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RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon, Honourable Members, this Sitting is resumed. When the Suspension was taken last evening, we were on Order No. 6 in Committee of Supply, to that we shall return.

Mr. SPEAKER vacated the Chair. Mr. CHAIRMAN assumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Resumed)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

ORDER NO. 6 - APPROPRIATION BILL (Resumed)

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I want to join the consideration of Head 54: Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development as we restart our overall consideration of the Estimates and Expenditures, 2011-2012. Mr. Chairman, it is important that we make the point to Barbados, which has been stated by the Minister of Finance on numerous occasions and also by the Honourable Members on this side, also in spite of the impression which one would sometimes glean from the comments of Honourable Members on the other side, there is no evidence of any cuts to the education budget of this nation. Sir, the Democratic Labour Party holds too close to its heritage, its birthright, the question of education. We fought the Barbados Labour Party on issues of education for a long time, and we would not revisit that debate now. We made sure that our children were properly nurtured at school because we saw it as a social need. Sir, as I pointed

out in my contributions earlier, at the level of transportation, we have implemented and maintained a free school bus service to all our school children throughout the nation.

Mr. Speaker, we need to quantify this benefit because we argued, for instance, about the reversed credit to domestic servants and to persons who are at the very bottom of the earning ranges in Barbados. These range between \$800 and \$1 300. We are now talking about \$1 600 being made available directly to parents with one child sending that child to school. It is to my mind a very important fundamental with respect to how we look at the provision of education and the ability to maintain the education system.

Mr. Chairman, the question of course too of the state of mind in which our children arrive at school and at home from school are important considerations which we feel are close to and will remain fundamental in the considerations of the Democratic Labour Party. Mr. Chairman, I am very happy that the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development and the Minister of Finance have been able to make sure that areas such as education have not suffered any kind of diminution of finances.

Mr. Chairman, how we apply those finances will always be a matter for discussion and indeed it has been for a long time whether we build a school in one constituency or the other but I want to make a close examination of the area for which I have the honour to represent. I plea for the consideration by the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, we have discussed it many times but I think it need to go into the record that Christ Church South is served by two primary schools, basically St. Christopher in the east and St. Lawrence in the west. Of course, there are a number of children who attend the schools at Water Street, the Milton Lynch Primary and Christ Church Girls' School. Mr. Chairman, as we expand in Enterprise and Carters Gap, I think there is a growing need for consideration of some primary schools being

provided in that area. Sir, along with that immediately comes to mind the question of recreational facilities, because all schools tend to be complimented by the provision of recreational facilities and Christ Church South has been suffering from the non-provision of recreational facilities. Of course, as the Democratic Labour Party representative of that constituency I have already started to discuss with the Minister of Housing and Minister of Sports the question of recreational facilities. We have of course the facility at Dover and that has its own history a very rich history contributing to sports in Christ Church in cricket, football and many great contributors. As a matter of fact, the pavilion at Dover is now named the Vincent Lashley Williams Pavilion.

Mr. Chairman, you have to be sure when you say these things that people understand the emphasis that is being placed on these kind of remembrances. Mr. Chairman, although there would have many names submitted of great contributions in the area in the final analysis after careful survey this was the choice that was made. Mr. Speaker, I was talking about Dover as a location. Of course Dover is vested in the National Sports Council and it is a facility which has become more and more dominated nationally and there is always a competition for its use by local clubs, even the Dover Cricket Club and Dover Football Club, Paradise Football Club in competition with the national desire to promote national events. Very importantly is the tourism aspect of the Dover development.

Mr. Chairman, in the east, there is the St. Christopher School and the facilities at St. Christopher are very bordering and they almost bely the performance of that school, the performances have always been credited in cricket and all manners of sports.

2.13 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, at this stage, we want to pay tribute to the gentlemen, known as 'Boycott', who takes care, almost voluntarily of that Mr. Clarke. Sir, he is a good Christ Church man, of Lodge Road, Christ Church, and the contribution he makes, in terms of developing those kids, is tremendous and, Sir, there is also Wilkes Primary School in Dover, Christ Church.

Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make is that there is need for a facility dedicated to sports to football, recreation and cricket, in the area and we have, of course, many guided lights who could take us through the development of a full-fledged strong, sporting unit in the area of Enterprise. Sir, we will continue to work with the Ministries I have mentioned before to try to make sure that this project can become a reality. It takes time, it takes negotiation and it takes money at the end of the day, so the

three of these things will have to come together as we seek that solution.

However, Sir, in achieving that goal, we would be able then to provide, I think, a balance in terms of how our children develop that is absolutely important in any consideration of education because no amount of academic achievement can replace the need to have a balanced recreational and sporting parallel achievement. Indeed, it is a fact that most of the great sportsmen of today are also strong academic minds and, indeed, more and more Barbadians take advantage of sporting scholarships in the United States of America and other countries which are designed around the athletic development. Sir, when I say "athletic", I mean athletic in the broadest sense but, at the same time, the academic training and development of the mind. Sir, we need just reflect on our sporting heroes the latest of which is Ambassador Ryan Brathwaite in respect of these global achievements, and Barbados has to do even better.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, staying again at home, we need to find avenues for occupation of these young minds once they leave school or they may be stolen away from us, from our mothers and fathers by deviance. We know there is a high concentration of deviant behaviour in Barbados. It is a growing problem and we must not close our eyes to this fact and, therefore, we need a structured programme of recreational development which parallels our scholastic programme in the schools and, therefore, brings about a much more balanced and rounded student and ensures that the society we know as Barbados, the society that we treasure so much, and that we are so proud of, this independent beacon of the Caribbean, to ensure that only do we remind a vibrant economy but we are also a proud and strong society.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George South. (4:32)

Dr. the Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sir, I am glad for this opportunity to speak in this Honourable House today as we look at the Head for the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. Indeed, as I look at their major programmes for the upcoming year, there are so many here in the information that has been provided that one could talk at length on the number of things that are being done, all of which are laudable but, Sir, I wanted to pick out just a few to spend the next few moments on.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, let me refer to a project that has been mentioned by two other members, the Minister and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and that is creation of the new school at Edgeton in Christ Church. Sir, many people do not believe me when I tell them that it happens to be on the edge of my constituency as well and so, I am pleased to welcome that school. It is an amalgamation of two schools, the St. David's Primary, which is in my constituency and the South District Primary and part of South District falls in St. George South and, indeed, the school is just on the road which is the boundary. Sir, these schools in themselves are small schools with roles of just over 100 and very limited facilities for recreation. There are very small fields, the class rooms are very small and so I know the teachers, the students and the parents would welcome this new facility. (6:07)

Mr. Chairman, I am just as excited about the field. The Minister spoke of the recreational area and the field would be provided there and he did say that somewhere along the line, in some time to come, we would look at getting a pavilion and that kind of thing. Sir, I want to welcome that as well because even though that facility would be on the border of St. George South, I must say that the folks in Watts Village, South District, St. David and Cox Road, all of which are in the constituency of St. George South, all of those folks have been asking for a playing field because there is no playing field to serve Cox Roads, St. David's, Edey Village and so on. Sir, they are very excited about this possibility and we hope that it will be set up in such a way that the field would be available to the community for use after school hours.

Mr. Chairman, as I mention these schools, there are, indeed, three schools in the constituency of St. George South, Ellerton Primary, St. Luke's Primary and St. David's Primary but there are three others that I consider as mine as well because, as I have mentioned, I have part of South District and the school is on the boundary.

Mr. Chairman, at Workman's Primary, most of Workmans is in the c constituency of St. George South and the school sits on the boundary and St. Jude's as well is shared between St. George North and St. George South, and the school also sits on the boundary, so I find myself looking after and getting involved in the activities of these schools as well. Sir, they are all very small schools but doing the best with the resources that they have. Mr. Chairman, just earlier this month, Ellerton Primary opened a library, a resource reading room, a very small room that they equipped. Sir, several donations were made to the school to have this reading facility so as to encourage reading at this school. Sir, what is also noted is the breakfast programme. Sir, right now South District is doing a breakfast programme in conjunction with the YWCA, (8:00) meals are being prepared at South District Methodist

Church which is just across the road from the school and students from South District and the surrounding areas would come there and have breakfast in the morning.

