional circumstances and exceptional responses are required to deal with the circumstances that confront us.

I do not only rely on my own wisdom in these matters. I read a few of the people who write about these things as well just to better reinforce my own understanding, or sometimes to clarify it where necessary. Sometime in the year 2003 a Nobel Laureate, an Economist, by the name of Joseph Stiglitz wrote this book, *The Roaring 90s*.

Sequence20 I read it as long ago as 2003 when it came out and he spent sometime looking at the challenges that faced the United States of America in particular but the world in general during that period of the 1990's and of course, there was much prosperity during that period. The huge budget deficit that President Clinton had inherited he managed to wipe out during this term of office and Stiglitz spent some time looking at the whole issue of debt and deficit, to make the point that this issue can only be

evaluated contextually that your attitude to a deficit cannot be the same if economic activity is normal, as your attitude will be if economic activity is abnormal, if you are in a recession. He made the following point which I read, Mr. Speaker, from page 50 of *The Roaring Nineties* by Joseph E. Stiglitz, published by W.W. Norton and Company. He said:

"We need to begin with a general lesson, often lost sight of in the midst of economic downturn. Every downturn comes to an end. Economic policy does make a difference. It can make a downturn shorter or longer, shallower or deeper. It can make the expansion longer but economic fluctuations have marked capitalism since the very beginning. Every boom busts, and every recession is followed by a recovery."

I think, Mr. Speaker, these are words of immortal wisdom. The idea sought to be conveyed by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter in this debate was that this Government is committed, it seemed to him, to running an excessively large fiscal deficit. We are in a recession. The recession is not going to last from everlasting to everlasting. It is going to come to an end and in the context of what we are going through, largely fueled by international currents and events, we have had to run a larger than usual fiscal deficit.

The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter himself, when confronted with circumstances much milder but circumstances not dissimilar, ran a larger than normal fiscal deficit as well. He adorned it in language like counter cyclical policies, nothing wrong with that but it was a larger than usual fiscal deficit. It was not the tried and tested and believed in orthodoxy of the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter. He went outside of his own orthodoxy did the Honourable Member, and ran a larger than usual fiscal deficit, and that is understandable because you were in recessionary conditions and the State was required to respond in those exceptional circumstances as a responsible State.

Mr. Speaker, let us get that right. I did not like the tone set by the Honourable Member in his speech that gave the impression that this Government is running a large fiscal deficit and that this is part of our orthodoxy or part of our theology. We are in exceptional circumstances. The world is in exceptional circumstances and that is the context within which what we are doing has to be analysed and evaluated.

There is only one other quotation I should like to use from Stiglitz at page 54 of the Book. He said:

"In the developing world too this lesson has enormous resonance. Many developing countries have effectively been forced to engage in deficit reduction

measures as they go into downturn and repeatedly, these measures have only exacerbated the downturns - in Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and Argentina, to give but a small sample of recent failures. Sometimes it is the IMF, wedded to pre- Keynesian ideas and finding support in the Clinton administration's deficit reduction rhetoric which has forced them to do the opposite of what they know to be in their best interests." "Sometimes, it is simply that they cannot get funds to finance the deficits. Of course, this is why the IMF was founded under the intellectual aegis of Keynes: to provide countries with the money necessary for expansionary fiscal policy in an economic downturn. But the IMF has forgotten its original mission and seemingly become more interested in ensuring the repayment of foreign loans than in helping the poor countries to sustain their economy at as close to full employment as possible."

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that what I have said on this issue lays to rest any belief or any thought that this Government does not understand the danger posed by large unsustainable fiscal deficits and the threat to the exchange rate to which we have grown accustomed. I do not think the course of any administration or any political party in Barbados that there is any Government better equipped to talk about resisting changes in the exchange rate than the Democratic Labour Party. We were held at gunpoint virtually, between 1991 and 1994 to devalue the Barbados dollar and we said, no, so nobody could lecture us on that. When all the prophecies from the Cassandras and the other prophets of doom were saying that the Barbados dollar was going to be devalued, a Democratic Labour Party Government that had character stood up and said, it will not happen. We will find another way.

While we appreciate the gratuitous and I want to think well-meaning advice from the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter the Opposition need not fear our eyes are wide opened and we are pursuing policies intended to see us through the present world situation and to bring us back to a situation of economic normalcy.

Asides.

Hon. F.J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, that is the context we stood, in which one has to look at the Estimates before the House. As I said, there has been no serious criticism of them. We are going to get into the Heads hopefully later on this evening and I suppose as normally happens, we will pick at this and pick at that and say how this should be done and how that should be done but basically, the Government's priorities have not been affected by the structure of this year's Estimates. We are still committed to the creation of a just society in Barbados.

Asides.

ESTIMATES - House A87C, Sequence 20, 2.37 p.m.

Sir, that was our vision for Barbados at the time the Democratic Labour Party was formed. The society that we inherited from our colonial masters took 339 years to create and all the social and economic contradictions therefore that have to be removed could not be removed in the short space of any 44 or 45 years of independence. In fact, upwards of 100 years after the passage of the British North America Act that brought Canada to independence, the Liberal Government under Pierre Trudeau was still talking about creating a just society in Canada because this is a work-in-progress.

The Democratic Labour Party understands that in spite of all the progress which we have made as a country, there are still too large a number of people being bypassed by what we are achieving in this society. As long as you have people out there being bypassed by the benefits being generated in this society, the society will continue to be unjust for them. Mr. Speaker, that is why we continue to be committed to the creation of a just society in Barbados, a society in which every man, woman and child of whatever station in life can find a comfortable place from which to realise to the fullest his or her God-given talents. Sir, that is the Democratic Labour Party vision for the future of this society.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates do no violence at all to the pursuit of that vision. The commitment to education and human resource development is still there. We have been in the forefront of developing the human resources of Barbados ever since we came to office in 1961. No political party in Barbados or in the Caribbean has done as thorough a job in the area of education and human resource development as the Democratic Labour Party has done. Sir, that commitment remains unaffected by anything in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the fiscal year 2011-2012 so there is no basis on which the Opposition could criticise us for shortchanging the people of Barbados on that score.

Similarly in the area of health care, I was quite pleased to hear the Honourable Member for St. James South, the Honourable Minister of Health, put the case as eloquently and as articulately as he did yesterday on this issue. We are committed to the provision of proper primary, secondary and tertiary health care in Barbados. We accept that the provision of curative health care has become almost cripplingly burdensome financially and we are now striking a balance between health care and preventive health care hence the accentuation of Government policy on the pursuit of healthy lifestyles. It was that which drove the Honourable Member for St. James South and the Cabinet to tackle frontally the issue, for example, of smoking in public places. We think that

ultimately preventive health care is less costly than curative health care and that the society must be brought around to the point of view that it makes more sense so managing your personal health that you do not have to be institutionalised or go for expensive corrections but that you can take hold of yourself and so manage your personal health that you bring little inconvenience to your personal fortunes. Our commitment to effective and equitable health care delivery remains intact by these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. Education yes, health yes.

Mr. Speaker, if I may go back to education very briefly, I know that we are going to get to it and have a full discussion on it in this Estimates debate but this Government is of the view that we have to draw a clear line between education and schooling. There has been a tendency in Barbados to blur the distinction between the two. I twinned education and health for this reason in that in the same way that good health is a virtue in and of itself without reference to what you could do or how you could profit by it, good education is also a virtue in and of itself.

Mr. Speaker, the whole idea of being educated because you want to satisfy the job market or being educated because of this or that has its place. In fact, that more approximates training. What we want is people effectively educated so that they can manage the challenges of life and deal with the stresses and strains begotten by interpersonal relationships of various kinds, whether it is relationships between employers and employees, relationships between husbands and wives or relationships between children and parents and so on. Genuinely educated persons as distinct from persons who are trained are prepared to deal with those circumstances. Sir, good education and good health are virtues in and of themselves.

Mr. Speaker, this Chamber heard this morning from the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. Again, our pursuits in agriculture have not been in any way endangered or adversely affected by anything contained in these Estimates. Food prices and energy cost are going up across the world and the Government of Barbados has to take cognisance of that fact. There was a time not too long ago when other leaders of the Caribbean, another generation of leaders of the Caribbean, talked optimistically about a regional food plan, the object being to confront the possibility that if we did not check what we were doing at that time we could find ourselves wholly dependent for the food we have to consume on farmers who live abroad. I think it was the late Dr. Eric Williams who talked about a regional food plan and discussed all of this. These ideas are of particular relevance today.

Mr. Speaker, I was quite pleased to listen to the Honourable Member for St. Philip West this morning as he spoke because there has to be a careful link between agriculture and food security.

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Mr. Speaker, the extent to which we in Barbados can achieve food security through our agricultural policies will continue to be a moot point but we have to pursue it and in that context we have to make proper provision at the level of policy and at the level of incentives for our farming community, so that we can pursue and successfully achieve that objective.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of social care, again the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, the Honourable Minister for Social Care spoke in this debate yesterday. I have heard nobody on the other side say that this Government is resiling from its position on the provision of social care as defined by the Ministry and as articulated in these Estimates and Expenditure. That programme remains untouched, in any adverse way, by these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. The Government continues to be committed to an effective use, for example, the Welfare Department, as the Minister pointed out, to ensure that in these difficult times and even when times are not this difficult, that the most vulnerable elements in this society are able to access the assistance of that particular State agency to relief the stresses that may arise from time to time. That department has had some challenges over the years and the Minister was kind enough to point them out but the Government is so committed to fine-tuning the workings of that Welfare Department that a more friendly relationship will begin to exist between the people who seek assistance from that department and those persons who are required, by way of their occupation, to provide that assistance.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment to the disabled is manifest in all that can be seen coming out of the Ministry of Social Care. The Honourable Members on the other side, unable to impugn the Government's performance on any of these issues, have had to settle for attacking Government on the issue of Constituency Councils. Mr. Speaker, day and day out, ever since this issue was rooted, we have had to put up with the Opposition sniping at the Constituency Councils. This is a Democratic Labour Party policy commitment. We did not come up with the policy commitment to please the Barbados Labour Party. We came up with it because we thought it was the best thing for Barbados and to the pursuit of that policy we are irrevocably committed, so let there be no mistake about that.

Mr. Speaker, we heard it was a threat to democracy because the counselors were not being elected, as though election equals democracy. I have never heard anything so absurd in my life. Mr. Speaker, for years there were elections where there was no democracy. Sir, there were various other types of sniping too, one impression being given that millions upon millions of dollars are being spent

on Constituency Councils. The impression is being given that so many millions are being spent, that the financial situation of Barbados is distorted as a result.

Mr. Speaker, all of the Constituency Councils are not even established as yet, the last set is to be launched some time soon, so that we do not even have a total picture of the amount of money being spent on Constituency Councils, yet we are hearing this is an area of expenditure that is somehow stewing the public finances of the island and that it should be abolished. Of course, this is a more recent argument. The earlier argument was that we were creating Constituency Councils to secure some kind of electoral advantage. That argument has now paled into insignificance, that has faded into the background. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew had said he wanted his money for his Constituency Council up-front. That too has vanished from public's view and mercifully is no longer heard.

Mr. Speaker, Constituency Councils are a policy commitment of ours. We think that in a situation where you do not have local government structures that this is a necessary link between Government and people. We know there are many daily irritations through which people have to live, many irritations that people have to endure because they cannot easily access central government resources and that these Constituency Councils, as closer as they necessarily are to people at the community level, than would at central Government level, these Constituency Councils can better deal with some of those problems. Sir, there is a system of accountability in place, it is not as though these are wild animals let loose and nobody knows where they will end up. There are principles of accountability that govern the operations of these Constituency Councils. Mr. Speaker, we are not ashamed of that and when we have to justify their existence to the people of Barbados we will. Sir, Honourable Members on the other side can continue their sniping. We are not daunted and our resolve will not be allowed to falter on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure set out the priorities of Government and over the next two years we intend, by these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure and by Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure that will have to be laid at this time next year, to accentuate the process of growth that is promised by the end of this financial year. We are told that we will register some marginal degree of growth at the end of this financial year. Sir, any growth registered at this time and in these circumstances is to be commended. It is a hopeful sign, and the Government is putting in place other policy mechanisms to ensure that this growth is maintained and improved upon, by a number of projects to which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North-West has referred and which are engaging the attention of this

Government week after week. Sir, for example, these are projects through the Barbados Water Authority, Tourism and of course, projects in the construction sector, among others.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here quite satisfied that the Government has been doing the right thing in the context of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure that it has presented to this Honourable House over the period 2008 to present. Mr. Speaker, the predictions that the country would have collapsed and unraveled have not come through.

2.57 p.m.

There is no indication that those predictions will come true and we are comfortable that the people of Barbados are not out there complaining about what has been taken away from them. This Government committed itself, for example, to protecting jobs in the public sector and nobody in the public sector has had to complain during this very difficult period about any loss of jobs, that was a commitment made by the Government and, of course, made by the Government to the disappointment of the Opposition because, had we resorted to that, as a policy, you would not have heard the end of it from Honourable Members on the other side. Sir, had we fallen for the gratuitous advice given by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter outside Tyrol Cot soon after this world crisis broke that we should have spent up all of the foreign reserves we came and found, he would have been having the last laugh all like now. Sir, wisdom prevailed in the councils of the Government and we did not follow that advice and that is why about 19 weeks foreign exchange cover that I can boast about now.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates promise us that by the end of the upcoming financial year, we should have a smaller fiscal deficit and, as the Minister of Finance so wisely and so properly pointed out, a certain amount of fiscal discipline will be pursued and observed right through the financial year. We are tackling the issue of wastage on many fronts. Sir, departments that know that they cannot get through particular programmes will not be allowed fancifully to pursue those programmes wastefully. We are making sure that the taxpayers' dollars are spent wisely and responsibly so that all of the charges about not cutting back on expenditure will fall flat on their faces. Mr. Speaker, when we hear about cutting back expenditure what we do not hear is what we should cut back on. We are not going to cut back on the right of our children to receive taxpayers funded secondary and tertiary education. We are not going to cut back on the right of our citizens to enjoy affordable health care and we are not going to put ourselves in a position, the position in which the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter found himself in Government and certainly by the end of the year 2007, where you could

boast that you had a fiscal deficit of 2.5 per cent or 1.3 per cent, all those figures that were read out by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter on Monday but schools were not being reopened on time after the summer holidays, people were complaining about the quality of service they were getting at the hospital, the National Housing Corporation had ground to a halt, the policemen were complaining about the physical conditions under which they were working and, in fact, the Public Service was honeycombed with discontent. Sir, while the arithmetic was right, the benefits on which citizens depended were sorely lacking. Sir, we are not going to put ourselves in that position.

Mr. Speaker, I have promised not to delay the House because, the truth is, as a lawyer, I like to know what is the case I am called upon to answer. Sir, every lawyer wants to know that.

Mr. Speaker, I listened between Monday afternoon and a few minutes ago to hear what exactly was the case against the Government. There is no case against the Government of Barbados on these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. Sir, because there is no case, the Opposition has had to try to resort to muckraking and the muckraking, of course, has had to do with attempts to drag the issue of CLICO into this debate.

Mr. Speaker, let me make my position very clear. I spoke in this House on a No-confidence Motion on the CLICO issue when it first broke, I believe, in early 2009. I made it very clear that I was not just speaking as a Member of Parliament, I was speaking as somebody who had investment in CLICO. I have a life policy with CLICO and I bought a flexible premium annuity, not an executive flexible premium annuity, a flexible premium annuity, a valid insurance product from that company from a good friend of mine of revered memory, well known to the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, the late Neville Smith, so I have something to lose in CLICO if all does not go well and I, myself, look forward to the CLICO issue being resolved.

Mr. Speaker, I have also said elsewhere that treating CLICO like some kind of political football, some attempt to besmirch reputations and to hound people down is really not the best way to deal with this issue. Sir, I went public and I said based on the information available to me the Government is committed to ensuring that, at the level of principal, the commitment of the Government is to ensure that people get their principal investments in CLICO. Sir, I do not resile from that. I acted as Minister of Finance for some substantial time, I saw the report of the Oversight Committee, I satisfied myself after having discussions with the Chairman of the Committee that was a claim that I could credibly make. Sri, I stand by it and I do not know of

anything that has happened since then that would cause me to resile from that.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to get into all the unnecessary cross talk, and the attempt to inflame national passions on an issue on which so many people are hurting. If CLICO had been the only corporate establishment to experience the difficulties it has experienced and is experiencing during this global recession I would willingly and readily join Honourable Members on the other side in their condemnation of what has gone on at the company but some of the most prestigious corporate entities in North America and in Europe have gone under as a result of the present global economic and financial meltdown.

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When I looked and saw some of the names of the institutions and so on that invested in the company, it is a matter for national concern, and we all have a vested interest in ensuring that the issues surrounding CLICO are resolved to everybody's satisfaction. It is not going to help the situation, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was just trying to do, to zero in on an individual and try to tie him up now with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, the Minister of Finance, since there is nobody else to tie him up with, so you are trying now to find a new person to tie him up with, and the old dingy Barbados Labour Party politics for which there is no place in Barbados anymore. Let us get past all of that and focus on trying to get the matter resolved, so that those people in the country who are hurting can be relieved of their pain. I have something to lose, much to lose, if CLICO goes under.

I have a vested interest in its recovery and success. It cannot help me to try to exploit some photograph that a journalist or some photographer secured for a newspaper with a Member of this Cabinet talking to the CEO of CLICO or whoever he was. He has been my friend for years as well. He was my client at one stage and I do not disown him. He is not a leper. I do not agree with everything he does. I have never agreed with everything he has done, but like all other Barbadians, he has worked his way up and he has fallen. He has had his ups and he has had his downs, but he is not a leper.

I have heard the Honourable Member for St. Peter stand in this House, and say how he has had to accept responsibility and that most politicians have to accept responsibility for the failings of their friends. Let us be very frank about it. Some of the friends of the Honourable Member for St. Peter never took vows of chastity or sanctity. If I were locked up in a room with some of the friends of the Honourable Member for St. Peter and a snake, I would take care of them first and leave the snake. Let us not get tied up with this.