Mr. Chairman, South District is also preparing meals that would be carried to Ellerton Primary and they are now doing a breakfast programme with meals that are prepared because the facilities at South District Methodist Church have been approved and so the meals are cooked there and carried across. Sir, Workman's Primary has just started a programme as well, again, in conjunction with the YWCA.

Mr. Chairman, I must congratulate and thank the Constituency Councils who have come on board in supporting the breakfast programmes in the constituency as well because we are aware that many children do come to school hungry and when teachers find that the students are not paying attention and they are a little bit restless and that it is hard to get them to focus on what they are doing, it can be because they are not eating breakfast and they are not well nourished and so they are at a disadvantage.

Mr. Chairman, one would then see the importance of providing breakfast for these students. I want to thank the YWCA publicly for the good work in conceptualising and carrying forward this programme and now we are seeing it expanded into many, many areas.

Mr. Chairman, the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development last January submitted to the Heads of Government a draft report that they had done. They had interviewed young people from across the Caribbean on their concerns and I would, from time to time, refer to this document because it looks at several aspects and education is one but the young people spoke about many of their concerns. I think it is always important that as we, the policy makers and legislators go forward, we must have in mind what all of our constituents are saying, not least of all the young people.

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Sir, when it came to education our young people expressed some concerns. Some of them would have been expressed here. As I listened and read through what their concerns were, I am glad that when I looked at the programmes for the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development in the coming year, they would have addressed some of the concerns students around the Caribbean would have expressed.

Mr. Chairman, when I spoke earlier, I mentioned of social cohesion, and the fact that we have still managed in Barbados, in spite of the economic situation, to ensure that we maintain social services, to ensure that education and other aspects are still provided and there is still access. Sir, I say that because one of the first concerns of the young

people across the Caribbean about education, is a restrictive access. The young people were concerned that because of poverty, because of an inability to meet the cost of transportation, the cost of school supplies, books and uniform, and so on, they were not given equal access to schools. Again, we in Barbados are fortunate. We are blessed that our students have access to schools.

Sir, one concern across the Caribbean is the lack of sufficient school spaces, not only at Primary but at Secondary level. They may not be sufficient school spaces. We do not have that challenge here in Barbados. There are school spaces, and any concerns that they now have in terms of supplies, access to books and, indeed, transportation, those problems and needs have been addressed.

Mr. Chairman, our young people were concerned about the relevance of education. They were concerned that the education being offered them is not relevant to their talents, skills, interests or their needs. They were also concerned about the quality of education and that, in fact, many Governments were under investing in education. That, we cannot see from the evidence presented to us, is a problem in Barbados. We cannot say there has been an under investment in our education system, and the education programme offered.

Sir, other concerns expressed included insecurity in schools. Children across the Caribbean have become concerned that their schools are no longer a safe environment not only from bullies, but from weapons, and so on. Our students are more and more finding the school to be a threatening environment.

Sir, in some schools also there is a concern about the homosexual culture in schools. There has also been a concern ... I just have a couple of others. Our students expressed concern about teachers falling short of their roles. They are concerned that teachers are not doing what it is they expect the teachers are to do.

Sir, one student was quoted as saying that the say, "Look, I am only here because I have to be here, and I have to show up in order to get a job." Now the document I have is a Caribbean document, so I do not know that was said in Barbados, but this was a concern expressed by people across the Caribbean that the teachers have expressed that concern. I know that in Barbados we do have some teachers who are not satisfactory in their work, but if our children are registering that our teachers do not want to be there, then that is going to be a problem for children as well.

In fact, our children know when they are appreciated and they know when the students are going above and beyond. All of us, here, have a favourite teacher. We all

know that teacher that went a little above and beyond just to be there for us, or the person at the school, the ancillary staff as well. For many of us the favourite person in school may not even have been the teacher.

Sir, just on Saturday I was working in the area of Bairds Village, and we came upon the home of an elderly lady, many of the members of my team got very excited because a number of them, with me, had been to St. Jude's Primary. One of the School Meals Servers was an elderly lady called Miss Veta Phillips. They all got very excited. Of course we went to her house. Nobody talked politics. There were all hugs and kisses, how are you doing, and she was reminiscing on the days when she would look after the students, when she would be there early and she would leave late just to ensure that the students were taken care of, and if they look hungry she would put a little extra food, or if she had an extra cake she would call them back to get the extra cake, and so on. Our children remembered that. Sir, those are the qualities that even today's children are looking for from their teachers, to know that the teachers are not just there because it is a job. This is what pays my bills. I have to come to school. I have to be here.

Mr. Chairman, children also expressed concern about stigmatisation of certain schools based on location. We see that happening in Barbados as well. There were concerned that rural schools, for example, are not respected as much, may be because of where there are or because of where they fall in terms of the catchment, and the quality of students, the grades of the students that they would get.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member you have five minutes.

Hon. Dr. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Then the 10 to 14-year-old students spoke of peer pressure. So all of these are things that our students recognised as concerns.

Sir, one of the things I want to point out that I have noticed in the programme document for the Ministry is, the Continued Teacher Training. I think that is so important. Sir, we have spoken in this Honourable House about training for doctor and all professionals. I think it is important that some emphasis is placed on teacher training. Indeed, some of the challenges our children face today are not challenges that teachers may have had to face years ago, or even as get grew up. Today's teachers would face in their classroom children of different family types, not the nuclear family, but all different family types. As time goes on, the family types will evolve as well.

Sir, we have students in our classroom who have been exposed to drugs. That causes a different dynamic in the school as well, whether they have been exposed to secondhand smoke, whether they have been exposed to secondhand marijuana smoke, or whether they themselves

have used drugs. That affects the student and it affects their behaviour in the classroom.

Mr. Chairman, I mentioned peer pressure and the concern that the students have about peer pressure, but teachers have to be trained to be sensitive to peer pressure and to bullying and to know how to address that in their classroom as well. Sir, these are not qualities that just come with wisdom and age, but our teachers need to have that as part of their retraining.

Sir, conditions like attention deficit, hyperactivity disorder and dyslexia, we are seeing more and more in the classroom. Sir, it is not only special needs students in special schools or special classrooms. This is happening across the board. We are seeing it more and more, and it is becoming widespread in our classrooms.

Sir, from time to time I have teachers who just stop me and say, "Look, can you help me get some assistance for this particular family because I believe this child has been molested, or this child is mal nourished. Yes he gets breakfast on the programme and he gets lunch, but this child is not properly nourished", or "this child is not sleeping properly."

Sir, when children are in a small home, a small room and adults are watching television until 3 o'clock in the morning, those children are not getting adequate sleep, so they cannot function, and this becomes a concern for the teachers. Sir, they have to deal with the anger, the violence and stress that children face.

Sir, there was a time when stress was not found to be related to children. Stress was for the high-level executive, but now we are seeing it among children, not only Secondary and Tertiary school children, but Primary school children as well. So all of this is why we need to place that emphasis on teacher training.

Sir, as I wrap up, just to mention and to endorse the Schools' Positive Behaviour Management Initiative, I gather that the Ministry of Education has had some twenty schools involved, and they are looking to add an additional twelve schools into this Positive Behaviour Management Initiative, using a child-centered approach in the classroom. Also participation in the classroom and inclusiveness. It includes a learning-ready classroom, creating and strengthening Student Councils and increased students governance. It also increases the participation of parents and the community as well, and heighten the safety and protection of students at school.

Sir, remember I said that many students, Primary and Secondary school, are concerned that their schools are not safe. The Principals and Teachers have been trained to deal with this. Some of the topics covered in this training

include, Creating a System for Bully Prevention. Also creating a school-wide Positive Behaviour Management Plan, and creating a system for Parental Involvement. We always lament that parents are not sufficiently involved, and rather than sit back and lament, Principals and Teachers are now being trained on ways to increase the participation of the parents within the school.

Sir, teachers are still called upon to instill values, and this has to be part of their training as well. Yes, we know the home must be where this is centered, but teachers are still being called to do that. Sir, not just about preparing them for education but productivity, industry and culture. Remember they need to know about the past culture, but you also have to bring to bear the present culture, the internet and communication.

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Sir, not just about preparing them for education but productivity and industry and culture, remembering that they need to know about the past culture but they also have to bring to bear the present culture, the internet and the communication that our children use.

We have to be able to incorporate things like the internet into what our children do in the classroom because they are doing that at home and that is what captures their attention. Gender equity needs to be included not as a separate module. We know the curriculum is packed but these are things that teachers have to bring to bear in their classroom, creativity and innovation, above all creating students who are respectful, responsible and resourceful, Mr. Speaker, with self esteem levels that are high and students who are prepared to be productive members of our society. My hat is off to teachers who have been doing this for generations and I want to encourage the Ministry of Education, through the Minister to continue to put emphasis on supporting our teachers to do this increasingly challenging but, I gather, sufficiently rewarding job.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Asides.

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

Mr. R.E. EASTMOND: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. In this particular intervention I would not be considering tertiary level education at this stage but focussing on some primary and some secondary education. It is well known to every Honourable Member in here that for more than 50 years, that successive Governments have invested very heavily in education. We do not want however a truthful situation to be put or to be argued that much of what we have invested in education has gone to

waste and the points I am going to make will support my argument that we have to ensure that the resources which we allocate to education do not go to waste.

Let me start then, Mr. Chairman, by mentioning this question of under achievement both in primary and in secondary school. In many a primary school there are students, some disadvantaged, some belonging to Barbados' underclass who do not benefit from going to school. The authorities in school and the Government are interested in making sure that every Barbadian can access education and yet there are scores and scores of youngsters who end up never having benefitted from exposure to schooling, and this is about underachievement.

Some years ago in the 90s, a study was carried out here in Barbados that showed that some children actually had learning difficulties, some children had problems with their sight, some children had problems with their hearing, some children were dyslectic, some children were in domestic environments that did not encourage scholarship, some poor children were in overcrowded hovels, where not even a bible was present far less a text book for school, and we in Barbados whatever gains we have made, whatever progress some of us would have achieved, cannot afford to lose not even one person as we set about to educate the population of Barbados. There is still a measure of underachievement and if you imagine that between 500 and 600 secondary school children are going to leave school with no certificates and no intention to undergo further education and training, and then when you check their attitudes and realise that they have a fatalistic approach to life, then you should get worried.

For example, Sir, I am still hearing in Barbados people say:

"Everybody can't learn. Wa the teacher putting pressure on the student fa. Everybody can't get certificates."

I hear that type of negative fatalistic talk in Barbados and when parents, especially parents of two and three and four and five children go out and put out that everybody cannot learn, they are sending a signal based on fatalism, that as far as they are concerned, going school is a ritualistic exercise that is imposed by law and that once the law eases up and the people superannuate, then they will have to find a way of living by their wits. Too many Barbadians are compelled to live by their wits precisely because they are not properly educated or trained. I think it is necessary for ongoing research done at reasonable cost to be conducted to look at the causes of underachievement.

Mr. Chairman, the underprivileged and those members of the underclass are the most vulnerable elements in our community. The time has come for us to

tackle the problem at its source because sometimes, Sir, student do not necessarily fail because they did not try in school. Some students fail because of not being exposed to the type of stimuli that would encourage them to learn. A bundle of factors, Mr. Chairman, is involved in the process of motivation to learn and too many children are turned off at a very early age from learning and too many children have a negative attitude often brought on by parents who themselves are possessed with a negative attitude.

We have Barbadians in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, who are 38 years old and are already ripe and rich grandparents. When I say rich grandparents, I do not mean rich in any materialistic sense, I mean grandparents to a degree where they are grandparents on end. We have people 50 years old, great grandparents and then you get something like a cycle, Mr. Chairman, where one generation fails and the next generation in that family fails, and the third generation fails, and despite every known effort by Government the cycle, a vicious cycle, and then a vortex occurs, and some people get trapped and do not really achieve.

Sir, every parent should be encouraged to take the responsibility of parenting very seriously and I notice that PAREDOS seems to be about to get a new injection of life. PAREDOS in the days of Marjorie Blackman did a tremendous amount of work in parenting, parent education and related areas and we need, Sir, a particular multi prong approach to ensuring that the goals of our educational system are achieved and that the monies expended are properly justified without wastage.

Sir, there are Barbadians who get nine CXC's at one sitting. In fact, that is becoming so commonplace now that I should mention that there are Barbadians who get 11 CXC's at one sitting, not that CXC is easy because the content and the demands of a lot of CXC syllabuses are so demanding that only the bold can really survive. A lot of CXC syllabuses are really not O-Level. They are higher than O-Level. It is a fact. The bulk of the syllabus is sometimes very awesome and although, Sir, we get a lot of students who get beyond five CXC's or five O-LEVELS, we still have children in the system who are teachable and still disadvantaged by the system.

There are children with minor difficulties that can be solved but the specialised type of approach needed for those children, we do not have and I am making out a case for special education, Sir, we in Barbados can do well with trained special educators, where persons are trained to teach the disadvantaged, where persons are trained to teach slow learner, where persons are trained to teach underachievers, which brings me to this. Sir, in this region, we encourage the free movement of entertainers, sportsmen and such like and certainly the free movement of graduates, Sir.

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I have seen the free and easy movement of lawyers and doctors into Barbados but I am coming across situations where the free movement of qualified graduate teachers is being impeded. Let me repeat that, Mr. Chairman. There are graduates from neighbouring territories, many of them trained in special education who qualified to be here not only because of free movement and the fact that they are graduates but because they have long-standing marriages with Barbadians, not marriages of convenience, but when they come here, they are met by a bureaucracy which tells them we know you have special skills in teaching but the Immigration Department requires you to go back to your country every six months and return. This is happening to teachers with special education skills but not to lawyers and doctors.

As Trinidad has invested heavily in Barbados' business enterprise, Trinidad has brought its own lawyers, especially young females, from Trinidad to practise corporate law in Barbados. The typical Barbadian lawyer has to practise criminal law and a few other things while non-Barbadians under free movement are following their bosses in the corporate sector and doing extremely well.

Beyond that, Sir, I just want to briefly mention that I am worried about the parent/school conflict. There is too much conflict between parents and the schools. Too many parents do not see the schools as being there to help but as being there to punish. Too many parents have no respect at all for school and authority. A teacher ran out of teaching because he set some homework for the children and the next day the children did not do the homework, so he called the parents and asked the parents why they did not check to see if their children had homework and the parents told the teacher - I am speaking anecdotally but I am speaking truthfully - "we tell them not to do any homework if it is too hard." They did not even make an effort. The attitude of the parents was, we tell them not to do the homework if it is too hard. Parents say that they, the teachers, want the children to rack their brain and send them mad and things like that. All types of strange things are happening that affect children. A lot of negative things come from the parents. Any time parents are locked in a battle against a school and see the teachers as the enemy trouble breaks out.

Sir, there is also something that ought not to happen. There are in some areas of Barbados a community versus the school dichotomy. Whereas the school should be part of the community and should compliment the community and work with the community as has happened successfully over the years, there are some communities that are hostile to schools. Those communities are populated by marginal elements and desperados who want to convert themselves

into heroes and who try to suggest to the children that going to school is a waste of time because ultimately the children are welcome to join them on 'the block' to idle. I do not particularly like that for Barbados and something has to be done. That might raise issues beyond ordinary education, Sir.

As I conclude by saying that our educational system should encourage lifelong learning, I want to lament the fact that in this Barbados reading has declined. I remember the halcyon days of Barbadians strolling in the afternoon after school, sometimes two and three miles meeting friends on the way to the library closest to them to sit in the library and read or to borrow books. That particular aspect of our living is declining. Those who are defending the fact that we do not read from hard copies are saying that with so many computers, we do not read from hard copies of text books, we read from computers.