I do not countenance it. I think it is indecent if, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is saying and as the newspaper reported, that estimable gentleman has sued the company for which he has worked. That is a matter that the judges will decide. The courts are there for that. He did not go in there and hold anybody at gunpoint and say, "Give me my money." He is demonstrating that he still understands the rule of law in Barbados. Let the courts decide that, but getting in here and sniping and all the innuendo and so on is unbecoming and I really do not want to be a part of that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I fully support the Appropriation Bill before this House. I think the Government is on the right track. I think the people of Barbados can be assured that their welfare is being properly taken care off. We are not perfect. No Government has ever been perfect, but in the context of what we had to face since coming to office in 2008, in the month of January, none but the churlish will want to deny that the Democratic Labour Party Government has done an excellent job.

I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, allow me just a few minutes to wrap up this debate on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, 2011-2012. I do not anticipate being too long again because ...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I promised today that I would not be too long because I think the Prime Minister having spoken so eloquently, so punctiliously, and so eruditely to the matters that have emerged from this debate, I can only spoil that effort by trying to do too much in response to what the Honourable Members of the Opposition have said in this debate, but I want to begin by thanking all Honourable Members who have spoken. Of course, Members on both sides of the House, clearly on this side have had the upper hand of this debate by staying focus on the message, have put forward credible arguments both to forward and in defence of the Estimates, the Appropriation Bill, and this would no doubt continue into the rest of the debate as we get into the specific Heads.

Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say the same thing for Members of the Opposition, well at least for all of them, because we did have a fairly enterprising intervention from the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East who continues to go through her metamorphosis. We are happy to see that is continuing and a level of contribution is being

made even if it did not necessarily connect with the Estimates themselves specifically.

Unfortunately, at the other end of that bench we could not say the same for the Leader of the Opposition or for most of the Members of his team. It is as though they were not prepared. Let me put it that way. They came to the debate unprepared. In fact, they came seemingly with an argument that was crafted in 2008, photocopied on different paper in 2009, and printed with different ink in 2010, and read backward on this occasion.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: That is what seems to have happened. Totally ill-prepared for this debate.

Sir, before I get too far into the debate, I think it is my duty, as you know with the Estimates documents, Honourable Members who have been in here for a long time would know this as well, errors do occur in the document that have to be corrected from time to time. That is standard. We get the errata sheets that tells you to take out this, put in that, and so forth and so on, this number is incorrect, that number needs to be changed or whatever, and we have had one such thing,

Sir, unfortunately, it caused the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter to have delivered of himself, at least in part, the speech based on a figure that was incorrectly posted in the Estimates Memorandum. A large part of it would not now be relevant in that context, and therefore to him I want to apologise, because it was not deliberately done. It was just part of the process, and therefore when we would have heard the Honourable Member speak, in fact even though in my speech I would have called the correct figure, the Estimates document actually has it different.

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He would have spoken to an accrual deficit of 8.3 per cent that is in the document and to be honest, I discussed it with him downstairs before we came up because they recognised there was an issue. The actual deficit, Mr. Speaker, on an accrual basis for 2011/12 is not 8.3 per cent but really 6 per cent of GDP. I just want to make that official correction for the press because it means that the Honourable Member would have cast a large part of this presentation...

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: It is still high. It is still something that we want to get down but the doom and gloom threat to the exchange rate and all of that stuff that the Honourable Member would have done, unfortunately, not to any fault of his own, I must say that honestly

because I do not think he was being mischievous or anything of that sort. He did not recognise it at the time even though he suspected that it may have been a little bit too high and we have made the correction. Mr. Speaker, it really should read as follows and the amended memorandum will come to the House.

A summary of Government operation and financing 2010-11, shown in Table 8, the overall fiscal deficit on an Accountant General's basis is projected at \$1 27.6 million or 12 per cent of nominal GDP at market prices estimated at \$8 564.0 million. When converted on an IFI or as we say, cash basis, the fiscal deficit is projected at \$584.4 million or 6.8 per cent which is what I had indicated and that part is correct but on an accrual basis the net operating balance is negative, \$515.6 million or 6 per cent of GDP.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Yes, rather than 707.

Mr. Speaker, we make that correction to the document. Everything else we will, of course, run through again to make sure there are no more mistakes.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: It is not 8.3 per cent. It is 6 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, having that out of the way, I want to turn to a couple of issues that were raised by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter in his presentation and also some other Honourable Members on the other side, who would have spoken in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make this point very clear, and I think I said it in my presentation. We did not come to Government with a recession in a back pocket and took it out as soon as got to Government Headquarters. We came and found a recession already in progress, late 2007, early 2008. Mr. Speaker, we could not have possibly imagined that the kind of financial and economic collapse that we saw globally could have happened in such a short space of time and to such an extent. It is amazing because one of the things that we have to do as politicians, I think, is to be honest with the people of Barbados.

We have had a recession which you have heard, Mr. Speaker, and which you know. Barbadians are not foolish. They can see on the television and they can encounter situations as they travel. At the height of this recession, for example, Mr. Speaker, in 2009, I visited Miami and I went into one of the more popular malls, I think they call it Dolphin Mall and you could run elephants through there and they would not touch a thing. There was absolutely no one in the Mall. If you went in a store there were only three

persons the store beside the staff. This is the extent to which this recession sunk into the very bowels, the belly of several economies. We in Barbados did not start the recession. It was no policy of the Democratic Labour Party but to get up and pretend, Mr. Speaker, or give the impression to the public of Barbados that what is happening in the Barbados economy is nothing to do with a global recession and it is entirely because the policy of the Democratic Labour Party is politically disingenuous, without credibility and certainly not fair and transparent in terms of political commentary, if there is such a thing.

Mr. Speaker, we came to office with businesses collapsing, Lehman Brothers folding, AIG having to be bailed out and in the United Kingdom, job-losses. As I said here before and I will say it again, the United States of America was losing jobs at a rate of 700 000 a month. Mr. Speaker, that is the context within which we are operating. These are our major trading partners. We rely on them for tourists. We rely on them for exports. We rely on them for almost everything.

The point I made last year in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, Mr. Speaker, and I think the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter has to take full responsibility for this - there are a lot of things that he has to take full responsibility for today - but one thing he has to take full responsibility for, as the presumed economic genius in Barbados, who in his debate in his speech a couple days ago admitted that he has never had to run an economy in a difficult period of any merit. He has never had to be in an economy that has had the difficulties which we have had to encounter. He said it, unless I hearing incorrectly.

In fact, he sympathised with me. He began his speech by saying I sympathise with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, the Minister of Finance because I - not even I the great economist - never had...

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. What the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter did say was that he knows what it is like to run the economy with major hotel premises out of operation at the same time but on no occasion did he suggest, Sir, that he never had such hard economy to run.

Mr. SPEAKER: I heard both statements.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As usual our friend, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, was busy doing his legal work while the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter was speaking. He was not listening to

a word he was saying so I understand why he would have difficulty remembering exactly.

Rt. Hon. O.A. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member is going to persist, Sir, I have to rise on a point of order. I did indicate at my very beginning that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West probably has the hardest hand to play of any Minister of Finance. I said that. I also said, Sir, that as far as I was concerned, I knew what it was to face difficult circumstances because I knew what it was to be in charge of a country's economic stewardship, with the three major economic enterprises in the country out of operation at the same time and I knew what it was to follow that, with Sam Lords also going out of operation. Sir, the notion that I never had to run an economy with problems, Mr. Speaker, is to distort the debate and I concede that I will agree that this Minister of Finance has the most difficult hand ever to play but to say that other Ministers of Finance including me, did not have difficult hands to play is to distort the record and unworthy of the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I am going to move on from this because I know what I heard, unless I misinterpreted him.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: If I misinterpreted what you said I apologise because I agree with you.

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I have had a very difficult hand dealt to me as Minister of Finance but I am applying myself to the task. You did not have as difficult a hand to deal with, except the closure of three hotels.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: The Honourable Member, Sir. His response was to invest over \$200 million of the Government's money in the GEMS Project. Mr. Speaker, with all of the jargon about building out capacity because we heard that in here... Building capacity sounds like an evangelical... Some of the Honourable Members sounded like evangelical preachers, building out capacity. The large majority of that BDS\$200 million was taken out of the Public Investment Fund which we created to put the proceeds of the sale of some of the assets which we had in Barbados, that is a fact. That was the Honourable

Member's response. Today, what we have to show for this additional capacity is three or four properties that cannot fetch an appropriate price, not even a breakeven price, for the taxpayers of Barbados to get back their investments.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of it was being done off budget, below the line accounts, in the books that the public of Barbados has to carry. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to get sidetracked because the Honourable Prime Minister spoke of some of the Honourable Member's friends and that is why I am not going down that road because we know which of the Honourable Member's friends were able to benefit handsomely from the GEMS Project. We know of GEMS and JAWS. The new advisor to the Leader of the Opposition can tell him all about JAWS because he knows about the JAWS. We are not going to go down there. We are not going to get there yet because a debate is coming on that soon and the public will be told the entire truth regarding that project.

I had to say to the Honourable Prime Minister only yesterday when I showed him a particular document, which I will speak about in this debate as I wrap up... The late Honourable Prime Minister must have had the same problem working in the Ministry of Finance. They got some files in there that you are frightened to touch because when you open them you do not know what will jump out at you.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Yes, you watch that movie "Snakes on Plane". It is like that movie "Snakes on Plane." You do not know what would drop out of the oxygen thing that they got in the top there when you open some of the files. I opened one and I am going to speak about it because the former Prime Minister and Right Honourable Member for St. Peter gave the impression in here that he was this great craftsman of fiscal prudence, who crafted this great policy in the Government where resources were responsibly used. Mr. Speaker, we are going to give lie to some of that this evening, so let me get on with the debate.

The impression they were giving is that we caused this recession, we were responsible for all the job losses in North America, Canada and Britain. Every single thing that has gone wrong in the world, the Democratic Labour Party is responsible for. The Honourable Member gets in here when he thought that the fiscal deficit on the accrual basis was 8 per cent... As I said, I am not going to reflect on that part of the speech because that was an error in the document. The Honourable Member, as a former Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of 14 years, who should know better, came in here deliberately, I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, this evening and to this Honourable House, with a lot of outlandish statements unsupported by facts to create fright and fear in this economy and mayhem in

Barbados to give the impression that the Democratic Labour Party was about to sink this country into an abyss. I am going to go through them one by one, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things the Honourable Member talked about was this issue of national insurance. The Honourable Member for St. Peter got in here and read from some document, which he did not make a document of the House, I distinctly remember that, saying that the Investment Manager wrote to the Director or somebody saying that NIS' exposure to Government was so great and tried to give the implicit underlying implication that at some level or the other this Government was putting the pensions of the workers and the people of Barbados at risk.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a dangerous piece of politics that the Right Honourable Member knows more than anybody else because of his seniority and because he is a former Minister of Finance and even in his new incantation as Leader of the Opposition, reduced so it is, that even a former Minister of Finance's word and a former Prime Minister's word can still have purchase in this economy and therefore I could only assume that when he made those comments, it was intended to create some level of mischief, and I really hope that is not the case.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we have to be responsible and that is why I am going to... I do not mind the Honourable Member for St. Joseph's comments about CLICO. I know what I meant when I said and I said what I meant. My text is here. I never told anybody not to talk about CLICO. I said probe if you will, investigate if you must but act responsibly, that is what I said. I never said the media should not probe and investigate, that is their job.

Mr. Speaker, I see some fellow writing in the paper today who all of a sudden has found a voice because up to a few years ago when the other Party was in office the only thing he used to write about was who horned who and who had who and all of a sudden now he is an expert on everything in Barbados to do with politics...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I do not mind. Write if you have to write, investigate, probe, ask tough questions but be responsible when you do it, that is my position and that is the position so eloquently outlined by the Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados.

Let me tell you about NIS, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister responsible for NIS, I am saying that the National Insurance Fund is stronger today than it has ever been in its history. The Honourable Member for St. Peter knows that. The latest actuarial review of the NIS has not questioned its capacity to be able to deliver. Indeed, the Honourable Member for St. Peter would admit that the NIS actually

may have a problem in that it has so much money at its disposal and in this very challenging economic environment, it has to decide where we are going to put this money.

I am chastened by the words of the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow when he was Prime Minister of this country that there is no safer place where you could put your money than in Government Paper, certainly not the Government of Barbados' Paper.

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Mr. Chairman, the National Insurance Scheme is a sound institution, but you would get the impression that we are doing something outlandish as far the National Insurance Scheme is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I will make this a document of this Honourable House. I have a printout from my ministry from the National Insurance, from 2000 to February 2011, in relation to Government's exposure. Sir across the board, the average exposure of the National Insurance Scheme to Government, for all those years, was no more than 65 or 66 per cent. At the end of December 2000, the exposure to Government generally was 69.7 per cent. Mr. Chairman, that is when the Government led by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter was in office. Sir, at February 11 this year, the exposure is 68.4 per cent. It is lower, it is no worse than it was in 2000. In fact, the figures would show that at December 2003, the level of exposure of the National Insurance Scheme to the Government of Barbados was 71.6 per cent. Mr. Chairman, this was under the great economist. Therefore, if in December 2003 the National Insurance Scheme was not in danger of going broke and people were not going to get their pensions, how on earth could it be today in the same position?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the words I used in this debate, that the concentration risk and exposure of the Government of Barbados...

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

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by indicating that the words "the exposure to the Government of Barbados is reaching an unacceptable level" are the words contained in the Investment Committee Report of the National Insurance of 16th March, 2003. Sir, they are not my words and I make this a document of this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am of the view that this is not the time to do that. You have already

made your speech. Unless you are contesting a breach of protocol or a breach of order which the Honourable Member has just mentioned, you are out of order.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the argument of Honourable Member is that I sought mischievously - the Honourable Member used the word mischievously - to try to put the National Insurance Scheme...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you do not have the Floor.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the words I used yesterday are not my words but are the words contained in the National Insurance Report itself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, let me hear the point of order.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, when I spoke in terms of the exposure reaching unacceptable levels, the Honourable Members said that I was being mischievous. Sir, I was simply reading the exact words from the manager of the Investment Committee, the report of the 16th March. They used words that "the concentration risk and exposure to the Government of Barbados were approaching an unacceptable level." These words were not my interpretation, they are in the report of the National Insurance Committee itself. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it a document of this Honourable House because the notion that I was trying to be mischievous really draws upon the fact that the Honourable Member thought it was my interpretation. Sir, they are the exact words of the National Insurance Committee itself and I make this a document of this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I understand what is now the Honourable Member's problem. Sir, I did not want to do it but the dethroned emperor has no clothes and I am going to clothe him today. Sir, anybody could write anything in a report, that is the opinion of the committee. The facts are the facts. The National Insurance Scheme is no more exposed today than it was in 2003. Sir, I am telling you to listen very carefully. Do not listen to what the Honourable Member is telling you, read between the lines. Mr. Speaker, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter came into this Honourable House and said that this Government was using the funds of the National Insurance Scheme to build a chancery or a house in London for the Ambassador.

Mr. Speaker, would you believe that the same Honourable Member would try to pretend, without success because those of us have the facts, that when I was Minister of Finance, I went to New York and opened a new chancery in New York, which was paid for out of the National Insurance Funds, which were approved by the Honourable Member, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs. Would you believe it?

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I went to New York, that building was a palatial building, with well-appointed fancy offices on the 5th and 9th floors. They were all brand new. Mr. Speaker, this was all done under the National Insurance Scheme but the Honourable Member would say he knows nothing about it. Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised that the Honourable Member would say that he does not know because it is a secret in Barbados, for those who are not paying attention, that in the last years of that administration, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter never used to go to work, the Honourable Member never used to come to Parliament and he never used to turn up at Cabinet.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, it is well-known, some of the public servants speak about it all the time. I do not listen to those conversations, they do not include me. I do not discuss politicians with public servants. I am not in that with anybody but you can hear as you walk through the corridors. How comes the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter gets all this energy, when in the dying days of the administration he would call on Thursdays and say: "Let Mottley chair the Cabinet."

Mr. Speaker, all of a sudden, washed in the blood of the lamb, the Honourable Member has shaken off the duppy dust and is now coming here to give us the impression that he has boundless energy to create impressions in this country that things are so bad and that this Government is causing stress in here.

Mr. Speaker, I make this a document of this Honourable House because it demonstrates that the National Insurance Scheme is no more exposed to Government than it was through the years. Sir, you can go through the years, in 2000, it was 69 per cent; in 2001, it was 66 per cent; in 2002 it was 69 per cent. In fact, Mr. Speaker, are you aware that when the Honourable Member was Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the National Insurance Scheme, he agreed that the National Insurance Scheme should advance a \$12 million loan to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, which the Honourable Member must have known that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation could not pay back. Sir, the

Honourable Member then charged that loan to the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. Chairman, that is the capacity they said they were building out. "When we borrowed fund, we build capacity to take the country forward." Mr. Speaker, the only capacity they were building was for people to get free cable television to watch programmes at nights. Could you imagine it?

3.47 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we are using the National Insurance Fund to do some things. We have decided that we want to build two buildings at Warrens for public officers who have been suffering in sick buildings and going home sick when the Honourable Member for St. Peter was the Prime Minister. Sir, you know the condition of some of the offices in which the staff of the Prime Minister works? Sir, the Honourable Member, the great economist, the financial manager, could not find ways to build appropriate quarters for even the people who served him but he gave \$12 million to CBC for cable TV. Sir, what a shame.