Mr. Chairman, I tell you the truth, the principal offenders who do not like reading even when they are computer-literate do not really go on the computer to read anything off the computer. Often, they go on the computer for games and what I would call software. By software, I am not using it in the technical computer sense, I mean for light things.

Sir, this country cannot afford to become complacent. We have spent billions upon billions of dollars over time and if you assume that even after spending these billions, we have an underclass in Barbados of about 30 000 people, then if that underclass had been exposed to schooling and has failed, the systems have failed themselves and are putting pressure on Government resources through welfare and such like, it means then that a lot of millions of dollars were not really properly spent from the point of view that even though the intention was to embrace everybody and help everybody, there were those who actually squandered money and opportunities in the process.

Sir, I will be back shortly. Thank you very much.

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

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am obliged to you for this opportunity to speak in this debate. In my contribution, since we are dealing with the Budget, I will try to treat to issues in respect of the financing of education in Barbados and the need for social innovation and social reform as distinct from just Budget chopping.

Mr. Chairman, the country faces an issue that I believe that we should not approach in a clumsy way. We must take pride and, to the extent that we can, persevere in making sure that our investment in the development of the

human resource of Barbados through education does not falter. This country now spends at least half a billion dollars a year on education. It is the investment in the building of skills and the creation of skills in this country that have underwritten the development of Barbados. We do not have mineral resources, we do not have rich agricultural resources but we have created rich institutional and human resource. We must stop treating our spending on education as an ordinary expenditure and see it as the investment that it is.

The reality, however, Mr. Speaker, is clear. This society, and we all have to agree to accept it, having been built on social investment now finds itself in a situation where the economy in transition can no longer carry the social sector as it is evolving given the fact that the cost of providing social services in this country and in the rest of the world are slowly spiralling out of the reach of most governments, that is the reality.

The response must not, in my judgement, be how much do we cut but how do we reform and innovate as the first option. Only after we have exhausted all possibilities for reform and social innovation should the issue of major cutting become the primary issue. The Government will therefore find that on this side we will want that the approach to dealing with what I call the disarticulation in our fiscal accounts takes the form of social reform and social innovation before we get to social cuts as the principal issue. We will support the Government in trying to maintain investment in education once our resources allow it.

Sir, that said, I want to suggest that the area in which there is the greatest scope for social reform and social innovation is in the area of education. There is perhaps no greater underutilised physical capacity in this country than our educational establishments. They are used largely on a 9 to 3 basis and for most of the rest of the day, they are underutilised. For many long periods of the year as well our educational facilities are underutilised. We have to open our minds to maintaining expenditure but doing it in an innovative way.

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I would urge this Honourable House, we must start paying attention to the Appendices that look at the relationship between the expenditures each of our schools require and the amount of revenues that are generated by the Boards and the schools themselves. Mr. Chairman, in many instances you will find that each of our secondary schools, to begin with, require \$5 to \$6 million from the Treasury, and that there is a list of functions from which revenues could be derived - rent, fees, endowments and trust funds, functions, other sources, other services and lunches.

Mr. Chairman, there is the anticipation that our educational institutions should also be looking to raise revenues by deploying the physical facilities of the school plant in these various ways. Sir, we have to start thinking of these things now because we are facing a fiscal crisis. Sir, in many other countries in the world, education and other institutions are funded as much by trusts and endowment funds, as by direct grants from Government. Sir, people will ask why have we not done this in the past but we are now faced with a fiscal crisis and we must open up our minds. I feel that before we talk about cutting, let us ask the Ministry of Education and work with the Ministry of Education to find ways by which we can optimise the revenues that can accrue to our schools from the fullest use of the facilities of the schools and from encouraging the Boards of schools not only to treat to educational issues before them but to see that there is a need for them to become more financially self-sufficient, and that every secondary school, Mr. Chairman, should set a goal and it is said that we in Parliament want them to set a goal, like the University of the West Indies, that come next year, they bring back some of the old scholars and try to help carry some of the responsibility of the school from trusts and other relationships, rather than coming to Parliament because we have reached the stage where quite frankly we do not to cut, we want to maintain but our non-traditional way of paying for them have to be engaged.

Mr. Chairman, the use of our educational facilities are greatly underutilised. How many schools at the start of the year set out to make money from functions? As Minister of Finance, I used to check these things because I remember former Prime Minister, in 1987, when Errol Barrow heard how much money schools had in balances, he asked them to be brought in. Sir I used to pay a close attention to the fact how much money they have. Mr. Chairman, I suspect though that what is before us is the greatest fiction in the Estimates and Expenditures, 2011-2012 because schools do not like to report fully the amount that they have, for fear that the Minister of Finance may take it away from them.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that goals must now be set and that there is scope for innovation and reform. The Estimates and Expenditures, 2011-2012 show secondary schools - we do not see the primary schools - but our direction of our investments have been to not only modernise them but to expand them in a significant way.

Mr. Chairman, when I pass through Coleridge and Parry, I am fascinated by what is now available in terms of facilities now, as compared to what was available then. I wonder to what fully use are these magnificent facilities paid for by the taxpayers being fully put. Mr. Chairman, I would like to urge that there would be this element of let us try to maximise, in an innovative way, the use of our

educational facilities because it is the greater under-utilised physical facility in this country at this time.

Mr. Chairman, the second point I want to make is that we on this side are critical about the issue of Constituency Councils. If Constituency Councils have been intended to be a nexus between the civil society and the State by overcoming some of the issue that have come from the over-centralisation of state functions in Barbados. If they are intended to perform that role, there is no evidence that we from this side can discern that is being dealt with in a serious way.

Mr. Chairman, Barbados has laboured from the fact that local Government has been abolished and there has been a centralisation of the role of the State in an important way, and if there could be a justification for the reintroduction of some form of governance at the community level, it is to maintain an intimacy between the citizens and the provision of public services. Sir, there is no evidence that Constituency Councils have yet established any serious working relationship at all with the educational system at the local level in any serious way or have even begin to conceive of how the physical facilities that belong to the State can be brought into a working relationship for the betterment of the community through a nexus between Constituency Councils and Government. And that is why it is critical that they be involved in a lot of trivial things.

Mr. Chairman, for the next two years, obviously the Government is committed, so it says, not to removing Constituency Councils, it would seem to me that in the interval that rather than Constituency Councils, to the extent that they have to continue to exist for the next two years, that rather than having to be concerned with debushing, because most of them are concerned with debushing.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Can I make my point, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please proceed, Honourable Member.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I have recently seen the Minutes of the Constituency Council of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. I pay attention to them and there are a lot of issues in respect of payment for debushing and catering.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. The Honourable Member was going well with what looked to be a studied presentation but the

Honourable Member now wants to fall into that mire, because the Honourable Member cannot accept that the structure of the Constituency Councils can and is already playing a useful and important role in bringing together these considerations, the same considerations of which the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter is speaking and therefore the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please proceed, Honourable Member. The Honourable Member has five minutes in which to wind up. Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, you have to add back on the time used for the point of order of the Honourable Member.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I took that into consideration.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, last year I read out reports of the Constituency Councils, what were their activities as reported in the Economic and Social Report of Barbados and there was not one instance in which any activities of any of the Constituency Councils involved working with schools at the primary level, in any specific activity related to the role of the schools in the local community. That is in the report.

Mr. Chairman, I am not saying this as any way of being adversely critical, that was in the report. If from the outset these Constituency Councils do not accept that if they are to justify their existence, they must bridge what the Government says. It is a gap between local communities and the use of local facilities for the benefit of local communities, if they do not see the school as perhaps the most important location for their attention to bridge that gap, then I say that they would be, from the outset, missing the point.

Mr. Chairman, you may tell me that has changed recently but I am telling you from what I have seen and the reports I have seen, the report only to which I can speak, that has not been the case.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House to try to score cheap mileage. It is not correct. Sir, for instance, this evening at 7.00 p.m., at the Christ Church South Constituency Councils there is a discussion on youth development. Our last year programme included help to the disabled in the community, job opportunity training and awareness programme for the entire community, all in concert with the schools. Mr. Chairman, what is the Honourable Member at?