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Yes, to watch Lifetime for Women. I like the channel too, Mr. Speaker, but I pay for mine. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member then gets here and speaks about our capital works programme, one big spandangle, Sir. (1:34)

Rt. Hon. O.S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member has misled the House, Sir. The Honourable Member needs to tell the House not just what is the National Insurance exposure to Government at 70 per cent now but what will be the exposure of the National Insurance Scheme to the Government when once two buildings in Warrens are brought to account, when once, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the \$50 million that is to be borrowed for the hospital are brought to the account and that is precisely why the report is being written in the manner the report has been written. What really is going to be the exposure of the NIS when once you bring to account the two buildings that have not yet been finished in Warren and the other loans that NIS is being asked by the Government? Sir, he should give the House the full facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well. Honourable Member please continue.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member said that we do not have a capital works programme, the lowest amount on capital works. Sir, again, check the way in which the Honourable Member spins the argument because you would get the impression that this Government is doing no capital works

when the Honourable Member knows very well that what the Government of Barbados has been doing in the last few years, beginning with his administration, has been doing TPPs and other types of arrangements where the private sector, under Letters of Comfort or Guarantee Letter of Comforts from the Government of Barbados have been approaching financial institutions, borrowing money, building out capacity in the country for which the Government has taken responsibility thereafter. Sir, that is nothing new and, therefore, you will see increasingly going forward that Government's capital works budget is likely to be reducing to take more advantage of these arrangements.

Mr. Speaker, I said in my statement that one of the things that we will do is to put in place appropriate either legislation or executive rules governing how the private/public sector partnership arrangements are done because under his administration, Mr. Speaker, Sir, it was a very loose, informal type arrangement to the extent where we could not even get a proper contract for the the ABC Highway expansion.

Mr. Speaker, we have said on the DPP thing that we are going to clean it up. We brought all the ones they had to book. Sir, over \$500 million of off Budget expenditure. Sir, when you talk about deficits, over \$500 million of off Budget expenditure we had to bring on to the books and now we are now being accused of not doing capital works projects.

Sir, the Ministry of Housing has a whole set of projects about to go. The Honourable Member St. Michael South Central is going to shortly launch, with the National Housing Corporation - he is the Member of Parliament and he is going to be there - a housing project for \$50 million at Valery. Sir, at Valery, we are going to give you 18 units and we are going to the Grotto, working with the private sector to do an additional set of units up there. Sir, we are going to West Terrace and we are coming to Deacons.

Mr. Speaker, all of these are just about to be rolled out in this Government. They are not captured in the Estimates because they are not part of the Estimates. Sir, what is this wise counsel that comes from the great economist who has graced us with his presence, only for the Estimates. Sir, I understand what the problem really is.

Mr. Speaker, our capital works programme is well on the way and because you do not see \$500 million on capital works in this document, do not give the impression to the public that we will be doing nothing when, in fact, we said that the capital works programme would be part of our effort to get the economy going again to get people employed. Sir, what we did is that we put in the \$4 million for polyclinic in St. John even though the Barbados Labour Party went to St. John and said there would never be a polyclinic but, Sir, it is in there.

Mr. Speaker, I would like through you to invite the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter to come on Saturday when we have the ground breaking and, Sir, he could bring Hutson Phillips with him too but do not bring the other fellow because they have fowls up there and we do not anybody to have any fowls missing, so leave him home in St. Peter.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we move on. Sir, the Honourable Member then goes on with his carefully crafted message to frighten people. He said that in January of this year the foreign reserves declined by \$16 million. He said there are record numbers of tourists but that they are not spending anything so the reserves declined by \$60 million. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I went to the Press to respond to that matter...

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, I was called at my office one night and told that a story was going to be going out that a former member of this House was claiming that the reserves had climbed to \$60 million. Sir, at first I was not going to respond but I opened up the computer and told them that I would respond. I told them that as Minister of Finance that I would be honest and upfront with people and that the reserves declined by \$60 million. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you know what, there is a saying that you throw out a sprat to catch a whale. Sir, I know certain people so well...

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, what disappointed me is that the Honourable Member for St. Peter, who I know, knows better has taken up with that argumentation and brought it to this House repackaged as though it was news when we all admitted that it happened. Sir, I said to myself that I could go the full gamut of this and respond but I will just throw a little sprat out there and catch a thousand.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would know what I am talking about, down Brandons before the highway, we used to go fishing and catch thousands. You would put a little thing in a net, they would come running and you catch them. Sir, he is not a whale, he is a thousand. Sir, you would call him a thousand.

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Sir, you put a little thing in a net and they come running and you catch them. He is not a whale. He is a thousand. That is what you will call him. So I responded by saying that the reserves declined because we had to pay for the Prison, among other things. Not satisfied, the thousand ran to the radio, "I must not be defined in this country, because every time I comment somebody has to comment behind me." That is after saying that the Minister of

Finance should comment on the decline. It is amazing, and, "Oh, that bill should not come as a surprise because it is there."

Mr. Speaker, never before in the history of Barbados have we had to deal with paying thirty-odd million dollars out of our reserves on a prison. Sir, it does not matter how that amount is there, it bound to come to a surprise to any Minister of Finance when January comes around. You do not get accustomed to \$30 million. That is like somebody giving you a pay pack of \$2 000 and every day after you get pay they take out \$1 000, and you say, "Oh, you should know that the \$1 000 is coming out, so you should not be surprised." Of course, it is going to surprise you. Sir, it is not so much how much you are paying, it is what you are paying for?

Mr. Speaker, the facts were, that is why I say I throw out a sprat to catch a thousand. You know that a sprat is a little bigger than a thousand, so it is impossible for the thousand to really eat the sprat, but I threw out the sprat, because I had in front of me the daily report on the foreign reserves, which the Prime Minister gets, the Governor of the Central Bank gets, the Director of Finance gets, the Leader of the Opposition, I am sure gets them, so he must know, and I get. Sir, up to when I was speaking, every cent of the \$60 million was made back in February, up to the end of February early March.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: It had nothing to do with the sale of the NIS shares. That is why I brought this and I am going to make it a document of the House.

Mr. Speaker, this is the significant reserve movement produced by the Central Bank for 2011, and this was March 2, 2011.

Non resident deposit to local accounts, CDB, IADC, World Bank, \$10 046 000; accrued interest on foreign securities, \$4.64 million; purchases from First Caribbean Bank, \$52.5 million, and those were on February 7th, 14th and 28th. Those were in relation to Emera. Purchase of foreign exchange from commercial banks, \$29.38 million. Do you know what that really has to be, because we were being made to believe that a tourist spends money in January and the Central Bank gets the pass through in January or early February, impossible. It has never happened in Barbados. It cannot happen. We do not have satellite registering of things. When people swipe a card in Barbados there is no direct link that carries the month. It has to come on the following month or later.

Sir, in fact, most of the hotels operate on the basis of post payment. They have to send an invoice in many respects to the tour operators, who arrange the deals for

them to be paid weeks after the tourist has left the hotel. I know that. The former Minister of Finance knows that, and the person who used to go there must know it, who used to go up at the Ministry of Finance and lime every day must know it. Sir, almost \$30 million, on March 2nd from Butterfield Bank, \$3.4 million, and funds from the World Bank, HIV/AIDS Project, \$3.2 million.

Sir, the outflows, debt service for CDB/IDB loans, \$17.16 million. Interest due on Prison, January 14th, \$29.97 million; that is the interest. Interest due on Scotia bank and Merchant Bank, a \$120 million, fixed rate bonds, January 31st, \$5.82 million; interest due on Deutsche Bank, US\$200 million loan, February 2nd, \$14 million; goods and services, \$33 million; purchase of foreign exchange from commercial banks, \$5.7 million.

Sir, the inflow was \$101.25 million and the outflow was \$1.67 million. So the net loss was marginal, negligible. Sir, I make this a document of the House. This rumour mongering...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: If you want to see it, come and get it.

Sir, this kind of thing. Oh, the reserves have declined. We are not making any money. The world is coming to an end. In fact, the latest printout from the Central Bank indicated that the reserves at March 14, 2011, that was Monday gone, was \$1 448.9 million. We began the year at \$1 450 million.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: It does not matter where it was in 2008. The fact of the matter is we have not lost any significant position in the international reserves of this country, and to give the impression by anybody that this is the case, in my view, is a dangerous piece of mischief designed to create confusion and mayhem in this society and weaken people.

Sir, do you know why I am saying that? Even why I say what I said about Clico, and I am going to make this point, because I am not going back to Clico. I am going to make this point. Sir, I am coming home shortly. I made that point to say this.

Sir, I met with some people from the Pickerin Project. Mr. Speaker, I want you to listen very carefully. I met some people from Pickerin. I met them on a previous occasion when they talked about the project and so forth. They went to see the Honourable Minister of Housing and they came to see me for an update on what was happening. Sir, they have indicated to me, as they did to the

Honourable Member, and I am sure that they have indicated to the Prime Minister as well, that the project is ready to move ahead from June 2011, with the first thirty-seven houses.

Sir, this is the point I want to make. The Pickerin people came to see me with a team, quantity surveyors, architects and builders, who are our brothers and sisters from Jamaica. I was happy to receive them in the Ministry of Finance, but when they came and I was speaking to them, I discovered that the contracting team, the lead contracting team on the Pickerin Project will be a Jamaican construction firm. Do you know why, and that depressed me, and I was about to ask, in fact I did ask, how come this massive piece of work in St. Lucy has landed in the hands of a Jamaican company, CSME albeit, and not one of our local contracting firms. Do you know what the principals of that project told me? That because of the irresponsible comments of people in Barbados, they did not say who they meant, but I knew exactly who they meant because we heard it not only in this House, we heard it in the St. John bi-election, that contractors in Barbados refused, when asked to bid on the project, because they felt, based on what was told to them by certain Members of this House that the project had no money.

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Sir, loose talk, dangerous talk, similar to what we had in the speech by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter caused contracting firms in Barbados to back away from a project for which they could have been making millions of dollars and employing Barbadians in this country. They say that loose lips sink ships. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West said that in here.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Well, drunk lips too. All kinds of fancy lips can sink, Mr. Speaker, that is why I am making the point. We have to be very, very, very careful. Yes, you want to become a Prime Minister again. I do not know why after 14 years anybody would want to be a Prime Minister again. Perhaps I was not a Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, so I would not understand. If I were a Prime Minister of 14 years, would I drag myself up off my bed to corral my colleagues in a private location to depose a young upcoming leader of an Opposition just because I want to become the Leader of the Opposition in Barbados to create mayhem and confusion. Mr. Speaker, it is a dangerous type of politics that all of the grandstanding about being a statesman, we give the lie to all of it because we know underlying that is a basic desire, an inner hunger. Michael Manley spoke about inner hunger, the education of a Prime Minister. This is inner hunger, the misbehaviour of former Prime Minister. *Asides.*

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I saw in the Hilton Hotel upon a glass board that hunger makes a cat eat salt but I do not know what kind of hunger this is. I have to ask myself what can drive a human being to want to be something so badly that they would prefer to act in a way that could potentially destroy this country. It is a serious thing. If that is what politics has come to, I am very depressed this evening, Mr. Speaker, let me come into the concluding part of my speech because I promise not to waste a lot of time in this debate on what I have been hearing.

Mr. Speaker, we talk in this country about subsidies and transfers and I heard the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter talking about subsidies and transfers. He said that you need to cut these things, let us form a national commission on cutting.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, that is what the Honourable Member said.

When the Honourable Member was Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member added so many statutory boards and corporations to the structure of the Government of Barbados and let us face it, Barbados does not have local Government. We stopped having that for a number of years and we decided to go the route of forming these statutory boards, corporations, commissions like the UDC, the RDC, and so on to provide services because they are largely service providing organisations, so we accept that is part of the structure. I do accept the argument from the former Leader of the Opposition whom I have no beef for but frankly, I think would have given a much better presentation. At least, it would have had a slightly better form, if not the greatest degree of substance.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the former Leader of the Opposition, that we have to look at the entire thing in Barbados. In my view, that was a profound speech that the Honourable Member gave in contrast to what the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter did. Why? Because it set you thinking, not that we have not thought about it before. I discussed this matter with the Cabinet and with the Prime Minister and we have agreed that once we get through the stabilisation and growth phase, we have to move to a phase of restructuring. We have to do the real restructuring in this economy to ensure that we can put it on a sustainable footing going forward.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, the thousand used to call for restructure, restructure, restructure. Now, you can imagine it, no restructuring took place. This was the laughable part because the Right Honourable Member for

St. Peter's speeches went from scrambling and rambling to false fury and mock anger and then ended up with the laughable parts so that is why I am at the end now, the laughable parts. The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter stood up - no more than about four feet five inches when he is standing erect - and indicated to this House, Mr. Speaker, with all seriousness, "I have not heard from the Minister of Finance about a restructuring plan for the sugar industry." Mr. Speaker, I turned to my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. George South and asked if I heard correctly and if my ears are working.

Mr. Speaker, this Democratic Labour Party under the late Prime Minister David Thompson when he was the Minister of Finance, at pains and at great lengths to his credit, restructured the Barbados Sugar Industry and put it on a sustainable path, the only person to have the courage to do it, Mr. Speaker, saved as he said, a lot of banks in Barbados which were going to go under. Mr. Speaker, for 14 years the great economist occupied the seat as Minister of Finance, did not lift a finger to complete that Restructuring Plan and then comes into this Parliament to say, where is the Restructuring Plan for sugar. Mr. Speaker, could you imagine it? Now what could be more laughable than that?

Mr. Speaker, do you know what he admitted his restructuring plan for sugar was? His Restructuring Plan for sugar was to move it from under the Ministry of Finance into the Ministry of Agriculture and his greatest complaint is that when we came back in office, we moved it from Agriculture back into Finance. All that the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, the great economist, did for sugar in Barbados was to move it out of Finance because he did not want to see it, he did not want to touch it, he did not want to extend the energy or brainpower for coming up with a proper restructuring plan for sugar and I say shame on him.

When he hears the word, sugar, he keeps silent. Mr. Speaker, we have to be very clear on these matters so this Democratic Labour Party comes back into office 14 years later and I as the Minister of Finance now have to be sitting down with a whole set of people from the sugar industry trying to come up with a restructuring plan for sugar in Barbados. Sir, that is why when the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter spoke, the Honourable Member knew that the guaranteed price of sugar protocol was going to be collapsed by the EU. The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter is an international trade specialist, with a big lecture in here the day before yesterday about the EPA. I told him to leave the EPA alone. EPA, what are you doing for the EPA and he got a centre page spread in the Nation Newspaper by the people who do not know what the letters, EPA stands for but they were caught in by all that political palaver. The EPA. The Honourable Member knew that sugar was under pressure and that it would dissolve

eventually because the guaranteed price was going to fall as the protocol had to come to an end under WTO rules and the Common Agriculture Reform Policy in Europe.

What did he do for 14 years to restructure the sugar industry? Now there are workers in that industry who face the specter of going home, just because the great economists and Prime Minister in this country sat idly in the seat of power and refused to act on their behalf. Mr. Speaker, I do not presume to be taking any lectures from the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter on anything to do with the sugar industry. He had 14 years to do it, he did not do it and now he is asking to be the Minister of Finance again to go back in there and idle.

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People work up there. We do not want any idlers up there, we want people who are going to work. Sir, this is what we have to deal with. He gave a lecture from EPA, oh, EPA, EPA, EPA, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade is not doing any work. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something. You see this EPA business, get the position very clear, Sir, because when you listen to people speaking, including the Honourable Member for St. Peter, you have to wonder.

The Honourable Member presumes to lecture this Government about implementing treaty obligations under EPA. The Honourable Member was Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and the Minister responsible for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. I can tell you today, Mr. Speaker, that a substantial part of the CARICOM single market project, particularly in the single economy, has not been implemented by the Honourable Member for St. Peter. I know one that he agreed to in CARICOM. The Honourable Member agreed that by 2009, because he assumed that he would have been still Prime Minister, Barbados should open up and have full free movement without putting anything in place. No contingent rights agreement was in place and no measures were in place to protect our education and health care, he was just opening up the floodgates for anybody to come.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. The obligation to the free movement of labour within CARICOM was agreed to in 1989 as part of the Grand Anse Declaration. It is embraced in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas giving effect to the Grand Anse Declaration. I did not, Mr. Speaker, invent the concept of full mobility of labour. It was agreed to by Mr. Erskine Sandiford in 1989.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I had a lecturer at university in history called Professor Woodville Marshall, who used to talk about the generation gap but this is the generation gap in reverse because I am trying my best to speak English language but the Honourable Member seems to have a difficulty understanding it. The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas agreed to at Grand Anse had a whole set of principles in it, hassle-free travel, single currency, a whole lot of things but there is a scheduling...

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas was not agreed to at Grand Anse. The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas was agreed to in 2001. Grand Anse was in 1989. The commitment as a policy to the free movement of Labour was agreed to in 1989 in the Grand Anse Declaration subsequently incorporated into a Revised Treaty. If the Honourable Member does not understand that of which he speaks, he should just shut up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thanks for the elucidation. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, look how we split hairs. Everybody knows that the Grand Anse Declaration is the foundation document for the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. The general declaration is the principle upon which the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas is done so we are trying to split hairs now but that is not the point. Wherever it was agreed, that Honourable Member when he was Minister responsible for CARICOM Affairs, in particular the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, agreed at the Heads of Government meeting that there should be free movement in CARICOM by 2009. We came to office and found that absolutely nothing was put in place to accommodate it and he called us xenophobic and all kinds of things that he says about us. How could the Honourable Member come here to lecture us about the implementation of the EPA? I made this point to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade as I would make to all my colleagues, whether finance or former foreign ministers, in CARICOM, that recession in 2009...

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is again misleading the House. A Task Force on Functional Cooperation drawing from Sir George Allen and all others were assembled to develop a programme to deepen functional cooperation to address the issues of labour mobility as an accompanying measure to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. The Report was commissioned and laid and since 2008, it has not been acted upon. The concept of labour mobility being liberalised with the provision of common services was addressed as a common approach. There is a report available on functional cooperation and the provision of common services to deal with the fallout from labour

mobility. It has been lying idle for two years and has not been acted upon.