3.03 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not speaking in terms of just holding a function in the school, I am speaking in terms of forging a relationship. Sir, let me make my point. There is a school called the Coleridge Parry School in St. Peter. Is there a working relationship between the Constituency Council and the Board of Coleridge and Parry, such that the plans...

Mr. F.J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The council of St. Peter has not yet been established. In fact, only today in Cabinet, we established the council for the constituency of St. Peter, so a non-existent thing cannot have a relationship with something that exists.

Rt. Hon. O.S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take that point but I am asking, in general. You have institutions that are schools with under-utilised capacities across Barbados, have working relationships been established between Constituency Councils and the Boards of these institutions, wherever they are, so as to enable us to be satisfied that the nexus that is intended to be secured between the local communities and the new institutions created by the State is being treated as the main priority.

Mr. Chairman, (2:24) I have not seen any evidence of it in the Report. If the Government would take its own for last year on Constituency Councils, there is no evidence that...(2:38)

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

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: (4:44) Mr. Chairman, I want to join this debate on this important subject of education firstly, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate the Honourable Minister of Education and Human Resources for continuing to do such a tremendous job and then immediately to pick up a few points on where the last Honourable Member finished off because I found it interesting that one of the most innovative institutions that has been created in Barbados, the Constituency Councils, that they would somehow find a part in the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Peter because under the Government led by him there would have been no Constituency Councils at all, so I am very happy that he is able to give some advice, apparently, on what he believes should be a part of the Constituency Councils. Sir, rest assured, as mentioned by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Constituency Councils that have been established have gone passed where the Honourable Member for St. Peter is and they continue to do some tremendous work.

Mr. Chairman, the other thing I find the Honourable Member has mentioned is that he is lamenting on the use of the schools and the school plants in relation to the various social programme. Sir, one of those programmes I believe

that even the Barbados Labour Party continues to scoff at is the annual camp programme. I would like to commend the Honourable Minister of Education and Human Resources for continuing to work with the Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth in ensuring that on an annual basis the schools, both primary and, indeed, secondary school plants in the summer vacation in particular are made available for the National Camp Programme. Sir, that, to my mind, is a very productive use of the school plant during the summer vacation.

Mr. Chairman, again, the Honourable Member for St. Peter is making a point about something that this has already, for several years, since 2008, has been embarking on.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Peter, that we obviously are in a time for review and, certainly for innovation but what I feel, Mr. Chairman, that we need to focus on is that at a time when we are going through a very serious economic challenge, the Honourable Member is asking the Government to be innovative and do all kinds of things but what should have occurred is that in time of plenty most of these programmes, all of the innovative programmes that I am hearing from the Honourable Member for St. Peter really should have been done at that time. Sir, if you look at all of the reports of the IMF even in the period 2006/2007 when the other side boasted of surplus what they said is that the Government failed to put in place measures to transform the economy.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the measures which we see in these Estimates in relation to the education Head really are commendable particularly at a time when we are experiencing serious economic challenges. Sir, what I need to say as well is that the Ministry of Education and Human Resources does not proceed on its programme alone. Indeed, the Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth work in a symbiotic relationship with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources in so many areas that historically have always required a collaborative approach.

Mr. Chairman, I speak to a few areas where the programmes of my Ministry and, indeed, the Ministry of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central continue to support each other.

Mr. Chairman, I can speak to the Youth Development Programme, for example, which continues to train a number of young people in a number of areas, training for the world of work, training them in the areas where they can attain skills and can become much more useful.

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We also have the Youth Achievement Results Programme, which, as I know, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is aware through the National Cultural Foundation and through the various schools, continue to train our young people in the creative arts.

Mr. Chairman, indeed, we continue to have a number of young people who come out of that programme, and who through their determination and of course the skills that they acquire continue to forge ahead in the creative arts, and many of them today are musicians and, of course, are skilled in the various areas of the theatrics, whether they have businesses in lighting and certainly in terms of stage management. Those are the proactive ways in which the two Ministries have been working.

Sir, sports development through coaching- we continue through the National Sports Council to work with the schools in the important area of coaching in all the various area of sports. I have to say that programme continues to work very well. The programme we started will continue in the new financial year, but we are going to improve that programme with more involvement of the various communities in two areas, that is the area of Road Tennis and Night Tape Ball Cricket. So the Coaches within the school system will be expanding that programme and, of course, inviting our young people within the schools to be involved in our indigenous sports.

Mr. Chairman, the other thing is, we will be improving and providing in every primary school the minimal cricket, football and netball gear to assist them in their various sporting programmes. We consider that to be vital because it is critical. When we speak of the kind of challenges that young people have, or that our families have, what we do not recognise is in order to tackle these problems, we cannot tackle them in the old traditional ways where we have a blinker view. We recognise both the Ministry of Education and Human Resources and, indeed, the Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth, that these problems and these challenges have to be solved in a holistic way. Hence, the use of sports as a means to ensure that our young people can be sufficiently challenged and that their characters can be built and further influenced, so to pursue positive life styles and at the same time get vital exercise which is crucial for their development.

Mr. Chairman, I think I heard the Honourable Member for St. James North speaking about the whole question of reading. I must stress that while the other side continues to identify challenges, I have an obligation as Minister on this side to point out that these challenges are already being dealt with. So through the National Library Service we have already embarked on a programme designed to ensure that we can again challenge our young people, particularly in the schools to understand that reading is still a vital part of their development.

I have to say that in the new financial year, the National Library Service will continue on an aggressive programme to promote and support literacy at all levels particularly in relation to pre schoolers and young children. These are vital areas because we recognise that we have to live up to and we have to face the challenge of our young people, obviously being encouraged to use more of the modern medium, the internet and so on, but of course not picking up books and attending to our libraries and reading.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has five minutes.

Hon. S.A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Sir,... that of course is a vital area we are working on.

Mr. Chairman, one of the other areas that we recognise is crucial, and I think the Honourable Member for St. George South mentioned the whole question of gender and the whole question of gender balance. We continue to have the problem in this society of domestic violence, and we wonder where that problem is coming from. Sexual harassment, domestic violence, lack of respect for the sexes is something that is happening. It is being inculcated at a very young age. Our young people are seeing these particular challenges in their home, on the streets, wherever they go, and we are convinced, both at the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the National Council, which is advising the Bureau of Gender Affairs, the way to tackle this particular problem must begin within our school.

Sir, we have to go into schools. We have to sensitise our young people that there are differences which manifest themselves in relation to the sexes. We are going to inculcate in them that they must have respect for one another across the sexes, and therefore we hope that through this programme of sensitisation and ensuring that gender is understood, because when we speak of gender we are not only speaking of women's rights, we are speaking of men's right. We are speaking of the respect that men should have for women and women should have for men. We are speaking of the kind of respect that boys should have for girls and girls should have for boys. We want to move towards having a society and an environment which has to start within our school population where our young people are going to respect one another, and therefore, a boy will not seek to beat up on a girl, or vice versa, but we will have that inert respect for the sexes. This is a programme that the Bureau of Gender Affairs will be pursuing with the assistance and collaboration of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources.

Mr. Chairman, I will end with one further point and that is what the Commission of Pan African Affairs has

been doing within the schools. We speak a lot of the need to inculcate the values of our ancestors as descendants of Africa within our young people, and we have the Pan African Affairs Commission which is continuing through its education and awareness programmes in the schools, to sensitise our Principals and indeed our teachers and students in the area of their African awareness. We believe by ensuring that we can understand our historical roots as descendants of African slaves, we will be better able to face the challenges of the future. This programme is a real life programme, and I hope to come back in this debate on the future to look at some other programmes which are being actually promoted within our schools and being pushed by this Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make the point that even in recessionary times, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources is fulfilling its mandate and is working collaboratively with ministries such as my Ministry to ensure that the issues impacting on education are tackled in a multi faceted way, designed to ensure maximum results.