The notion therefore, Mr. Speaker, that one was committing the region to labour mobility but was not seeking to address how the effects of it could be managed and neutralised, is a notion that is misleading the House. I would urge that the Honourable Member should go and read the Task Force Report because people like Sir George Allen and some of the best people in the region were called upon in a Task Force to prepare how we treat to the fallout from labour mobility. It is to mislead the House to put these assertions in the records of this Parliament and I would urge that they should be removed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member. Can you give a point of order on a point of order?

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. ...That the minister made in relation to the settling of freedom of movement by 2009. The Minister, however so, is misleading the House. Mr. Speaker, in 2006, a decision was made for that to be an aspirational goal of the Heads of Government, I happened to have been at the meeting myself. To say that it was done without any form of preparation is untrue because there was also a corresponding committee working on contingent rights. I have no interest to serve in this matter, Sir, but those are the facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, the Heads of Government, with the Honourable Member for St. Peter as lead Prime Minister for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy agreed, this is a fact, that there should be the free movement of people around the region by 2009.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. If he does not know what he is talking about, he should ask a question. The Heads of Government agreed to a phasing in of labour mobility. We started with five categories. We agreed that additional categories, including nurses and artisans should be liberalised by 2009 and that the region would work toward full mobility by 2015 but that the process of managing labour mobility in the region would be phased. We started with five categories and you added and added and added depending upon shortages in the region. We moved from sportsmen and others to nurses and others on the understanding that the thing should be phased. The notion that the Heads of Government have just said liberalise is wrong and should not enter into the record of Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, that is the third time though that you have made that point in a different way, so I have heard the end of that as a point of order. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much and I will restate the position. The Heads of Government, all of them, with the Honourable Member for St. Peter as the leader on CARICOM Single Market and Economy issues agreed... Mr. Speaker, I notice the contortion. The more you get the points of order, it changes. They agreed on a phased basis to masons, maids, carpenters and then agreed in principle that in 2009 we should move to full free movement, that is a fact. I am saying that whether they agree to the full movement, movement of maids, carpenters, artisans or whoever, the appropriate arrangements were not put in place.

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In fact, we came to office and found an Immigration Act that needed to be properly updated, reformed and amended. Sir, we had to start that work and we will complete it.

Mr. Speaker, I have made this point on the Economic Partnership Agreement, when I was Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, we agreed to establish an Economic Partnership Agreement Implementation Unit, which is headed by a former Ambassador to Brussels, one of the lead negotiators for CARICOM and Barbados. Mr. Speaker, that person has gone through the entire Economic Partnership Agreement and pulled out all the things we have to do and all the areas of which we have to take advantage.

Mr. Speaker, the year 2008 was a game changer because the conditions under which we negotiated the Economic Partnership Agreement changed radically with the massive recession with which we had to contend. I am saying today to this Parliament that as a sovereign country...Sir, the Economic Partnership Agreement is not something Barbados is doing alone, it is a regional agreement, it is the whole of CARIFORUM, including the Dominican Republic. Sir, I heard the Honourable Member saying that Barbados is not downloading the money, but Barbados alone cannot download the money, it has to be done through a pool of people, including the private sector. Sir, it is not for Government to tell the European Union that we want 90 million Euros or whatever the case may be. In fact, the Honourable Member must know that under the 10th European Development Fund, because it was under his Government, that an agreement was made up with the European Union to get budget support to do certain things to help put the country in a position to be able to contend with the Economic Partnership Agreement. That is a fact. Mr. Speaker, the International Business Sector is getting

some of that money, health care is getting some of that money, education is getting some also. Therefore, how could the Honourable Member come here and give the impression that we have sat idly by and have done absolutely nothing, when we are accessing that money all now?

Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that the Economic Partnership Agreement is a trade agreement. Sir, in a sense countries do not trade, only private entities trade. We can only create the framework, the facilities, the agreements, the provisions to facilitate trade but Barbados does not sell onions to anybody - we can buy them from them - it is the private companies that buy and sell. Sir, you could take a horse to the water as much as you like, whether that water is cool-aid, brandy or anything else, that horse is not going to drink unless it wants to drink. Mr. Speaker, we have done every possible thing for that to go forward.

Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Finance, I have signed off on the implementation of the aspects of the Economic Partnership Agreement that we need to implement. That should have started on January 1. Sir, if you listened to the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, you would feel that heaven was going to come down and crush us because of the EPA, when the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter knows that the Economic Partnership Agreement has been negotiated in a way for a phased introduction of the removal of duties and tariffs in various baskets. Therefore, we started with the ones that are going to have the least effect first. We start with the one that are going to have minimal impact. Sir, the baskets go over 25 years. Sir, it gets progressively harder but we front-loaded the easy ones first, so that the impact would be minimal.

Mr. Speaker, for the Honourable Member wanting to give the impression that next week, when we implement the provisions of the Economic Partnership Agreement, all hell is going to break loose in Barbados, could only be designed to give a certain impression that things are going to collapse in Barbados and that the only person who could save it was the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter and the thousands. Sir, this is what this is about.

Mr. Speaker, there is a kind of a sick pleasure, that is how we have reached in politics in Barbados, not from the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter because he knows better, I hope. Mr. Speaker, you know what they say, you are known by the company you keep. There is this sick pleasure that some people in Barbados want to see this country fail because it would boost their stocks and they would get into Government. Is that what we have come to in this country, that every time you hear a little bad news about Barbados they would bound to a newspaper or to the radio and make comments that we do not know what we are doing, that we need the economic dream team? Mr.

Speaker, it is almost as though it is some kind of happiness, some kind of an internal delight or some kind of orgasmic feeling that Barbados is doing badly. This is what is happening. Is this what politics has been reduced to in Barbados? Mr. Speaker, if that is what it is, personally, I would like to shut shop and go. I do not need it.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, if that is what it has come to, we might as well all go home. Sir, as Barbadians we all have to put our shoulders to the wheel and work for the betterment of this country. Sir, whether it is a Barbados Labour Party or a Democratic Labour Party in power, at the end of the day we all have to live here. I am not going anywhere because I do not have anywhere to go, nobody wants me anyhow. I have to live here, so I want my children, their children and I to live comfortably in a country that can afford them free education, free health care and good social services. Therefore, unlike some members who are hanging around this now male-dominated chauvinistic Party called the Barbados Labour Party, I am not going to say or do anything.

Mr. Speaker, that is another point but we will deal with that another time, that is not for the Estimates debate, that is about how they treat women. Mr. Speaker, this male-dominated chauvinistic Party feels that they could call Press conferences and can cause confusion in this country. They feel they can lecture people on fiscal prudence. Let me tell you about fiscal prudence and I will close on this point. Mr. Speaker, do you remember and Honourable Members would recall that we had a project in Barbados called the Greenland Landfill Project, which is well-known to many Barbadians. It is a project which was signed off on by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter when he was Prime Minister.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: He certainly did not object to it. Sir, against the very best technical advice and local knowledge, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter and his Government were told not to put a dump there. They were told that it will never work, that there was too much water seeping from the bottom, that there was too much slippage from the top and besides that it is a national park. Sir, you do not place a dump in a national park but Mr. Speaker, the arrogance, boastfulness and bombastedness led that Government under the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, to ignore very strong technical advice. Sir, to the constellation of everybody and to the ruination of the accounts of this country, the guardian of the accounts and resources of this country, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter approved the project and the project spent BDS\$28 million on the first phase.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North got into this Honourable House and said: "O, we spent money because we had it. We incurred supplementaries because we were running a deficit of 1 per cent, so we could afford to lick out money on a highway, on GEMS, on Greenlands." Sir, do you know if you have a deficit of 1 per cent and all that money came in, had we saved that money, when the recession hit, we would have had some hay in the barn to be able to help. We would not have to be running the kinds of deficits that we are now running, but we came and found the cupboards bare. Sir, like old Mother Hubbard, we went up to the cupboard to give the dog a bone and found nothing.

4.38 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Barbados Labour Party to office in 1994 finding a recommendation from a technical committee that had been established to advice on the move from Mangrove, a recommendation from a technical committee that Greenland was the preferred site. The Honourable Member may want to go and do his full investigation but the Barbados Labour Party came to office finding recommendation already made. Sir, that is a fact. Sir, to see that we invented the decision, we inherited it. Sir, I just wanted to put that in the record for the sake of completeness if we are going to proceed in this debate with reference to the truth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member please proceed.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the facts would say that close to \$50 million were expended and not even a toffee paper...

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you understand that we should have saved some of this money for a rainy day. Sir, that is why I said this to the Honourable Member for St. Peter in the Budget speech, Proverbs 6, verse 6:

"Go to the ant thou sluggard,
consider its ways and be wise."

Sir, I said that because the ant gathers unto itself hay in the time of summer for food in the time of winter. Sir, but not the great economist and Minister of Finance. He spent a wash of Barbadian money on the thing...

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: I am not talking about Greenland because we have heard that. It is the consequences of Greenland because, Mr. Speaker, you know that Government came into office in 1994, and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas would remember this. The Honourable Member was not the Member of Parliament at the time but she would remember 'Mount Stinkeroo', they call it, and a promise was made by the former member of St. Thomas that whenever the Barbados Labour Party got back into office they would close the landfill at Mangrove Pond.

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: It justified the effort to find a landfill but not the mess that became Greenland. Sir, there were alternative site identified by the last Government refused to accept the advice of the technical team that showed that there were other sites because they wanted to put the landfill in Greenland to spite the Honourable Member for St. Andre. Mr. Speaker, Sir, notice that I have St. Andre and not St. Andrew, because I am using the old Barbadian pronunciation. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew is not in his seat today, as usual.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point is this, having failed, the Honourable Member for St. Peter was not finished, the great economist was not finished. He said, "Oh, do not worry about that, pass that off, that is only \$60 million of the Government's money. We are swimming in money and we can do it another way". Sir, because it they did not get Greenland done, the Government of the day, the Barbados Labour Party Government had to find an alternative because Mangrove Pond landfill was running out of space and the garbage was piling up in Barbadian home in terms of volume but, where could you sent it, and what could you do with it?

Mr. Speaker, the last Government came up with the brilliant idea, and got the concurrence of the Honourable Member for St. Peter, to do partnership with a local firm. Sir, I do not blame the local firm because I like the local firm I feel the people behind are industrious, they see an opportunity and they go after it. They saw an opportunity with the Desalination Plant and they went after it. We argued about the fundamentals of that Desalination Plant agreement. How much money they are paying for the when the month comes. Sir, they are paying hundred of thousands of dollar, more than \$9 million a year for water from the Desalination Plant. (5:28)

Mr. Speaker, a Desalination Plant that is operating under the last Government at 60 per cent of its capacity. It had another 40 per cent that could be used by the Government of Barbados under the last Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the great economist was paying for the 100 per cent while only tapping into 60 per cent. Sir, it is

absolutely shame. Mr. Speaker, Sir, apart from the fact that he agreed to allow them to put it down on the pasture down Spring Garden and stop my fellows in Black Rock from getting a little kick ball. Sir, that is another point but will solve the problem shortly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me tell you. have the greatest respect for the people who own that company and who the other company that Government caused to be created because of their inept, financial, environmental and economic management. Sir, do not let it go abroad to the newspapers that I said anything about the people because I like them. They are Barbadians, they work hard, they see an investment, they go after it and you cannot blame them for that. Sir, that is what the Barbadian way is about, and I say more power to them.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that because they failed on Greenland and Mangrove Pond landfill was running out of space they had to come up with an initiative to ensure, either that they find a new landfill, which they could not go back to the Barbadians with because they knew that Barbadians would never accept it, having made a mess of Greenland, they went for what we call a garbage treatment facility. Sir, a garbage treatment facility is a good idea because this is what it does. You treat the garbage and by doing so, you reduce the amount that eventually has to go into the actual landfill, so that you could extend the life of the landfill. Sir, there is nothing bad about that but we ended up at that stage because the Honourable Member for St. Peter and his then Minister made a mess of Greenland to the extent, Sir, that October 15, 2007, the Cabinet approved an agreement for the company so called SPRC Barbados Recycling Centre to design, construct and operate a transfer station chemical waste storage facility and composting facility at Vauxcluse in St. Thomas and the Minister of Finance agreed with it and supported it to the extent where the Honourable Minister of Finance indicated, sat in the Cabinet, chaired the meeting and approved that project.

Asides.

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: I will read it for you. In fact, the Minister said that he wanted that transfer station to be on a contract agreement for 20 years.

Sequence 33

Rt. Hon. O.S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Greenland Project was part of an integrated solid waste management that had many various components. The intention was that only the inerrant material should go to Greenland and you would have many components, including a composting facility that if things could be composted, you do not send it to Greenland, that you have

hazard waste management somewhere else, and a place called a Transfer Station where what was to be sent to Greenland would be taken out and what had to be sent to Greenland would be sent to a composting facility. So there was not just a Greenland Project. There was an Integrated Solid Waste Management Project comprising all of those various facilities, multi dimensional, and a Transfer Station had to be put in because we did not want to transfer to Greenland things that did not have to go to Greenland.

Sir, if the Member does not understand the project he should ask, but he is seriously misleading the House when he treats a Transfer Station as part of an Integrated Solid Waste Management Project as something that is wrong.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, the Honourable Member is missing the point. The Government of Barbados agreed with SBRC to establish a Solid Waste Treatment Plant. The Honourable Member said it was part of an integrated plan. An integrated plan on a myth, because the Greenland was never created. So if Greenland was not created, why do you need the plant? That is simple logic. Well Greenland collapsed, why would you sign the agreement on a twenty-year deal that will cost the public of Barbados \$600 million of the taxpayers money, and I will tell you what is worse. The great economist, as Minister of Finance, that we all are supposed to bow down to as though worshipping confusion, we are to bow down to this great economist, saddled the public of Barbados with a \$600 million project. Sir, do you know what surprised me at the Estimates, that is why when you heard me give my speech on opening this debate I talked about tipping fees, because when I first saw it I asked what was tipping fees. I thought it was something you give when you go into a restaurant and you tip a fellow.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I thought it was some little 'trala' that you give a fellow when you go into a restaurant, or if you go and you see a Caddy and he carry you up, a Valet or something. You give a fellow a little 'berry' as we would call it, or a 'trala' and say, "put that in your pocket".

Sir, I heard tipping fees, and I saw an estimate for tipping fees, almost BDS\$30 million. I ask what were tipping fees? Sir, under the Sanitation Services Authority transfer, \$30 million. That is what this Honourable Member for St. Peter cost the public of Barbados, not only \$30 million for a prison every year...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: The fundamentals of that agreement were passed by the last Cabinet, signed, sealed and delivered.

Mr. SPEAKER: Members, let us have some order, please. Honourable Member please continue.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, imagine...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let us proceed. Honourable Member please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: You know when the licks start to share in here, they disappear.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, are you still addressing the Chair? Let us have some order, please. Let the Members settle.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, I am going to come home soon.

Rt. Hon. O.S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. Sir, fees were signed off by the then Minister, who is not here, after review by the Democratic Labour Party Cabinet. The Member is scoring an old goal. We did not sign off on tipping fees, and if tipping fees are an issue now, the Member should go and check the facts. It was reviewed and signed off by the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I know the discomfort that the former Minister of Finance has. Sir, Government is a continuum. It continues. This Government's hands were tied because in principle both in writing and verbally it was agreed that the project should have gone ahead, and the person who was building it had started the construction by the time we came into office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please let us have some order.

Asides.

Dr. W.F. Duguid: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I was in this House when a former Prime Minister fired a contractor on the Floor of the House. You do not have to sign off on it if you do not agree. It is obvious that the Democratic Labour Party agreed to the matter and signed off on it.

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

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a minute. Honourable Members, please. Honourable Member I want it struck from the records "they wanted kickbacks". Please strike that from the record. Honourable Member please continue.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude because I understand the difficulty the Barbados Labour Party is having whenever I speak. They feel that because - life is a very funny thing. I said before, as I spoke to the Honourable Prime Minister, my leader, and I said to him, he said right here and I said, "Prime Minister the honest truth is, that when you open files in the Ministry of Finance you do not know what you will find in there."

The Honourable Member for St. Peter and his Government put a garland of \$30 million on. Sir, do you know that the entire budget of the Sanitation Services Authority is about \$31 million, give or take a million. They have got an agreement tied around the public's neck for total value of all the money that we give to the Sanitation Services Authority. That is what the great former Minister of Finance did, shame.

Sir, not only do we have to write off the \$200 million for GEMS...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Not only do we have to write off the \$200 million for GEMS, not only do we have to pay the money for Barrack's building, that the National Housing Corporation is in, not only do we have to pay \$30 million every January for a prison, but now we have to find thirty-odd million because of the political and economic mismanagement of the Barbados Labour Party around the necks of Barbadians.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please let us have some order so that we can conclude. Honourable Member just a minute. Let us get some order, please.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I understand the discomfort they feel, but that discomfort is felt throughout Barbados by thousands of people who today because of the financial mismanagement of the Honourable Member for St. Peter, cannot get things in this country that they are supposed to be getting from a caring Government.

Sequence 34

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that when the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter and his team come here to lecture you or I on anything to do with financial prudence and fiscal prudence listen to it, but take all of it with a pot of salt because it is worth nothing more than

that. It is not worth the paper it was written on. It is all froth and no beer. Mr. Speaker, ignore it.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, as I said, this Government has tried to craft Estimates that are credible, that are relevant and that are flexible enough to allow this country to function and to bring itself out of this recession. I commit myself as Minister of Finance, as we all commit ourselves in this Government to building greater pathways to progress for the people of Barbados. We do not lay down our arms, Sir, we go out to fight every day, to fight to ensure that Barbados can continue to be the great country that it is and I give the assurance that as long as there is breath in my body, I will come to work every day on behalf of the people of Barbados.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member has sought to mislead the House and the answer really lies in the very document that he has laid in this Chamber.