I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make a few observations under this Head. I especially want to start my contribution on the matter of the University of the West Indies. Sir, about two years ago the Government came to Parliament to seek a Government guarantee the amount of \$5 million to contribute to the construction of a Chancery at Mona Campus. On that occasion I commented on my own concern about what I suppose we could call the fractionalisation of the University of the West Indies. Other Honourable Members of this Chamber have commented on it. I believe my good friend the Attorney General delivered himself some comments of a similar theme, about six or so weeks ago. Sir, I believe that it would be remiss of me if I did not seek to refocus some discussion on exactly the direction that the University of the West Indies is taking.

Sir, it is understandable that in order to satisfy the demands of a population for tertiary education, and we know in Barbados only how big a challenge that is.

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We know in Barbados only how big a challenge that is but in that context, Mr. Speaker, it is important to accept that individual nations will try to establish their own tertiary institutions so as to cater to their demands. It is no secret, Sir, that our own administration set as our goal for Barbados, a graduate in every household before the end of this decade and so, in order to achieve that, Sir, we felt it

was important to establish a University College of Barbados of the West Indies.

I am happy to see that there is an amount of money in the Budget for the University College for Barbados but I have to express my concerns, Sir, because what I see happening in the region, is that in pursuit of our dream of ensuring all of our people university education and adequate access to tertiary, Sir, that we are removing from the University of the West Indies that essential character, Sir, that made it the crucible in which not just the leaders of yesteryear but the leaders in the Caribbean in the future were being burnished.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have been a graduate of the University of the West Indies prior to this period where we seem to be splintering off into establishing national faculties. I found, and I believe many of those colleagues who had that experience that there was tremendous advantage, Sir, to be sitting in a classroom with a Jamaican, an Antiguan or a St. Lucian. We have to reflect, Sir, that people like Errol Barrow when he started his tertiary was in London, and it was there he rubbed shoulders with many of the region's leaders. It is there that they were burnished but we have had a unique opportunity, Sir, to create a cadre of leaders of the Caribbean who have rubbed shoulders with each other as they sat in classrooms in the University of the West Indies, in any of the three faculties.

Sir, what is happening now, Sir, is that we have a medical school and a school of dentistry in Trinidad. There is talk of Barbados establishing its own law school. Jamaica is now looking to do the entire law programme in Jamaica. Trinidad is also looking to do the second and third years in Trinidad and this is happening across every spectrum of UWI education, Sir, and no faculty or no country wants to be left behind and so we have a medical faculty here as well, Sir, but I worry that it is removing from the character of the University of the West Indies, the essence of West Indianness. What is happening, Mr. Chairman, is that only those individuals who come from the OECS are the individuals who are to be benefitting of this notion of a University of the West Indies because very soon, I expect within the next years, maybe the next decade, every element of tertiary education that is now spread across the region will be done at home in Barbados and at home in Trinidad and at home in Jamaica. Sir, when once that happens it will cease to exist as the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Speaker, if that is the direction that Governments want to go in then so be it but where we are talking about the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, where we are espousing the values of Caribbeanness and uniting as a region to face the challenges that beset us from beyond our waters, Sir, then I think we have to go back to basics and ask ourselves whether we should not fight tooth

and nail to ensure that the essential nature of the University of the West Indies as a regional institution is preserved.

I sincerely believe that these efforts to pursue our national development goals can be pursued consistent with maintaining the character of tri campus institution as such but we need, Sir, to begin by that commitment and I worry, Sir, that in order to balance our domestic interest we are losing sight of the fact that the University of the West Indies has been a beautiful thing for us and really has done a lot to contribute to whom we are and what we are as a region.

It is something, Sir, that is not now facing this Government. We saw and certainly when I was Attorney General I saw what was happening with the Bahamas and I could see this happening and it is continuing to happen, Sir, but at a faster rate. I would like to suggest to this administration that they should, and Opposition is happy to join with them in this aspect, take measures, Mr. Speaker, to try to see in what way possible we can maintain the essential character of the University of the West Indies as a regional institution. I believe, Sir, that the economics of it still makes sense.

We certainly have to establish a University College of Barbados. It is vital. The demands that are placed on the University of the West Indies in terms of applications cannot be met by that institution and we support that but we still believe, Sir, that there must be certain areas that are best left to a regional institution where we benefit from the concentration of the finest skills of the region. We may decide that we no longer need to do it in medicine, we may no longer need to do it in law, we may no longer need to do it in engineering but, Sir, there has to be some scope for allowing the University of the West Indies to cater, especially for certain areas so that the institution remains as an institution.

I would also before I conclude like to weight in, Sir, on the matter on Constituency Councils and the nexus between our educational institutions and it is a very simple point I want to make. I heard a Member on the Government benches in speaking about his already established Constituency Council, referred to the fact that he had already identified a building that his Constituency Council would rent. Sir, the Opposition's position on Constituency Councils has not changed but it is an item in these Estimates and as such, we reserve the right to be critical of it in the context of these Estimates and beyond. I want to ask, Sir, whether in fact Constituency Councils are paying rent to private individuals for the purpose of securing a home. The relevance to this Head, Sir, is that there are numerous buildings in constituencies that I believe we would all agree are underused and it would make good sense, Sir, if you insist on spending the people's money on Constituency Councils to ensure that to the extent that they

are going to be needing homes, Sir, that they could use the facilities that we accept are already underused in this country.

Asides.

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: Yes, offices. The Minister can correct me if I am wrong. The Minister simply needs to say that no Constituency Council pays rent to anybody and I would be glad if that is the case. I would be glad to hear that Constituency Councils are not paying rent to a fellow because in 30 Constituencies in this country, there are enough community centres, enough pavilions, enough schools and I am urging, Sir, if the Government has to spend money that it should do it properly.

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

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

Sir, I would urge that to the extent that this is a policy position of the Government that they will see to it that the resources are utilised in a way that is optimum, but the Minister who is responsible has every opportunity to say whether Constituency Councils are in fact renting private individuals' property to occupy or whether in fact, all of them, as has already been established are occupying Government places such as schools.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Dr. Hon. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, let me first congratulate the Minister of Education for his sterling performance in that Ministry and for the work that has been done in that Ministry under his direction. Let me, Sir, try to correct some of the basic lack of understanding of the genesis, in relation to whole concept of Constituency Councils.

ESTIMATES - House A87D, Sequence 09, 3.33 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I would want the Honourable Member for St. Peter to recall that on assuming office in 1995, he called for a national consultation at the then Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre to look at the whole notion of public sector reform in relation to how you can roll out more effectively services at the level of rural constituencies and communities. Mr. Chairman, it was from that discussion in 1995 that the then Administration left and went and formed the Office of Public Sector Reform. It is from that discussion, Mr. Chairman, that the then

Administration commissioned a study to be done that was reported to them in 2002.

Mr. Chairman, it was in that Report of 2002, that these following observations were made. The Report carried out evaluations in rural communities and decisively across all the communities and it came back almost ad nauseam that rural communities were not best served by the centralisation of services that could be best delivered at the level of the constituencies. Sir, I remember distinctly, I can see the page in the book, that they spoke specifically to services to the elderly, services that would have been provided in relation to things like debushing and flooding and other types of local amenity services and even some welfare services.

Mr. Chairman, it is from that premise that what we did was to go back and introduce one of the critical components of public sector reform which would have been conceptualising and implementing institutional structures known as Constituency Councils. Mr. Chairman, I stand firmly in concert with that because it stands also in full support, as evident by that Report that was commissioned by the then Prime Minister and Honourable Member for St. Peter...

Mr. Chairman, I want to take this debate on education into another area of analysis. I think it might be best to look at how, I guess over the years, I may want to look at this notion of education. Mr. Chairman, I see education as simply a vehicle that is designed to equip members of a society with the skills to manage, manipulate and control their local environment in that society and also to interact with the external environment in such a way that it improves their own internal interest and promotes their own survival and sustainability. Mr. Chairman, that is my definition. If that is so, and I believe the evidence from using our own experiences suggest that it is a correct and reasonable definition, then it indicates implicitly that the notion of education is a dynamic, that we are talking about a concept that is changeable and dialectical in nature.