In 2009-2010 under the document Revised Estimates of Expenditure Dying Heads and Dead Heads, the figure of \$36 172 113 was spent for the Sanitation Service Authority. If he was not finishing his speech now, I would go into 2007-2008 and to 2008-2009 but the fundamental point is that there was a jump from \$36.1 million to \$63.8 million in 2010 and 2011 thereby showing that any increase or any sums paid by any contractual entity by Government to any person providing services at Vaucuse occurred not in 2007 but in fact occurred in the last financial year which is about to die, so that in the circumstances, Sir, even if there was a commitment in principle to the concept of tipping fees, \$30 million in tipping fees could only have been agreed by the Minister who is not now present, and is not now able to defend himself and I would not therefore seek to say more because he is not present and the current Minister here was not part of that decision. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy was not part of this decision.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East for tying the noose around the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter's neck a little tighter by that intervention. Thank you very much.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, the way in which the agreement was structured by the Barbados Labour Party allowed for the tipping fees to increase as the

volume increases, is exponential. It is not what it ends up as in the Estimates. It is what it grows by every time there is a tip.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: They did not have a contract for the Highway either but we still have to deal with it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please address the Chair.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Last year the late Prime Minister Thompson in his wrap up, spoke eloquently about the Prison and he went through many administrations. We heard of the late Grantley Adams Administration and Adult Suffrage, that was his legacy. We heard, Sir, about the late Right Excellent Errol W. Barrow and free education, that was his legacy. We heard about the late J.M.G.M. (Tom) Adams and the international business sector and the Central Bank, that was his legacy. He heard of Erskine Sandiford's saving the Barbados dollar, that was his legacy.

Sir, 14 years of the great of the great economist, the great Prime Minister reincarnated, washed in the blood of the lamb with a Damascus experience returned here for another term as Prime Minister of this country, and we are still scratching and clawing to find beyond the Prison and now we hear another \$30 million garland around the necks of the people of Barbados what his legacy will be, cannot find it.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Therefore when he speaks about the Honourable Member for St. Michael South that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South is a Prime Minister idling at the wheel, Mr. Speaker, and they say this Government does not have a driver, I prefer to drive with the steady assured hands of the driver we have now.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, than to be driving with any other driver, a wasteful spendthrift driver. I refuse to do it.

Therefore, I close this presentation by saying lots of lessons to be learnt. I do not claim to know everything. I do not and I do not want to, unlike the 'Thousand'. I know when you know everything you have to be a very lonely person because there is nobody else to communicate with. You know everything already. I converse, I speak with, I listen to, I learn and I do what I have to do in humility.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Rt. Hon. O.A. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Mr. Speaker, our participation in these Estimates was based on a document that showed that the Government's un accrued basis, the net operating deficit was \$707 million or 8.3 per cent of GDP. The Minister has said that there is a fundamental change in the statement of that deficit. This has never before happened in the House. We are asking on this side, if we are to participate effectively in the deficit, for the Minister to give us the revised information so that we can understand the contours within which these Estimates are being discussed. Never before in the history of this House has a Minister have to come during the course of an Estimates and change the deficit by almost \$200 million and that is what the debate is about. We are asking if we could see the revised numbers that now explain the difference between an 8.3 per cent deficit and the deficit to be discussed. Sir, we would be grateful if the information could be provided to us because what we have here is a deficit of 8.3 per cent of GDP. If the Minister is to change that, Sir, circulate the information to us so that we can understand what it is that we are dealing with.

Mr. SPEAKER: Okay, Honourable Member.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, the licks are too hot. I will make a document of the House, the official errata that will come. Estimates have come to this House and have thousands of mistakes in them and typographical errors and we have to change them every year, under him, under the previous Minister and under me too, and it is done by addendum.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please conclude.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, the lashes are too hot for the Honourable Member and so as not to cause a calamitous situation and have us to lift the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter out of here on a stretcher, I will lay down my cudgel for now but I shall return because, Mr. Speaker, we have in this country to remove the fig leaf of mythism and expose the rump that is now the Barbados Labour Party, the male chauvinist dominating Party in this country. We will do that, just as we will assure Barbadians that we will work on their behalf to ensure that the standard of living and the quality of life in this country is protected.

Mr. Speaker, with those words I beg to move that this Appropriations Bill be read a second time.

Dr. Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ESTIMATES - House A87C, Sequence 35, 5.07 p.m.

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m. today.

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

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

House A87C Sequence 36

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon, Honourable Members, this Sitting is resumed. When the Suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 6, with that we will continue. The Honourable Leader of Government Business.

On the separate motions of the Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, seconded by the Hon. R. D. JONES, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply. Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER VACATED THE CHAIR. Mr. CHAIRMAN ASSUMED THE CHAIR.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

HEAD 54

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

IN THE AMOUNT OF \$302 561 808

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, Head 54 deals with the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. This year we are speaking of funds allocated under that Head, where the direct Ministry receives \$302 million but then the requisite transfers to secondary schools, tertiary institutions, the Barbados Accreditation Council, et al, are to the tune of \$537 286 275. Central ministries \$303 million and transfers to the other entities will use up the rest of the money.

This would mean, Mr. Chairman, this is above the figure granted for the last financial year when we came to this Honourable House. We would recognise, of course, that we came back for a Supplementary to the tune of some \$65 million above and beyond what we were granted in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 2010-2011. At the time the figure was

\$526 million and when you add that \$65 million, that will give some \$582 million because of the supplementary. Mr. Chairman, the same thing will happen during the financial year 2011-2012. Mr. Chairman, that figure usually relates to the University of the West Indies because we make two allocations, and this was historically done when you look at the revenue inflows into the coffers. This year the University of the West Indies receives some \$77 million, including for some six capital projects. We will later deal with additional monies for the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Speaker, I want to state at the outset that education is not a contentious issue in this country and that over time the party in governance has listened to the voices of the people, by and large, who have stated that education is very important to the transformation of individuals and the transformation of the society. In fact, Barbados has benefited quite substantially from the provision of education to all of its citizens. It only takes citizens to open their hearts and their minds to the inculcating of the values of education. Sir, I use the word values of education because by and large education should train people. It should make them better citizens of the world in which we live, even if it is the Barbadian world, the local community, the regional community or the global world, now referred to as the global village, because of the presence of information and communication technologies.

Mr. Speaker, education in Barbados has had a long history, going back to the period of slavery when owners of sugar lands were able to provide education, either in England for the children of owners of plantations or gradually to poor whites, as they were referred to in those days, or to mulattos and gradually to coloured as they were called free citizens after 1838. Sir, many of our older

schools carry that bequeath from the coffers of those individuals and so schools like Combermere, Harrison College, Foundation Boys', Foundation Girls' Coleridge and Parry, the Alleyne School all would have developed as a result of the provision of private resources for education in this country.

Mr. Chairman, as we move further beyond the riots of 1937 and the presence of the Moyon Commission and the recommendations thereof, one saw the emergence of the modern secondary or comprehensive school, today now referred to as newer secondary school and institutions. Sir, this is to show a distinction between the historical older schools, vis-a-vis, those school which were started in the early 1950s, schools such as St. Leonard Boys', St. Leonard Girls', Princess Margaret, Florence Springer, Parkinson, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, both political parties have, in fact, contributed to the development of primary and secondary education for Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I prefaced my comments in that way so that we do not get into any contentious argument on this. I firmly believe there is no need, since we are seeking to educate a nation. The provision of resources to education again this year takes a substantial portion of the expenditure of Government. It is divided into transfers to secondary schools, the University of the West Indies, tertiary level institutions such as the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Barbados Hospitality Institute, the Accreditation Council and all the other entities under Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development.

5.38 p.m.

You would also find this year the provision of some sums, I believe around \$13 million for the roll-out of the Human Resource Development Strategy on behalf of Barbados, a document which has been previously laid in this House and which will most likely occupy some debate in the future, so I am not going to spend a lot of time on the actual Human Resource Development Strategy but more I will focus on what I call the traditional elements of education. Sir, I believe that the Human Resource Development Strategy 2011/2016, should engage fulsome debate by all members of the House. Sir, I just want to lay that foundation as well.

Mr. Chairman, a major portion of the allocation to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development would go to statutory emoluments. I believe of that \$537 million, you will find that about \$301 million goes to personal emoluments and then you will find a major slice going to transfers, the University of the West Indies, the Barbados Community College and areas such as that. Sir, statutory emolument - \$301 511 873; to goods and

services - \$36 160 847; transfers - \$136 202 615; so you have a total operating expenditure of \$501 875 335.

Mr. Speaker, capital assets. Sir, one knows that is for the construction of schools and other related facilities for the service of education. Sir, capital transfers which will go to those institutions where a transfer is to be given. Sir, in there you would have resources to do some work at secondary schools and at the level of tertiary institutions as well as the Higher Education Development Unit, which has responsibility for the maximising of economies of scales and helping to propel the development of education at the tertiary level, so we will have total technology infusion across the institutions and you will have a total capital expenditure this year of \$27 937 671 for us to use in education.

Mr. Chairman, I have to thank the Honourable Minister of Finance and the officials of the Ministry of Finance, who sat and listened very carefully to our presentation of these Estimates and who, understanding where we have to take education, agreed to our pronouncements. Yes, we had to give up some things in the current economic scenario but it has not in any way thwarted the delivery of education to the citizens of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, education covers nursery, primary, secondary, post-secondary or tertiary, the University of the West Indies, the Higher Education Development Unit, the Accreditation Council, UNESCO, all of these institutions and, of course, the Human Resource Development arm of the Ministry.

Mr. Speaker, through the public provision of education the system caters to some 28 000 students at the primary level and just over 21 000 at the secondary level and some 15 000 students at the tertiary level of education in Barbados, including the University of the West Indies where there are some 8 000 odd students, not all Barbadians. I think there are just over 7 500 Barbadians in the various undergraduate programmes and 853 or thereabouts in the graduate programmes. There are another 200-odd that come from other countries of the Caribbean and further afield.

Mr. Chairman, within the educational systems there are 70 public primary schools, one infant school, 8 public nursery schools, 20 private schools offering primary education, 22 public secondary schools, 3 public special school, 2 private special schools, 8 private schools offering secondary education, 3 tertiary level institutions, University of the West Indies, Barbados Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Erdiston Teachers College, as the sole teacher training institution, and one central administering agency on Constitution Road, the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Chairman, in the last two years or so, we have been engaged in re-looking education in Barbados and some time, later this year, we will be bringing another White Paper based on the work of the National Advisory Commission on Education to the House which would spell some programmes to the people of Barbados. Sir, the fundamentals of education remain the same with maybe some tweets here and there because it is still our belief that education in Barbados has a reasonably solid base. What has been happening, nevertheless, is that as we become a more so-called affluent society, there are some persons who are not grasping the opportunities which education can, in fact, provide.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas spoken about this from time to time, that it seems as though as you move the society towards more affluence and towards more of a middle class orientation where comfort seems to be the part of the day that those persons who really need to grasp the benefits of education are some of those who are shying away from actual education within the country and some of them tend to be a bit disruptive within the educational environment.

Mr. Speaker, the newspapers pointed to some levels of disruption, some of it a bit emotional, some of it a bit salacious, et cetera, and that is not denying that there are not challenges within the educational plant and that there are not difficulties within the educational system. There are challenges and there are difficulties and, as a society, we cannot hide from the realities, not of the school plant itself but as a result of the wider society on which the school exists. Therefore, as practitioners, as pedagogs and as leaders within the educational environment, we have to become firmer, more focus and we have to bring about that discipline which is very much a part of the learning environment. Therefore, we would want to continue to provide a strong primary, secondary, tertiary level education, particularly the foundation level of education in this country.

Mr. Chairman, that is why we, as a Government, have continued the agenda of the provision for the provision of nursery education in Barbados. Sir, in the past, we have developed some specialised nursery schools, one at St. Boniface, one at the old St. Giles Senior School, that has been transformed into nursery provision, and we have utilised some of the existing plants in the primary schools for the provision early childhood or nursery education.

Mr. Chairman, we have gone further under this Government and we have continued to look at nursery education and this year at Sharon in St. Thomas, we will be opening the Myriah Holder Nursery School, a school equipped to house appropriately 12 students.

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A school equipped to house approximately 120 students. This school is a prototype of the other nursery schools to come. Sir, I said in my second reading speech earlier that it was provisionally set up cost of \$1.5 million. That cost has now gone up to around \$2 million. If you look at the facilities you would have realised that we have encountered substantial, even though there were some test holes, because of how the holes were tested and the rock protruding, we have had to develop the down foundation sometimes five to six feet down. So you will find that there is a substantial basement in that facility. That is going into very good use. The same thing happened with Staple Grove. I will speak to that as we come to it, or the Blackman-Gollop School. So there is a pretty big base and a piece at the top.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: You can call it that if you want to say that, but it is not really a cost overrun within the context of if you have a level surface. You have actually have additional space when you enter that facility.

In fact, if you see that facility, to me it is a delight, may be one of the better nursery school structures in this country. Not only that, the school is equipped with green technology where we will have solar panels, batteries, photo voltaic, all of that is built into that structure of the school.

We recognise that there were some vendors plying their trade to students and we have incorporated structures into the entire facility so that there is no displacement of those vendors. So they will be able to ply their trade in a nice formulated facility right at the front near the car park of that facility. Of course, we will have to say to them, because these are nursery and primary school children, they need to bring wholesome snacks to those children. So it is part of that process that we are talking about.

We will also, as part of the nursery education movement, we have been commanded by COSAD, as part of the regional project, to ensure that we are able to satisfy the provision of early childhood education by the year 2015. I think Barbados is very well on target in achieving that particular endeavour. Therefore, when we move the students from the primary school at St. Davids School, we will convert that St. Davids School, we are not just going to leave the structure there to rot, into the Thelma Murray Nursery School. Thelma Berry was a lady worked for some twenty-two years as a Janitor at that school. Persons have recognised her as an outstanding mother, a person with strong maternal instincts, an outstanding Barbadian who almost saw those children as her own, not only in the morning but in the evening as parents come for their children. She has past on and we thought it only fitting that we should name that nursery school after her, recognising,

of course, the work, not only of those who are referred to as high society, but persons who also worked at low levels of society but who have a contribution to make as well. So that will be a nursery school.

Sir, we have had further discussion with the Maria Holder Foundation. If in fact they have brought the proposal to us and we are looking at it, where they will fund or four nursery schools in Barbados and one of those nursery schools will be in the constituency of St. James South, which will help service the persons in Oxnards, Haynesville and Holders Hill, because currently there is no facility of that type in that part of Barbados. We will not leave Christ Church out. There are a few primary schools in Christ Church, St. Bartholomew, St. Christopher, Christ Church Girls, Milton Lynch, St. Lawrence and Arthur Smith, but at the level of Christ Church Boys and Christ Church Girls, where the numbers are over six hundred plus students at each school, we would need a facility which will take off...because they also children at three-and-a-half-years-olds, but nursery starts from age three. Sir, therefore we will move to find a facility which can take about 120 of those students in that part of Christ Church.

Sir, we had some challenges. The land was identified but the whole process took some time before we came into Government, and even as we worked through the process with the Maria Holder Foundation, they have indicated quite squarely if the acquisition of land is going to take that length of time, we will purchase the land, if Government does not have it in the locations we will purchase it and move on with the project. I am hopeful that Government, in fact, will have the land so that we could have extra resources to put into other facilities.

Sir, so the Nursery Education Project is moving ahead as quickly as possible, to satisfy in many instances those children who are not able to access education, because you have to be at a private institution and where there is a cost. We know that because the ages of those children we have to have a pupil/teacher ratio that is smaller than within a primary school or in a secondary school, so that project is unfolding. Sir, let me repeat it. We will have two new nursery schools opening by September 2011.

Mr. Chairman, we have moved further to consider and to look at primary education. For some time it was spoken of by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, who spoke to the school at Staple Grove. We are going across the Edgeton Road. In truth and fact that school is in the constituency of St. Michael South East, where the Honourable Member, Mr. Lashley, is the representative. The land was previously identified under the previous Government but no work essentially was done, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East said, for some period of time. We were able to move

ahead on that project from plan designs, tender, delivery of contract to construction. Sir, we are about 6 to 8 weeks behind time because there were serious foundational issues. To the north of the building was a massive falloff. Therefore underneath there is massive space to be turned into other use, storage, may be extended facilities. I think we had to do major steel stabilisation and that has carried that cost up. The tender cost was some \$7.7 million, and it is my view, as told to me by the technical people, consultants, et cetera, that the because of that work which has pushed the project, an additional \$2 million had to be expended for the project.

Sir, that school is based a bit off the George Lamming School, even though, because of the George Lamming School space, we were not able to get all the wider expanse in, so that school right now is looking extremely beautiful. It would amalgamate the students from South District Primary and St. Davids Primary Schools. Those two schools will have, when they move into that space, just over 400 students. Sir, it is a 630 student capacity school, because we know that other persons and other communities will grow up around there.

Sir, added to that as well is a major playing field facility because it our view that you just do not put the physical structure but you have a place for the recreation of young people. We have always said and we have insisted that persons who have been denied before, playing facilities from the wider will be able to now play their various games, cricket, football, and whatever you have as field sports. Persons from the areas of Fair Pilgrim South, Fair Pilgrim, St. Davids, Edey Village, Cox Road, South District can all utilise that facility for their benefit. A little later we might most likely twin with the Ministry of Sports, to establish a proper pavilion to be used by students and residents of that community.

Sir, there are still some primary for which major work has to be done. Some of those will be the Belmont Primary School...

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

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Hon. R.D. JONES: Thank you, Sir.

Some of those would be the Belmont Private School, Chalky Mount Primary School, St. Marks Primary School, St. Martin/Mangrove Primary, Vauxhall Primary, a major construction of a two-storey facility at Wilkie Cumberbatch, the Coverley School in the Villages that is a little later down the road but as that construction is completed and persons move in, the St. John Primary which is supposed to be amalgamation between the St.

John Primary School and the Society Primary. I know recently we have had some challenges with the Society Primary School. Thank God we were able to deal with those issues which presented themselves and therefore there will be the construction of a new school. The late Prime Minister identified some land in St. John for that purpose and as soon as we are able to find the resources, we will move on that, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, we are having a discussion with the Minister in the Ministry of Finance as to how best we can facilitate this process. We know that Wesley Hall is an old School and it has been costing a lot of money to keep it going and it might be better to construct a new facility there. It will still be Wesley Hall that does not change. It has made an outstanding contribution to Barbados. We will look also at St. Giles, another outstanding school in Barbados and therefore that too. In the end there will be some 14 or 15 schools.

In that provision as well, we are looking at a new secondary school after the removal of the Louis Lynch School from the stock, it has placed some pressure on the existing 22 other schools therefore in the first stage we are looking at the construction if a new secondary school where persons will be flow from Christ Church, St. Philip, across St. George Valley and the upper part of St. Michael to occupy that facility. I want to say thanks to the Minister of Housing, who has been able to redirect some 15 acres to that project so that we will be able to get that work going as soon as we possibly can on that new secondary school on that part of Barbados.

Sir, with the coming out of service of the South District School, we will sit down as I said in another place and look to see what uses that can be put to but, of course, we know, identified by this Government and the past Government that we might need one or two other schools to compensate for the numbers in some schools which are quite large. Schools such as Parkinson which has more than 1 000 students, Harrison College as well, which is a Sixth Form School and other schools, which have very large numbers. There is the argument of course that very large numbers can add to the whole issue of discipline and control and therefore we will look, because we know we add operating cost too, as we build more and more facilities, so we have to ensure that the impact on our operating expenses would not be burdensome on the people of Barbados. Sir, will gradually roll out those institutions to satisfy the physical needs, the plant, the infrastructure of the school.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one more minute.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I will return to focus a bit more on some issues that are taking place in education, more of the pedagogical issues, the whole look at ICT in education and how that is now being bent for the full use of education. We will look at the Human Resource Development Advisory Council, the Accreditation Council, some traveling issues with our students in Cuba and our dentist at Mount Hope and how working with the Ministry of Health, we are better going to be able to resolve and solve those issues.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Miss C.Y. FORDE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to add a few things to the presentation made by the Minister, perhaps and ask a question of the Honourable Minister. I am not putting him on the spot but I think this is more concerns from myself and the public because I too would want to see our educational system continue to be the best there is the Caribbean, in the hemisphere therefore, unless it is shared responsibility with the Government by the society as a whole then we cannot achieve our goals.

I would really want just to put it on the table and leave it there, to let the Minister know that there are tremendous concerns in our society about the supervision of our students. Therefore, it calls for the management of the schools to be able to ensure that children are as secure as possible on the schools' compound, as well as the members of staff and those who visit. I would just leave that hanging there but the Honourable Minister understands my concern.

The major question I wish to ask of the Honourable Minister is associated with the photo voltaic project that was started at Combermere as part of the EduTech Programme, to find out if that project has shown any measure of success, where it can be duplicated or replicated for that matter in some of our other schools to minimise the use of electricity and the high cost that school boards and so on will have to be paid, in order to make sure that the school is properly accommodated. I believe that this will go a long way in helping. I think that further measures must be taken with our school where sometimes there are two floors on a school and if you pass there at 2.00 a.m. all the lights in the classrooms are on but there are no classes so there has again to be the management of the school of the school, ensuring that measures are put in place to minimise the use of electricity especially in the night time. I am not talking about security lights because we need them because we had

quite a few robberies at Lester Vaughan School within recent times. There are security lights there but people seem to think that schools have money because they would have been at another school in the north sometime year before last and would have been able to get a fair sum of money. And so, I would like those practices to be looked into to and make sure minimal money is on the compound but that better security measures are put in place and that the electricity use is controlled.

If I may move to another matter that would have been in the process more than three years ago, it is to do with the revision of the Education Act. I think it is important that we look at that. There are so many things happening in schools now that the Education Act does not really directly cover. My biggest beef is to do with the deferral of students for writing the Common Entrance Examination. This is something that happened since 1996 and our children can stay back in the primary school for an addition year and write the Common Entrance at 12 years old, which means that during that year, activities are done to prepare them so that they will score more than 30 per cent so when they go into secondary, they can master skills or are better able to manipulate certain skills and so to bring them up to a level.

When they go into secondary, sometimes they are touted at primary not only by the students but by some teachers, which is a very unfortunate experience because all of us have different levels of picking up skills and performing. Then when they get to secondary, children also tout them and other and if they are to stay in school to get at least the minimum five years exposure at secondary level, if they leave at 12 then they are 17 by the time I get to Fifth Form but the Act only covers up to 16 years. This gives some of the Principal to superannuate the children. They caution them, they threaten them, let me say it this way, 'you are not paying attention', 'you are giving trouble', 'your 16th birthday is next week the 21st of March therefore you will not be coming back in here'. I think that it is wrong. It is an injustice and we are not treating to our children in the best way whenever that happens.

Therefore, I would want for the Minister to give us an update or to put something on the table that at least some amendments will come until the new Act is ready to give those children the privilege to be able to continue in school at 17-years-old, Sir, some need two years in Fifth Form which means that they go to 18. Why are we holding the ones that are good in athletics, even though they may not be excelling in the academics, until they are 18 sometimes nearly 19 but because these children have come with some problems most of the psychological because they are being touted or there are problems in the home and as soon as they manifest those problems, they are being

sent home, superannuated and are sent to the Edna Nicholls often, without treating to the causes that they display.

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I also want the Minister, if he can, it does not have to be now, to give us an update as to what has happened with the technical and vocational projects that were introduced at six of our schools, Combermere, Coleridge and Parry, Grantley Adams Memorial, Princess Margaret, St. George Secondary and, I think, Ellerslie Secondary, some time, I believe, in 2005-2006 because we recognised that many of our students and as well as our citizens were moving away from the technical and vocational skills into the academics. That is the reason why I think there was the influx of non-nationals to find employment here as artisans.

I know that the National Vocational Qualifications as well as the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications were to be put on the table so that the Accreditation Council would be able to work with that kind of information to make sure that our people have the skilled sets to be able to work in businesses and in the manufacturing sector.

Sir, it is okay for people to think that Combermere is a school with all academics but a lot of people have innate abilities and they want to do something else. They are academics but they are so multi-talented or multi-skilled, they want to do architecture, draftsmanhip and different things. That was one of the reasons Combermere and Coleridge and Parry were included. If that is a success, then what plans are there for the future of the technical and vocational skills.

I am saddened, Sir, because for the 20 or so years that I would have been away from the schools in the parishes surrounding St. Thomas and indeed in St. Thomas, there has always been a close association with the Royal Barbados Police Force and the DARE Programme. I could only speak for the area that I am in because I know that one best. I have recognised that the particular officer has now been relocated in the police force and the whole aspect of training our young minds in the primary schools particularly about drug education, is now lacking.

We know that there is a proliferation of drugs across the length and breadth of Barbados. You only need to strike up a conversation with some of those young children who, if you are not careful, would bring every story out of the household as well as every story off 'the block' or in the community.

Sir, it is better for us to be proactive in helping to educate those young children how to react in relation to drugs. If a child brings it in the bag and the parent has given it to the child to bring to school to sell, how to

respond to that. They have been doing dramatisation, writing short stories and so on to help to develop that kind of involvement in drugs. I would like to see that programme continue not only with narcotics drugs but indeed with alcohol. A lot of our children are using alcohol in a coke bottle but we feel it is a coke they are bringing to school. It is the same problem at the secondary schools. It is not something that you can just talk about and think that it would die a natural death. It is important that we give or provide the necessary education for our children and for the parents and guardians as well because a lot of them have the alcohol or the drugs in the home and the children have the smoke blowing in their faces. You see people with babies in their hands and they are taking a spiff and they are blowing the smoke in the baby's face. You would know, Sir, what impact that would have then on the minds of these young children who would be exposed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has five minutes.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: The other query I would like to make of the Honourable Minister is associated with a facility. I know that it is an economic situation that we have but sometimes if you do not arrest things early, they can lead to further problems.

I am disappointed that so many of our children manifest challenges not only because of drugs but some of them are schizophrenic. It is not okay to see a child and see the behaviour it is displaying and just assumes that he has to be on drugs, alcohol or something. It is a mental illness. You do not only become mentally ill when you are an adult. These children are still in school. Some of the teachers are frustrated. Some of the workers at the school are frustrated. Some of the parents are frustrated because they have no way of having these children attended to in a professional way. I would like for our Government to identify a facility, the children may have to be away from home, dormitories may have to be set up to accommodate them, and provide the right kind of psychologists, nurses and doctors... Parents must be engaged as well because if you do not share the skills and knowledge with the parents then they too cannot act accordingly.

I would like for some kind of planning process to take place if it has not yet been done to be able to pull those children out of school. There is nothing more frustrating than for teachers to say that one child or those two children - and most of the time they are boys, we cannot get away from it - have been disrupting the class all day long. Some of them are not ready for academics, their minds are not there. They feel that the teacher is the biggest problem that they have in the world if they are being told to sit quietly or to go and do whatever and they get angry and they would like to blow up the school.

Mr. Chairman, the teacher does not have the training either to deal with such cases and I therefore want to ask that some kind of inter-agency committee involving other social agencies like the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Care and all of the other agencies, because it is not something education alone can do, be set up to be able to look at that challenges because the more we keep them in the schools at the primary and secondary level and then expel them, they are going to go back out into the society to create even bigger problems when it is really a problem that all of us must work together to resolve.

I believe, Sir, that my time may be up by now and I would just want to come back and raise a few other matters that I consider to be holistic in the way that all of us as a people and all of us as lawmakers must be intimately and integrally involved in if we are to move forward because at the end of the day our schools are not institutions. Our educational institutions are a part of us in Barbados and we must come together in order to be able to resolve those matters. I wish to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Thank you, very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would want to use this occasion to really congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for a very enlightened speech. It is certainly a discipline that she is very much au fait with, I think it was very insightful. Sir, perhaps this gives me the time also to congratulate the Honourable Minister of Education and Human Resource, this outstanding, outspoken, hardworking, articulate and passionate Minister. I also want to congratulate the Government of Barbados for carrying out the largest capital works educational programme in the history of the constituency of St. Michael South East.

Sir, this unbiased non-political approach to governance in Barbados is one that certainly has to be commended by all Barbadians. Sir, I am sure that the Government, of which I am a Member, should be sincerely congratulated for this tremendous effort and boost in education. Mr. Chairman, I am not guessing. It is not a fleeting mirage or an illusion that I am talking about. I am talking, for example, about the Anne Hill School that is located in the Pine. This is a school that has been specially dedicated for persons with special disabilities, particularly autism. This school was specially reconstructed by this Government and has a suspended floor so that those persons with that kind of disability could do dance, drama, keep-fit, et cetera.

Sir, they have a home economic suite where the children could go and develop their own culinary skills. These are children with varying types of disabilities. There

is also an agricultural project attached to this school for persons with disabilities. Most of all, Sir, there is a technical vocational block, which means that even during the long summer vacation, they can team up with the Ministry of Youth and Family particularly with the summer camp programme, so you have an integrated approach in the educational system for persons with disabilities.

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Mr. Speaker, the American Charter on Disability talks about an inclusion of all and at the Blackman and Gollop Primary School, at Staple Grove Estate, is virtually saying it is strategically located between St. David and Staple Grove, which will accommodate those children from St. David's, that entire geographical linkage the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development has outlined. Mr. Chairman, perhaps more fundamentally important is the fact that those children from the entire South District areas and St. David would have one of the most modern technically-equipped primary schools in the western hemisphere. If you care to tour, you would see what a fabulous primary school that is going up there. Mr. Chairman, I also want to say that only last year there was a new modern three-storeyed block constructed at Parkinson Secondary School. Sir, that school is now celebrating its 50th anniversary. There are also plans to build a new two-storeyed block at the Wilkie Cumberbatch School within two years' time.

Mr. Speaker, if we are all tuned into what is going on, we will clearly know that the Wilkie Cumberbatch School is overcrowded and that this promised facility will certainly relieve those children of the current pressure that is being placed upon them, including the overcrowding in the classrooms there. Mr. Chairman, there was also the refurbishment in part at the Grantley Prescod School. I say that although it is not in my constituency but in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, but a large portion of students who go to the Grantley Prescod School are from the constituency of St. Michael South East, particularly the Pine and Wildey. Mr. Chairman, these are four major capital works programme that being undertaken in St. Michael South East. Sir, was not by accident but by strategic planning.

Mr. Speaker, the Parkinson Secondary School is celebrating its 50th anniversary. I was a pass student of the school. Sir, nowadays to refer to pass students one such terminology is that of an old scholar but I am not old. I am approaching being old, neither was I too much of a scholar, I am a past student. Mr. Chairman, this school has produced many outstanding Barbadians and therefore for the record, particularly Hansard, I would want to lay claim in this Honourable Chamber to a number of outstanding persons. Mr. Chairman, sometimes there is this notion that once someone has been to one of the newer secondary

school that person is not important. Mr. Chairman, these newer secondary schools have produced a number of outstanding Barbadians who are contributing in an immense way to the national development, not only at the national level but at the regional and international levels.

Mr. Chairman, let us look at the late Earl Warner. The fact is, he was the Caribbean's leading and foremost dramatist. He is the person who took Earl Lovelace's production, "The Wine of Astonishment," and directed it at Parkinson Secondary School. It was done at Common Entrance Examination level. We all know that Edwin Yearwood is also a product of Parkinson Secondary. Edwin is one of the finest entertainers in the region. There is also Victor Clifford, Barbados' foremost dramatic actor and director. Sir, Darcy Boyce is also a product of Parkinson Secondary School, the foremost expert in the region when it comes to the aspect of technical theater, backstage management, lighting, sounds, stage. There is then "Alf" Padmore. I want to use this occasion to wish "Alf" well, as I understand he was sick. "Alf" Padmore is another product of Parkinson Secondary School.

Mr. Chairman, I see the Honourable Member for St. George-North looking at me in a kind of quizzical matter but I want to put this into the record. There is then John Collymore, a renowned actor. There is Wayne "Paks" Riley, who is another outstanding actor. There is Rodney Grant, director, choreographer and Chief Executive Office of the Pineland Creative Workshop. Parkinson School is also the home of the Pinelands Creative Workshop and "Little People Fun and Frolic."

Mr. Chairman, against this background of cultural activities, motivations, getting the community involved and the products and byproducts of Parkinson Secondary School in the entertainment industry and part of Government's cultural industry plan, I would want to pronounce in this Honourable Chamber that the school hall at Parkinson Secondary School would be dedicated as an entertainment hall, with all of the modern equipment to facilitate dance and dramatic productions, for which it has become very popular.

Mr. Chairman, I will not stop there, did you know that Malcolm Marshall, probably the best-thinking fast bowler the West Indies has produced went to school at Parkinson Secondary School? Mr. Chairman, the best legspinner that Barbados would have ever produced, Winston Reid who played for Banks Breweries Cricket Club also went to Parkinson Secondary. Mr. Chairman, the Chief of Staff of the Barbados Defence Force also went to Parkinson Secondary School. The current Principal of Queen's College also went to Parkinson Secondary School. The Director of the National Insurance Department also went to Parkinson Secondary School. "Ron" Clarke, Eric

Berry, Sandra Fergusson, among others are all outstanding Barbadians who went to school at Parkinson Secondary.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to come back in this debate because I want to speak about thinking outside the box when we talk serious educational development in Barbados in this 21st Century. Sir, I think the Minister has been pointing Barbadians along a pathway to think outside the box, to develop other educational initiatives, rather than the traditional ones to which we are so accustomed. Sir, it is against this background that I want to speak about the important areas of compensatory education, from the perspective of community intervention into educational development in Barbados. Sir, this is critical especially when we begin to look at stabilising communities, when we start to examine from a sociological perspective how are we going to control some of the waywards in society. Sir, there are a number of methodologies that are outside of the traditional educational realm that we can institute.

Mr. Chairman, it is an area I will speak to with a passion because I have seen it worked at the microeducational level. It could also work at the macroeducational level, particularly in the densely populated housing areas and districts across Barbados. Therefore, there must be an urgent meeting of like minds, there must be an urgent meeting of community practitioners and educational practitioners coming together in a special forum to examine some of the new pathways to education.

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Mr. Chairman, when I come back I also want to speak a lot more about a pioneer in this area, Dr. Bradley Niles. I will come back and thanks, Sir, for indulging me.

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

Hon. D.O'N. INNIS: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I rise to join in this interesting discussion on education and I want to, at the very onset, to commend the current Minister of Education for his commitment and outstanding work in this particular area, leading the charge in terms of education and education reforms in Barbados. I think we can all say that the \$520 million of taxpayers' money being expended is, definitely, in good hands with the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central as Minister of Education. Sir, it is \$519 million that we are spending this year coming.

Mr. Chairman, education has definitely been described as perhaps one of the areas, among many others, that the Democratic Labour Party has really been able to use to transform this society from a village into a greater nation. Sir, our commitment to this area certainly is beyond

challenge. It is not to say the Opposition that, the Barbados Labour Party has not done its work because, certainly, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas speaks so passionately and with a sense of commitment on this matter. Sir, as a matter of fact, I stand here and say that Barbados has achieved what we have achieved as a nation due to the commitment of both Parties to education in this society. Sir, we have certainly built a wonderful society and Barbadians wherever they go in the world make a success due to the fundamentals taught here in this society.

Mr. Chairman, I want also at the very beginning to thank those teachers who, to my mind, are very much the unsung heroes in our society, those who are charged with the responsibility for our sons and our daughters, sometimes spend more times than we, as parents, spend with our own children during the day and certainly I want to thank them for the outstanding work they have been doing as teachers.