From that understanding, Mr. Chairman, it means that your educational paradigm, therefore, must change with the developmental thrust of your society over time. Mr. Chairman, if we accept these premises as so, we can look back at the demographic development of this country where we would have gone from the agrarian-based society where those persons' educational remit or level of development was that as being a seamstress, a labourer, driving a tractor or truck, a domestic servant or that type of scenario. Sir, that was alright for that period of time so therefore you may have had seventh standard if so much or some people did not go to school at all. In fact, what was necessary then was to have an educational construct that was based on the observational, therefore, there was an apprenticeship system. It was not an educational system

that was based on the rationale which is the thought process of innovation and creation. Mr. Chairman, that is my analysis.

Mr. Chairman, what I would therefore want to take this evaluation into is that when you evaluate that type of society where education is at that level, you will find in every single society very high infant mortality, very low life expectancy, a poor quality of communication infrastructure, a poor quality of health infrastructure, a poor quality of a solid waste integration management system, a poor road infrastructure quality, a poor transportation structure and also inefficient port and seaport systems.

Mr. Chairman, we have passed that. Thanks to the development process in the 60s and the 70s where we started to recognise the diversification that was necessary to move the Barbados economy, out of that grew the need for technical and vocational training and the other type of skills sets that were required to move the system of education forward.

Mr. Chairman, I intervene largely to say that during that demographic transition as it is called, societies per middle shape changes. As a result of that, in those early societies, even in Barbados, the base of your society had the largest cohort of the population in terms of age between ages 1 and 15. What is happening to Barbados now is that we now have a change in the demographic arrangement where we are squaring up the demographic profile, that is, that the number of persons in the younger age cohort is almost less than the number of persons in the older age cohort. What that means, Mr. Chairman, is that at this time Barbados has the demographic characteristics of an industrial society even though we do not have as yet in our educational system the level of applied scientific training, applied technological training and innovation utilised to drive that society.

Mr. Chairman, I would want to say to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central that it becomes important to start to picture where we are now, understand the historical transition and recognise that what he now needs to do in driving the knowledge-based society that we already have the characteristics of, is to have his educational paradigm designed not around memory or apprenticeship system of observation and learning exactly what you see but it must now come from how to access information, how to utilise that information, how to utilise critical thinking and how to evolve what you called problem-solving skills structure. We can no longer evolve an educational system as we move towards the level of a knowledge-based society that is one driven on anything else but that type of rational approach to the educational system. Sir, it cannot be any longer read and reproduce what you see to pass an exam.

Mr. Chairman, what is even more critical is the appreciation as to when to introduce certain levels of expansions of your educational inputs. Sir, the primary school level is for basic education. That basic education should be where we start to introduce accessing information, how to use that information, how to critically apply the information and how to take that information into problem solving. What I have seen from my own children when they come home in terms of their data... Sir, I will give you a good example. In my time at primary school, you used to utilise the classical three-rule sum, 15 apples cost X, 1 therefore cost X on top of 15 so therefore 25 would cost 25 multiply by whatever you get out and you will do it that way. We understood how we got a ratio.

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Today, Mr. Chairman, the children are using ratios and do not understand the basic genesis of those ratios, they call it dimensional analysis. I am well-aware of these mathematical development because when it was at the time when I remember the argument back then when they were talking about whether calculators were going to make people dumb, the fact that these things were coming into being. I say all this Mr. Chairman, so as to try to understand what it is that we need to do at that primary level that becomes foundational so that the educational ability of the individual is now enhanced towards the critical thought process, how they now start to be able to see themselves as the next creator of the motor car or the next space shuttle and be unafraid the application of their natural innate god-given skills.

Mr. Chairman, I would want to say to my comrades and friend, Honourable Member for Christ Church East-Central that it becomes critical that the whole paradigm of education is altered and it can only be altered if you do it in relation to this Cabinet and also I would want to make this last point, because of the demographic transition that occurred this country the University of the West Indies can no longer be an institution that is driving and pushing out just first degree basic students. It is critical therefore that they drive and build on that type of approach and new paradigm to which I speak, to carry Barbados truly into knowledge-base. They must be driving innovation, science and technology in their postgraduate training courses. Unless that is done we will not move as quickly as we ought to if we are to see Barbados as a developed country in years to come.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Mr. Chairman, I want first to congratulate the Ministry and Minister of Education and Human Resource Development for ensuring that education is still very much accessible to the average citizen in Barbados from preschool through to tertiary education. I

also want to respond to the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter when the Honourable Member raised the issue of any connection between Constituency Councils and the educational programmes. Mr. Chairman, I understand what Honourable Member for St. Joseph is saying, he is saying they have a right to comment on the Constituency Councils because there is an allocation in this year's Estimates towards those Constituency Councils.

Mr. Chairman, regarding the Constituency Councils and the housing of these Constituency Councils which the Honourable Member was concerned with to date not a single Constituency Council is housed in any accommodation that is privately-owned. Mr. Chairman, there is the possibility, because of the inadequacies of spaces in some constituencies there will necessarily be seeking private accommodation but we are trying, as far as possible, to house all of the Constituency Councils in properties that are owned by Government but sometimes we will probably have to go to private accommodation but to date not a single Constituency Council is housed in any single accommodation.

Mr. Chairman, we in the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development, have carved out a segment of special educational training that we saw lacking and have conceptualized two programmes to address this dearth that now exists in our communities. Mr. Chairman, one of them is the National Lessons Assistance Programme (NLAP) which we are currently pursuing and the aims and objectives of this particular programme is to enhance the performance of students from the communities of low income household in the 11-plus preparation for the 11-plus examination but providing a structured educational support to those children and families that we have identified.

Mr. Chairman, the special objectives of this programme are to provide a selected primary school student entering Class 4 with additional lessons in Mathematics and English in preparation for the Common Entrance Examination. Secondly, the programme is also to mitigate some of the psychosocial obstacles preventing these children from reaching their highest attainable level at the stage of the Common Entrance Examination. We saw that there was a definite need within our communities where these children from these low social economic brackets are disadvantaged especially when doing the 11-plus examination because while there are people who are from households who could afford to pay for these extra tuition, these children from the lower socioeconomic bracket are definitely disadvantaged by not being exposed to this extra tuition in preparation for the 11-plus. Sir, we have moved to put a halt to that in some ways by providing lessons through the National Lessons Assistance Programme (NLAP) programme administered by the

Community Development Department, in association with the Constituency Councils.

Mr. Chairman, recently I had a meeting with Constituency Councils that are already instituted and I gave them eight mandatory core functions and one of the core functions was to establish educational assistance programme within the Constituency Councils and the programme such as the same home work lessons, remedial and extra help for children as well as through the transition to secondary schools that they should also pursue that and regards to the home work programme it was stated that the Constituency Councils should try to acquire resource persons within the communities who were willing to teach the programme and they should do so in collaboration with the Community Development Department.

Mr. Chairman, we are trying to develop that nexus between the Community Development Department and the constituency empowering department within my ministry to establish these programmes so educational programmes are very much part of the remit of Constituency Councils.

Mr. Chairman, the initial planning for the National Lessons Assistance Programme (NLAP) programme the preparation of the programme took place in 2009, the implementation could not be carried out at that time due to the lack of funds because at that time we were adjusting our budgets within the ministry but in tense discussions with the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development and during that period the ministry fully came on board and gave some guidance on the project.

Mr. Chairman, the structure on that project is that it is going to be a team of four Community Development Department officers identified to develop and implement the programme under a revised and simplified structure to reflect the significantly reduced budget that we have allocated to it. Sir, there are going to be nine schools participating in the project. they have been carefully selected with the guidance of Minister of Education and Human Resource Development and they are based on three area; (1) the assessment in relation to the pupils' circumstances, (2) the accessibility and security factors and (3) the availability of necessary teaching aids. Mr. Chairman, the decision was taken to use schools where practical and of course we are going to use Constituency Councils where there are no schools available.