Mr. Chairman, we are engaging in this debate on the Head of education at a time when this society is going through tremendous challenges, not in relation exclusively to the debate on the Estimates which we have had for the last two days and a half but perhaps to the manner in which the societies and our communities are changing. Sir, the reality about it is that one can very well argue strongly that what is taking place in our schools today is a mirror, a reflection of what is happening in the wider society. The level of indiscipline, deviant behaviour and lack of respect for authority is perhaps the most common complaints you get from teachers and those who are charged as guardians of our children during the day. Mr. Chairman, we will not bury our heads in the sand but, certainly, we have to accept that we too see these complaints as politicians every day in our constituencies and in the wider communities.

Mr. Chairman, we really have to engage in a robust debate about education reforms and the extent to which changes in the education system and the management of education facilities in school can help to transform this society again into a much more disciplined society than it currently is. Sir, certainly, I would like to see things reversed to the point where what takes place within the hallowed walls of our schools on a daily basis influence what is happening in the wider society as oppose to the other way around.

Mr. Chairman, on that basis, I also want to thank those who work with this report and others who have raised concern about deviant behaviour. I have seen some proposals from the Ministry of Family Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Education, and including the Ministry of Health to address these concerns. I am sure that the respective Ministers will speak to them in greater detail as we go forward but what we have all accepted is that there is need for a holistic approach and stronger and sustainable

interventions if we are to save many of our young people, and save this society and community on the whole.

Mr. Chairman, we also have the issue continuing of the difference in performance between boys and girls in our society and this perhaps is a manifestation of what is happening in the wider society as well. I note the proposals from the Ministry of Education to address some of these issues.

Mr. Chairman, tone of the challenges we have in Barbados today in relation to education...

Asides.

Hon. D.O'N. INNIS: Sir, I make bold to ask the question: Are our young people valuing education as much as their foreparents would have? Sir, sometimes I have to say no. I think our foreparents and some of us in this Chamber, and many other in our age group and little older, would have certainly recognised the value of education and would have taken things a lot more seriously than some of the younger people today are taking it. Sir, certainly, I hope that we can get back to the point where education is really treasured in this society.

Mr. Chairman, let me say that education cannot just be about quantity but has to be about quality as well. Sir, I share this sometimes when I see the lack of ability of graduates whether they be CXC graduates, A level graduates, Barbados Community College graduates or even university graduates. I shudder when I see their lack of ability to express themselves both in the written and spoken words and I ask myself what is happening in our school system today. (6:21)Sir, you have graduates from the university whether they be University of the West Indies or elsewhere who sometimes have major difficulties constructing a sentence and who have major difficulty standing up and expressing themselves. Sir, as a matter of fact, sometimes you go as far as to say that some might even have a challenge spelling Ada backwards. Sir, I think the reality about it is that we have to get back to some basics in our school system and focus on the quality of those who are graduating from there.

Mr. Chairman, I also would like to see within our school system in Barbados some greater emphasis placed on entrepreneurship. I believe that if we are going to transform this society that each and every student coming out must come out with some kind of basic business acumen and the right attitude that can help transform this society as opposed to just reading, writing and arithmetic on the whole.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to commend those parent teachers associations that have been working closely with the school. The recognition is that one may say that \$519

million is a lot of money to spend but when you realise the number and the age of our school plant, the number of staff you have to pay, the number of students you have to cater for, the school meals and the administrative overhead at the Ministry, the reality is that \$519 million can only go so far and it cannot do everything.

Mr. Chairman, that is why it is imperative that parent teachers' associations and parents, general speaking, get more involved in what is happening in their schools. Sir, often times you would hear the complaint that those who come to PTA meeting are the one you really do not need to see and the ones who you wish to really engage with, talk about their children, their behaviours and their challenges you often times do not see at PTA meetings.(8:19) Sir, PTAs have certainly done well in the past and I believe there is a more meaningful role that they can play in going forward in this society.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to commend the Minister of Education and the Ministry of Education for the initiative in renaming some of the schools in Barbados not just for those outstanding teachers and community workers but certainly, for example, the maids and the ordinary staff who would have laboured for decades at schools and who would have been the surrogate mothers of some of these children. Sir, it is really touching to know that we, as a Government, recognise the outstanding contribution and recognise that even though they may not have had a Bachelors degree, a Master's or a Ph.D., that we recognise the outstanding contribution to building this society and building villages in this country and, certainly, I want to commend the Minister of Education for taking that initiative in renaming some of the schools in Barbados after these unsung heroes.

Mr. Chairman, the other area I want to touch on briefly is the fact that education does not begin and end within the class room. It says that it takes a village a raise a child and if we believe firmly in that, we need to recognise that there is much more we can do outside of the class room to ensure the education process is complete. Sir, for example, in my constituency, I recognise and I salute those Youth Commissioners, and those in Haynesville, in particular, who teach those young minds after school in the Homework Pogramme, which we support, and who also teach those kids to get involve in drumming and dancing, so that we were building well-rounded young men and women giving them many positive opportunities and keeping them away from the scourge of illegal drugs in this society. So education certainly cannot begin in the classroom and therefore we in the wider society have to...

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Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member you have five minutes.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, we have been able to provide. I believe there will be an official opening sometime next month.

I also want to note the interest and the commitment to establish a nursery school at Holders Hill, St. James as well, where we have a growing population who need this service. Too often many young women and mothers are forced to stay at home, because there is no one to care for that child during the day. I do not think that is fair. I think that they too must have an opportunity to get out there in the work force and make a contribution knowing that their child is kept in a safe and secure environment. On behalf of the constituency of St. James South I want to thank the Ministry of Education for providing that.

Mr. Chairman, in winding up, in relation to education and health, we must note that the Ministry of Health is providing nutrition and dietary guidelines for young people. Many in our age group have perhaps not taken the advice given before, and may not have taken good care of ourselves, but we cannot allow childhood obesity and bad practices to take place among our young people. We have to save the next generation, and hence my Ministry has provided dietary guidelines to the Ministry of Education and to all our primary schools. We certainly have encouraged the Ministry of Education to ensure that physical exercise and physical education are taken seriously by the Ministry and to ensure that each child in the primary school and the secondary school have the opportunity to benefit from sound physical education programmes. It must be taken as seriously as you take Mathematics and English in our schools going forward.

Sir, I will come back in this debate because I wish to speak to the issue of education and health from the perspective of the number of doctors we are training and the need for more specialists. For example, I can tell you right now that we have several young Barbadian doctors who are not gainfully employed. This is a source of concern. The State cannot employ them all. I believe that most of the posts provided to the Ministry of Health for doctors are filled now, and therefore we are seeing an abundance of physicians, but I do not want to scare anyone because it may mean we may have to create more posts, or the private sector will have to step up to the plate and address the issue.

In respect of dentists, we are spending almost \$200 000 per Barbadians student to be trained in dentistry at Mount Hope University, yet still they have to come back to Barbados and pass a dental exam in order to be licenced here. It has caused untold difficulty and trauma to those students who have failed the exam consistently as well as to their parents who have put up the money to send them abroad.

Mr. Chairman, just to let you know and those Honourable Members of the Chamber who have raised this with me, that next week the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education will be meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at St. Augustine University, along with the Head of the Dental Department there and other lecturers to put our heads together and find a solution to what is obviously a nagging problem that has been going on for years.

Sir, I will come back because I believe that education is an area we all must engage our minds. It really and truly what will help to transform the society and build Barbados into a sound economy and a strong community.

Sir, with those few words I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to speak in this Committee. I too would want to compliment the Governments over the years for the amount of money and resources spent in education. I believe that over the last sixty or so year, surely from the 1950s, the Governments in the pre Independence and the post Independence period had a number of resources left for education. I want to compliment all those persons over the years who have spent so much to building what we consider as our greatest resource, the human capital.

Sir, I want to say that at this junction we have to look carefully at what is going on in our schools. It is of concern to us, because the Government has spent over \$500 million in education, it is a lot of money for a small developing society, so that resources are not the problem. So you cannot say that the schools are suffering for want of funds, even though as a teacher I know that there are many times teachers complain that they do not have resources to buy things like art and craft material. I know that many of them have to beg the Parents Teachers Association, many of them have to raise funds through the PTA and other resources, but this is part of the learning process. I believe that more has to be done in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, when you look at all of this, the teacher training, more teachers are trained today. I believe there are more graduate teachers than ever before. Most teachers have graduated from Erdiston Teachers College and most of them have gone onto university. So you have graduate trained teachers. Sir, once before there were graduate teachers out of Erdiston and not graduate trained, in terms of the university graduate and so on, but there are more trained teachers at this stage. Yet it seems to me that there are still a number of psychological problems coming out of the schools.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister, during this period that we are discussing, can be frank with this Parliament and let us know what is happening within the school system, because recently a group of parents met in my constituency, to say that they are concerned about their little ones going to school, and what they can do to form a small group to protect their little children.

It is a known fact that the school is part of our community. It is part of our society. It is a known fact that the church, the school and the home play an important role in rearing a child. What goes on in the school you can say to some extent is really part of what goes on in society. When you have a situation today where little children are involved in bad behaviour, wanton behaviour. You have children involved in promiscuity. You have children involved in a number of problems. Obviously it calls for attention, for us to really spend some of our resources on the psychological problems that exist. I wonder if the Ministry has this type of training where persons can detect from early that little children seven-years-old, I believe from before, are having a problem.

Mr. Chairman, you cannot tell today the ratio between teacher and pupil. I do not know how much it is today, but I know in my time it used to be between 20 and 28 children to one teacher. Now that is a bit high. I do not know what it is today, but the teacher really needs help in a classroom. A teacher cannot see everything that goes on. Children go to the bathroom and the teacher is not what is happening. Children leave the classroom and the teacher is not aware of what is happening. Children are out at lunch and the teacher is not aware of what is happening. It is a fact of life that children at lunch time, who supervises the children during the lunch hour? Is it the teacher?

Sir, there are problems.

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I believe that the Ministry must look at teacher aides in the system. There needs to be some help for the teacher. A couple of years ago, we were thinking about an aide-assisted school. The parent either voluntarily comes in and help or the Government brings in a small group of people to help the school manage the children because that pressure is too high. A teacher cannot adequately supervise 20 to 28 children from morning to evening, it cannot happen so we definitely need to look at the teacher aide at this time and how we can assist the teachers.

Sir, I want to find out what special training is given to the teacher at this time because there must be ongoing training, either at Erdiston or the University of the West Indies to train teachers how to detect early problems in children. They must have this early detection of psychological problems. There are lots of problems that

children face. For example, there are children who come to school on mornings, hungry, they cannot learn. What help is given to the early child? I know for a fact that children get school meals at 12 o'clock. What happens between 8.30 a.m. and 12 o'clock? I understand that there are many breakfast clubs going around across Barbados. Many communities have helped. Many teachers tell me that they have to assist the children early in the day, giving them some form of breakfast. There was a time when biscuits and milk were given. I am sure if this is given now but that was in the early days when children were given milk and biscuits to help them get through that early morning period but we need to look at that again.

I also want to say, Mr. Chairman, that the continual assessment of our children is needed. There needs to be continual assessment not only for the examination process, but there was a time when the community health people would go around to the schools. Is this happening? Sometimes children in the classroom may not necessarily be attentive, not because they are doing it willfully but some children cannot be attentive because of the attention span, because of a psychological problem at home because of something in the society so I want to find out if the Ministry has that special person who can go around to the schools to help to detect any problems. If the teacher finds that there is a problem, who can this teacher turn to.

The other thing, Mr. Chairman, is the problem of security at schools. I am aware that over the last decade or so a number of security arrangements were put in place to help secure the primary and secondary school. I believe there should be an ongoing programme where the Ministry will continue to ensure that the schools are secure and those watchmen and security guards do their job. I believe that the time has come where parents and the society cannot go onto the school grounds at any time. They must report to that security officer.

Then, what happens after school, after 3.00 p.m. is that again there are still too many children are left on the compound. Teachers get in their cars and go off to university, some go to their homes and they allow the children to remain on the compound but this does not happen in the private schools and that is why, Mr. Chairman, you find a number of parents today are saying they prefer to send their children to the private schools because they get better attention, but we have to watch this. I believe that the state education is till better than the private education but people are beginning to fear that you get better attention as the pupil/teacher ratio is smaller, especially at the lower level.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has five minutes.

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

Sir, the kindergarten children really need that attention and I would hope that the ratio to children would come down. Again, security is needed at the schools and continuous assessment is also needed.

The other question is who is really in charge of the schools. Is it the principals? Can the principal make any decision at all? I have a feeling that today, the principals are not as powerful as they used to be in our time. In our time Principals were very powerful people and they made decisions. I am not sure that Principals make decisions now. If the Principal reports a teacher that is not performing what happens? If a Principal reports that a groundsman is not performing, what happens, is he overturned by the Ministry? If the Principal sees something happening, what can he do? Is the Principal really powerful as he used to be or everything has to now go to the Ministry? I just want to find out if this happens. I believe that we have to put more power in the Principals' hands. The Principal has to have a say in what is going on. You have to let me know if this is so.

Parents are concerned today more for their smaller children than at any time before and a system must be put in place where the teacher is respected by the parent, the parent respects teachers and there is this coming together where you have a holistic programme for the good of our children. Because, it is no sense spending all this money and at the end of the day the children cannot perform, the children do not understand and know how to perform in a society like ours.

I have also found a situation, Mr. Chairman, where persons who were able to read and I find people coming to my clinics at age 20 and 25 and cannot read and cannot fill out a form so something is wrong with our education system. After spending so much time and so many resources, why is it that you have children now, adults who have to retard back into a situation where you cannot fill out a form. Again, we need to have this continuous education again. We need to have continuous training for the society.

There is this whole question of providing grounds for the schools. In my constituency I have about four schools. There is Cuthbert Moore, St. George Primary, St. Judes, Workmans and St. George Secondary but I would like to see the ground better developed. I would like to see not only the community helping but they need to spend more time and the groundsmen need to perform. Sir, that is why I say, the head teachers must be in charge. I am not sure the head teachers are really in charge of the ancillary staff but they have to be more powerful.

Mr. Chairman, I will be back as time goes on.

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

His Honour K.St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head. I think, Sir, that when one really looks at this whole question of education, one must look at the EPA Global Monitoring Report, Sir, which speaks to education for all. Sir, this Government is taking a very serious look at the whole question of education because, as you are aware, the millennium goals, as far as education is concerned, speak to the whole question of equality for all as far as education is concerned.

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Sir, from the Mission Statement of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Department, it can be gleaned that we are on the right track as far as education is concerned. Sir, what concerns us in this little Barbados is that the global financial crisis is causing issues and problems as far as getting the right medicine to solve some of the educational problems in this country.

Sir, I think that what we need to look at is an inclusive educational system where we embrace everyone. Sir, an inclusive educational system has the potential to harness the skills needed to build the knowledge of the society in the 21st Century. I believe that is the way forward.

Sir, we must look at education from the cradle to the grave. Sir, we should start at early childhood education. It is quite clear that early childhood care and education is the bedrock of education for all. Good nutrition, effective health care and access to good preschool facility can mitigate social disadvantage and lead to improved learning achievements. Sir, that is critical and so we must pay particular attention to our early childhood education. I believe that the time has come for all persons to put their hands and heads on deck. We need to raise the standard by spotting the problems early using constant monitoring and early grade reading assessment, I think that is critical.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas spoke about the whole question of children who come to school who are disturbed psychologically and are on drugs or alcohol. If we have this constant monitoring and examination of these young minds by social workers, medical practitioners and psychologists, we can develop a better society because at a very young age we will be able to glean what is happening with our citizens. Sir, I believe that is extremely critical if we are to achieve full literacy as far as our educational system is concerned.

Sir, the other issue is that we must look at universal primary education. We know for sure that this Government and successive Governments have decided that every child

must go through the whole school system from early childhood up to tertiary level but too often many children are slipping through the cracks and one has to ask the question why. The Honourable Member for St. George North Spoke about people coming to his constituency office who cannot fill out a simple form, that is a serious, serious problem. Sir, I believe that if we use this early monitoring and reading assessment, we can solve some of those issues.

Sir, you move now from the primary to adult skills and learning. Literacy is a vital asset and key component of skills development yet adults remain one of the most neglected of the education of the Millennium Goals. Sir, the actual fact is that we are moving forward but we are not paying enough attention to the adult skills as far as learning is concerned. Sir, I believe that the time is now for us to look seriously at how we can solve that issue.

Sir, the other issue is one of educational quality. The ultimate measure of any education system is not how many children are in the school but what and how well they learn, that is critical. This can only be achieved, if all things continue to flow, with constant assessment to see what is really happening so that you understand what is really happening.

As the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said, there is the deferral system. You have the deferral system because of those children who have challenges, yet at that particular school or institution, there are no special teachers to deal with the issue so even though they are deferred what would happen is that they will almost end up in the same state just one year older. Sir, I believe that we need to look seriously at how we can solve that problem.

Sir, I believe that the time is right for us now to revisit the Education Act and raise the age of children leaving school back to age 18 because at age 16, there are situations where students just go through the system and some teachers are just praying for them to get to age 16. You do not even have a second chance if you are a troublemaker or if they see you as one who is not an academic. They are not taking the time to look to see what deficiencies you have in order to help you along the way.

Sir, I believe that we must look at the whole education system holistically if we are really to understand that education for all is critical. It is not only critical for the person who can leave school with 10 O'levels, it is critical for the persons who are gifted with their hands. With those persons who are better with their hands, we would have a better and rounded society. Sir, I would want to us to look at this whole question of how we really, really grade our schools. We should get away from this whole notion that everybody wants to go to Combermere and Harrison College because at the end of the day, the CXC syllabus

remains the same for all the schools and we must look at what we are really doing.

With those brief remarks, I want to support this Head.

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

Mr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Chairman, I will not detain the House very long on this matter.

Asides.

Mr. W. F. DUGUID: I was going to get up to agree with something the Honourable Member for St. James South said. For the first time in the history of his sitting in this House I was going to get up and agree with something the Honourable Member said but it makes me wonder whether I should continue with my agreement but I will go forward.

Mr. Chairman, there are two matters I want to bring up. I do not want to waste any more of the House's time. The first matter is that I want to ask the Minister of Education and Human Resource what are the plans for the old Roebuck Secondary School, which then became the Louis Lynch School because it is a structure that is going derelict. I believe that some utilisation of it can be made of it. I it is safe or if it is not safe, we need to make a decision on it and make some use of the Louis Lynch School. I pass there from time to time and I see it and I think we need to make a decision on it. I think that something can be done to improve it.

The other matter I want to bring up relates to what the Honourable Member for St. James South brought up with respect to the dental registration. Obviously, it is a matter close to my heart. The last time I spoke about the dental registration and the unfair actions of the Council against these young dentists, they took out a full page advertisement against me in the newspaper but I am going to go at it again. Mr. Chairman, the Dental Registration Act is clear.

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Mr. Chairman, it says that a person is qualified to be registered as a dental practitioner if he holds a diploma, degree, fellowship, membership, licence or certificate or other status or form of recognition granted by the University College or body empowered to confer authority to practice dentistry by the law of the country or place where it is granted.

Mr. Chairman, what does that mean? It means that under this Act, everybody who has graduated in Trinidad,

once they have the licence to practice in Trinidad and Tobago, that licence should be acceptable in Barbados. Mr. Chairman, what has happened is that we have taken the other part of the Act which says that on the opinion of the Council evidence of satisfactory training. Sir, they are saying to these young dentists that training in Trinidad under the University of the West Indies is unsatisfactory so therefore you have to do an examination but whereas training... Sir, this goes to the basic way in which Barbadians think. If you are trained in the United States of America or in the United Kingdom it is said to be satisfactory training, it is training that can be accepted. We do not even have to see the examination or the examiners, but because dentists are trained in Trinidad, we feel that is a problem.

Mr. Chairman, do you know where that concept comes from?

Asides.

Hon. D. O. INNIS: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I know that the Honourable Member and his colleagues in the dental profession would now be at war over these matters and I will sit back and listen to them on both sides. Mr. Chairman, the reality is that historically and I believe also enshrined is the understanding that the Dental Council would approve those who come from accredited programmes. Mr. Chairman, that has always been the case. Sir, like the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, I too have concerns about the way the whole matter was handled over the years. However, let me just assure the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that the dental school in Trinidad was recently granted accreditation by the competent authority here in the Caribbean. We intend to meet with them next week and try to resolve these issues.

Mr. Chairman, those persons coming from North America have come from those programmes that the Dental Council in Barbados has recognised. Mr. Chairman, in clarifying what the Honourable Member seems to be saying, it means that if you come from Russia, Mozambique or anywhere else, then you ought to be able to walk in here and practise dentistry. There must be standard.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Chairman, the genesis of this goes back to what happened in Trinidad. Sir, let me explain. In Trinidad, the dental practitioners at that time did not want dentists to become registered in Trinidad. Sir, what happened was that the Parliament of Trinidad had to legislate for those trained practitioners to register there because they were trying to create a closed shop, so that they would not have the competition for practice in Trinidad.

Hon. D. O. INNISS: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, I am very disappointed that during the time of the former administration, when these issues were looming, they could not find any solution. I heard nothing. In Trinidad, the son of a prominent politician had failed and the Trinidad Government went to Parliament and legislation that everybody who came out of dental school must be licenced to practice dentistry. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Members must also include that piece of information but for 14 years the Honourable Member did nothing about it.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Chairman, I am not being political on this, I am just saying a very similar thing. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is qualifying everything I said.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, one minute, please.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. James South has just clarified everything I said. They legislated because it was the opinion of the Council that in order for them to be able to practice they had to take an examination, which also meant that dentists coming from Barbados had to do that same examination. Dentists from Barbados also had to do an examination in Barbados. What we should say is that we accepted the examination of Trinidad.

When I qualified for dentistry, the Dental Council accepted the final examination of the University of the West Indies as their examination as well. You do not have to go through examination after examination. We have about 15 Barbadians dentists now who the Barbadian public paid for, for them to be qualified as dentists, some who made their lives in Trinidad and they cannot complain about coming back to Barbados. There others who would like to come back but it has been difficult for them in passing the examination.

Mr. Chairman, it is interesting because the examination is going on this week at Sir Winston Scott Polyclinic. Sir, it works a hardship for these young people who after having studied for sometimes four or five years, have to come to their home country that paid for them to do that study, where in circumstances the home country then does not accept their degree. Sir, I think that is wrong.

Mr. Chairman, if now we are saying - and even though Honourable Member for St. James South tries to interrupt me - that the university has now been accredited, then I am happy for that because it means that all the future dentists we have coming through would not have to go

through the hardship over the examination. Mr. Chairman, I am not saying that people from all over have to do it but I know that the accredited universities are the American and English universities primarily, and those are the ones we accept without question.

Mr. Chairman, why should we be accepting those universities without question and not accepting our own? If first we are going to accept them, we must first accept our own. That is all I am saying and I thank you.

Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this Head and would wish to congratulate the Honourable Member for Christ Church East-Central, Minister of Education and Human Resource Development for his outstanding leadership of his ministry. I had the pleasure of working as Minister of State within that ministry for about a year and I can attest to his serious commitment of to the task of educating our nation's people.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the Honourable Member for St. George North alluding to the issue of leadership in the primary schools and I would wish to congratulate this administration for reintroducing the Primary School Advisory Committees in a number of public/primary schools, including Westbury Primary School within the constituency of Bridgetown. This enables residents and other interested individual schools to take part in the governance of these schools, in terms of ensuring that there is tremendous leadership and that there is sufficient liaising between the various stakeholders to ensure that the education of our nation's primary school age children is optimal.

Mr. Chairman, I would also wish to congratulate this administration for moving steadfastly towards the fulfilment of the Manifesto pledge which we made in the last General Election, as I quote from page 13 of that Manifesto, and I quote:

"In particular, a Democratic Labour Party Government is committed to: Extending the Textbook Loan Scheme to include Primary Schools."

Mr. Chairman, I am very happy therefore that as you would have noted in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposal of the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs last year, that we would have seen that this administration has committed \$500 000 in this year's Estimates to provide workbooks to those vulnerable students of working-class families, who are at least 10 per cent within the primary school population of Barbados. Mr. Chairman, as you know, these are workbooks for those children because workbooks cannot be passed onto other students because they are written up. Therefore, they would have to be purchased by the parents. Sir, Government has provided \$500 000 worth of books to be provided to these working-

class children will go a long way in ensuring that these is equal opportunity regardless of the social and economic background of these children or their parents.

Mr. Chairman, I note that thus far, the Government has been able to provide the core text books to all public primary schools in Language, Arts and Mathematics.

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Sir, as I understand it, this process is ongoing such that textbooks in the area of science are currently being distributed in the present phase. I look forward, therefore, Mr. Chairman, to taking this process to its logical conclusion such that we can have a fully-fledged textbook loan scheme similar to what occurs in the secondary school system, in the primary school system, particularly for those class four children. Sir, as a teacher myself with 10 years vintage, I know that many of the textbooks at that stage, the mathematics books by Walter Phillips, New Common Entrance Mathematics, books by Jeff Broomes and other authors have worked examples and problem exercises that are vital for those children, and so it is very important for them to be able to take home those books after three o'clock so that they can continue in the learning process so that if, because of lack of funds, working-class children cannot take home a book and do not have that book, then there would clearly be at a disadvantage to those children from the more affluent sectors who would have those books to assist them at home.

Mr. Chairman, I am really very excited by this because we know that knowledge is power and it is very important that we give these children a very strong, solid foundation so that the transition into the secondary level of education can be seamless, as it were. Sir, as I have said, I taught primarily at the secondary level throughout many of the schools both older secondary and newer secondary. Sir, I taught primarily in mathematics and I know that many children struggle in the latter part of their secondary career because of not being able to recover from weaknesses at the primary level and so there is need for strengthening the remedial programme. I know that many schools in the Government are committed to doing that and this will go a long way to ensure that there is early recovery from any deficiencies in basic numeracy and literacy, reading skills and so on, so that children would be able to handle more advance topics in mathematics, for example, equations. Sir, in order for one to understand how to solve equations, one must understand basic issues such as directed numbers and, of course, how to add, subtract, multiply and divide.

Mr. Chairman, I would also wish to congratulate the Minister of Social Care for launching his national lessons programme including Westbury School where the Government is providing taxpayers funded tuition for those children preparing for the Common Entrance Examination

after school. Again, this helps to level the playing field because we know the importance of having that extra tuition because children maybe in households where their parents in the position or even have the time to assist the children in terms of extra tuition at home, assisting them with their home work and so this additional tuition will assist those children whose parents cannot afford to pay the tutor the lesson fees. Sir, this would help them to attain the scores in the Common Entrance Examination to get them to school of their choice.

Mr. Chairman, again, I congratulate the Minister of Social Care for launching, at a pilot level, the breakfast feeding programme. I know this goes a long way in terms of supplementing the laudable work done by agencies such as the YWCA and churches, for example, at the St. Ambrose Church Hall, in the heart of the City in Bridgetown where we have the YWCA and churches in the surrounding areas, the New Testament Church, the Roman Catholic Church, St. Ambrose and others coming together to feed hundreds of children to give them a wholesome breakfast so that they are physically and mentally positioned to assimilate the knowledge which is being provided for them in the school environment. (5:00)

in terms of the preliminary level for those persons who have entered the UWI at the lower matriculation level. In fact, you would remember that years ago, there was an articulation agreement entered into between the UWI and the Barbados Community College such that the students who were in the Natural Sciences Programme and did not have the two 'A' Levels which would give them higher matriculation to enter the three-year full-time Bachelor's Programme were able to, rather than spend one year doing the N1 Programme, which is equivalent to 'A' Levels in Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology and so on, were able to do the equivalent at the Barbados Community College in the same time but for a much lower cost to the State. Sir, I believe that with the Associate Programme being so popular and exciting, we have a situation in which, where the Grade Point Average of the graduate in certain hospitality studies, Associate Degree Programme is sufficiently high, after doing two years of an Associate Degree full-time at Barbados Community College, they are able to move onto the University of the West Indies to complete a Bachelors Degree, two years full-time, and therefore saving an entire year

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Therefore saving them time and also saving the taxpayers thousands of dollars. So these are creative ways, I believe, that we can use to really deal with the issue of escalating cost of providing education to our children at the tertiary level.

Sir, I believe what happens is that many students find the Associate Degree Programme superior in terms of flexibility to the traditional CAPE A'level.

Sir, I remember having to leave Lodge School to go to the Sixth Form at Harrison College because I could not do Mathematics and Biology, because that combination was not possible, given the limited physical space and staffing resources at that school. At the Barbados Community College we have a wider range of subjects, from Pharmacy, Medical Laboratory Technology to Fine Arts, where you actually do an entire degree, and Physical Education, so you get the point. Sir, therefore, I believe this is very attractive to many of our children leaving the secondary schools.

In fact, in St. Lucia, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College is the primary learning institution at the tertiary level. There is hardly a Sixth Form there, if any at all.

Sir, these creative imaginative initiatives can really help us to ensure that as the demand for tertiary education rises in our country, we are not in a position where can to even put on the table issues of reducing the access to tertiary education.

Mr. Chairman, I would wish to congratulate the Minister of Education, for pressing ahead to ensure that the tremendous track record of this Democratic Labour Party, in terms of educating our nation's children continues to soar ahead. I thank you.

On the motion of Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE, seconded by???, Mr. Chairman reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again. Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until Thursday, March 17, 2011, at 2.00 p.m.

Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that.

The question that the House be suspended until Wednesday, March 17, 2011, at 2.00 P.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the House accordingly.

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BEST, His Honour K.St.C. (St. Michael East)
BOYCE, Hon. J. D. E. (Christ Church South)
BRATHWAITE, Hon. A.D. (St. Philip South)
BYER-SUCKOO, Dr. Hon. E.R. (St. George South)
CLARKE, Mr. G.A. (St. George North)
DUGUID, Dr. W. F. (Christ Church West)
ESTWICK, Dr. Hon. D.C. (St. Philip West)
FORDE, Miss C.Y. (St. Thomas)
INNIS, Hon. D.O'N. (St. James South)
JONES, Hon. R.D. (Christ Church East Central)
LASHLEY, Hon. M.A. (St. Philip North)
LASHLEY, Mr. H. F. (St. Michael South East)
MARSHALL, Mr. D. D. (St. Joseph)
MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A. (St. Michael North East)
PAYNE, Mr. G.W. (St. Andrew)
SEALY, Hon. R. L. (St. Michael South Central)

SINCKLER, Hon. C. P. (St. Michael North West)
STUART, Mr. F.J. (St. Michael South)
THOMPSON, Mrs. M-J. M.
TODD, Hon. Patrick M. T. (City of Bridgetown)

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Opening. The source opens without the convening sentence (Pursuant to the adjournment ... met at ...). The date is taken from the heading of the source.

Q3. Order No. 6, end of Mr. G. W. Payne's speech. The Speaker's call 'The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.' is run into the last paragraph of Mr. Payne's speech ('Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.') rather than appearing as a separate line for Mr. SPEAKER. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Take-slip before Mr. G. W. Payne's last passage. The take-slip reads 'H:No.87C (7)11.12 p.m.', although the Sitting was then in its morning session; presumably 11.12 a.m. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 6, speech of Mrs. M-J. M. Thompson. The speech refers to '\$750 000 million on a prison', a figure that cannot be right as it stands. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Committee of Supply, Head 54. Hon. R. D. Jones gives the previous year's figure as '\$526 million' and says that adding the \$65 million Supplementary 'will give some \$582 million'; \$526 million and \$65 million make \$591 million. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Committee of Supply, report of progress. The procedural note reads 'On the motion of Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE, seconded by???'; the seconder's name is missing in the source. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Suspension of Sitting. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce moved the suspension until 'Thursday, March 17, 2011', but the question as recorded reads 'Wednesday, March 17, 2011'. Printed as in the source.

Q9. Reporters' headings. Several reporters' page headings appear as lines of the debate text, for example 'March 16, 2011' beneath a stray heading 'ESTIMATES' before the Prime Minister's speech, and 'ESTIMATES - House A87C, Sequence 15, 1.47 p.m.' within Mr. D. D. Marshall's speech. Printed as in the source.

Q10. Speech labels and the Chair. Labels vary in the source: 'Rt. Hon. O.A. ARTHUR' and 'Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR', 'Mr. W. F. DUGUID' and 'Dr. W. F. DUGUID', 'Hon. D. O. INNIS' and 'Hon. D.O'N. INNIS', 'MR. C. P. SINCKLER' and 'Hon. C. P. SINCKLER'. In Committee of Supply the Member for St. James South is called by 'Mr. SPEAKER', and Hon. J. D. E. Boyce addresses 'Mr. Chairman' while the Speaker was in the Chair. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly resumed on Wednesday, 16th March, 2011, with Mr. Speaker in the Chair, on Order No. 6, the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, 2011-2012, which the Minister of Finance, Hon. C. P. Sinckler, Member for St. Michael North West, had presented on the Monday.

Mrs. M-J. M. Thompson, Member for St. John, supported the Estimates, setting them against the global crisis and the earthquake and tsunami in Japan and appealing to both sides to stop playing politics. Hon. M. A. Lashley said the Government had maintained public sector jobs and a safety net for the vulnerable, and spoke of a backlog of 500 to 700 cases of title to land. Mr. G. W. Payne, Member for St. Andrew, said the Estimates did not reflect Democratic Labour Party policy, criticised 'instant policy' on a sixth form at St. Michael School, and found nothing in them for the Scotland District; a point of order by Hon. J. D. E. Boyce was upheld. Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick, Member for St. Philip West, reviewed agriculture, noting that sugar's contribution had fallen from \$47 million in 1986 to \$13.6 million in 2008, and set out the constraints facing the sector and plans for an agricultural census and a National Agriculture Health and Food Safety System. Hon. R. L. Sealy, Member for St. Michael South Central, spoke on debt and defended the Gol flight from Brazil. The Sitting was suspended until 1.30 p.m.

After the suspension Mr. D. D. Marshall, Member for St. Joseph, said the Government had borrowed and spent more, neglected the Scotland District and failed CLICO policyholders, and sought to table CLICO documents; the Speaker cautioned Members that the CLICO matter was under judicial management and before the courts. The Prime Minister, Hon. F. J. Stuart, Member for St. Michael South, said there had been no serious criticism of the Estimates, citing Sir William Harcourt on the role of an Opposition.

Hon. C. P. Sinckler replied that the Government had found a recession already in progress, contested the Opposition's figures ('It is not 8.3 per cent. It is 6 per cent.') and criticised the former Government's spending of over \$200 million on the GEMS project and its handling of the Greenland landfill. His reply drew repeated points of order from the Rt. Hon. O. S. Arthur, Member for St. Peter, on CARICOM free movement and the Greenland project, and from Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley; the Speaker ordered the words 'they wanted kickbacks' struck from the record. The second reading, seconded by Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo, was agreed to without division, and the Sitting was suspended until 5.30 p.m.

On resumption the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. James D. Paul, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair. On Head 54, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, Hon. R. D. Jones, Member for

Christ Church East-Central, said the Ministry received \$302 million directly, with transfers of \$537 286 275, and that the University of the West Indies would receive some \$77 million. Miss C. Y. Forde, Member for St. Thomas, raised concerns about the supervision of students; Mr. H. F. Lashley, Member for St. Michael South East, described a school for children with disabilities; Hon. D. O'N. Inniss, Member for St. James South, Mr. G. A. Clarke, Member for St. George North, His Honour K. St.C. Best, Member for St. Michael East, Dr. W. F. Duguid, Member for Christ Church West, and Hon. P. M. T. Todd also spoke, Dr. Duguid and Hon. D. O'N. Inniss exchanging points of order over the dental profession.

Progress was reported, and on the motion of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, seconded by Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, the House was suspended at about 7.31 p.m. until Thursday, 17th March, 2011 at 2.00 p.m.