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Mr. Chairman, the programme is going to be free of cost to the students and at the commencement of the tuition, the Community Development Department is going to undertake to provide students with the necessary kits containing the necessary stationery so that they would have to look for absolutely nothing. They would just have to

present themselves at the centers or at the schools, get ready to get something in their heads and prepare themselves for the 11-plus examination.

Mr. Chairman, an ongoing evaluation is going to be conducted to allow for any necessary improvements to the programme as we go ahead and after review, we will make the adjustments as necessary. Sir, we have allocated \$55 000 to this programme and, as the need arises, we will make the necessary adjustments.

Mr. Chairman, the classes commenced on November 13, 2010, in most schools and others are completing preparations, and starting within the next two weeks or so, we will move to other schools and centres for the expansion of this programme. Sir, this will be administered by the Community Development Department and very much in collaboration with the Constituency Councils to give them necessary support.

Mr. Chairman, there are nine schools so far, as I have said, and so far, we have enrolled 132 students. We have started with the Westbury Primary, George Lamming Primary, Belmont Primary, St. Bartholomew's Primary, Milton Lynch Primary, St. John's Primary, St. Joseph's Primary, St. Lucy's Primary and Half Moon Fort Primary and the Honourable Member for St. Philip North could be sure that we will get there shortly.

Mr. Chairman, we are starting with a pilot programme and we will expand it to cover the entire island. Sir, that is our goal. Sir, one of the others I would like to touch on is the question of the Community Technology Programme. This is a programme that when I came to the Ministry was established but we have enhanced the programme somewhat. We began in 2003 and we have successfully trained over 40 000 Barbadian in basis information technology and 5 000 at Level 2 which we introduced recently.

Mr. Chairman, Level 2 classes were introduced in 2008 building on what we found and after numerous requests from past students for further educational training there are now 15 resource centres and six schools offering training in the Community Technology Programme and this expansion of the schools was initiated to ensure that Barbadians who may have experienced some difficulties accessing the resource centres that were not in close proximity, those Barbadians have accessed the schools and they now have the opportunity to benefit from the free information technology offered. (3:27) Finish this.

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

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head and to say that it has been said by the

other side that we are just using Constituency Councils for sport but I do not know if whether a council that is involved in ensuring that the roads that lead to the primary schools in St. Lucy are in good order, if that can be making sport. Sir, when one looks at the contribution of the Council in St. Lucy, one would recognise that they are known for writing the Chief Technical Officer at the Ministry of Transport and Works and they speak about St. Lucy's infrastructure and the improvement of roads, and things like that, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I also want you to know that is located in the Welfare Department at Benthams at the present moment and there are also involved in environmental programmes, educational programmes and many other programmes in terms of small repairs within the constituency, helping what we would call the old persons within the community, et cetera, and ensuring that those who have fall out of the society that they have an opportunity to get back into society by doing meaningful things.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot about education in this House yesterday. We have even heard why we should ensure that headmasters have power again and one would not believe that speech was given by the Honourable Member for St. George North who was talking about the 1981 Education Act that took away all the rights from headmasters in this country. The Honourable Member for St. George North spoke about empowering headmasters and he did not even recognise that everything he said in his speech was against his own Party.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate the Minister of Education for following the policy of the Democratic Labour Party which you can call a Constituency Council policy and that is empowering every constituency by going into St. Thomas and delivering one of the state-of-the-art nursery schools in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, this is not the first time that we have entered St. Thomas, a constituency that people regard as not ours, and have done tremendous structural work, that is, we were the ones who built the St. Thomas Secondary School.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member who represents St. Thomas does not even know that the St. Thomas Secondary School was built by the Democratic Labour Party.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. (8:24) The St. Thomas Secondary School, as it was called then, the land was acquired by the Democratic Labour

Party as a Government but the property was left in shambles. It was the Barbados Labour Party who completed it. Sir, as with the nursery school, we completed the nursery school but the credit now goes to the Democratic Labour Party but it was a Barbados Labour Party project. Sir, the Honourable Member is really misleading the House if he said that they built the school and, Sir, it is the same thing with Staple Grove.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, now you understand the policy of the Barbados Labour Party, the same thing they have done with old people in this country. They will go and find old people with houses, they go and repair them and then they claim them. Sir, that is the same policy. They come and find things and once they put on one board on it, they own it. Sir, that is the Barbados Labour Party all the time.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, left, right and center, that is all they do. Mr. Chairman, I also want to say that I also look forward when the northern community college is built because I know that is a policy of the Democratic Labour Party or the northern polytechnic is built in the north of Barbados.

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Sir, I can tell the Minister of Education he needs not worry because I have found thirty-five suitable acres for him in the right location, and it is also near to Pickerin, a project that cannot be started. That is what we heard, but I will find the land to ensure that the Northern Polytechnic or Community college can be built, all in the right area in the center of St. Lucy and accessible to everybody.

Asides.

His Excellency D.St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, the airport is to the north of that. Do not worry. The thing you is, you all came and found the airport and then claimed it. That is the good thing about you all. You all can only claim things. You all do not know how to get any project that is productive in this country.

Sir, I will also say to this House we have to be very careful, we cannot follow the other side's belief that we should not train more doctors. The last time we were training doctors in this country, the Barbados Labour Party stopped the training of doctors and nurses and the next think we know, there was a big shortage in this country. I am saying that we have always used our educational system, to ensure that we increase our productive capacity in the country, and we also exported the products of our educational system to ensure that the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister of our country are always happy

because of the inflows coming back to the country. Sir, there is no crime for ensuring continued education to our people, to a level where we have an adequate supply of professionals, and the capacity to export some of them to earn foreign exchange.

Mr. Chairman, under the Democratic Labour Party we have always found a new industry, using our educational system to ensure we develop and market professionals who can represent and work for the country, not necessarily internally but externally to ensure that the inflows are right.

Sir, I am proud to hear that the Minister of Education is still building more schools, constructing them in those areas that satisfies those needs. Sir, he is not only building more schools, but he is also expanding the School Meal Service in this country, ensuring that our young people are fed on a daily basis in this country.

I want the other side to understand that when the Constituency Councils are fully operational, they will not have to talk about reinstating Local Councils, because the Constituency Councils will provide a better things and better service than the Local Government that they speak about all the time, along with the need for more MPs and another tier of Government. Sir, we have demonstrated that there is no need for that. The people of Barbados are good enough to point out the needs within their areas and to complete them.

Sir, I also want to say to the Minister of Education that he must return to that old good system left to the Barbados Labour Party, where once there is a school within an area, and instead of waiting until it becomes capital works, revenue expenditure can be created by using the local artisans within the community to ensure the schools are kept in a proper way, rather than waiting, like the Barbados Labour Party until there are all dilapidated, then borrow foreign exchange to build a new school. All I am asking the Minister to do is to ensure that the carpenters, plumbers, electricians and the labourers in the area are mandated to do the minor work, and to ensure that the schools are kept in a good condition.

Mr. Chairman, I am also asking the Minister, because there are some areas where the climatic conditions are such, school like the Ignatius Byer Primary... the Barbados Labour Party built it and destroyed its history. Sir, if I were in charge at that time, it would not be the Ignatius Byer Primary School, it would have been the St. Clements School at the Ignatius Byer Complex, to maintain the history, but the Barbados Labour Party has a way of destroying history because they want people to know that they built something, so all they can do is just destroy. They have no interest in history. They just destroy the history of Barbados. As I have always said to my Party if

you have anything good, do not allow the Barbados Labour Party to touch it, because they can destroy any good idea. That was the case at St. Clement School, a school well-known and well-cherished by those persons in the East of St. Lucy. Now some of the people do not know which school they attended because they never went to Ignatius Byer.

Sir, had they done what they were told to do, those persons would still have their history. Instead of that, they removed the name St. Clement School. Even the Church they have attacked in this country.

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

His Excellency D.St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, everybody knew the school as a church school, and they came and moved it from Christ to man. The Barbados Labour Party did that. I am asking the Minister to correct that error and continue to be a good religious minister by ensuring that we give Ignatius Byer his due, by naming the complex after Ignatius Byer and putting back that history which they have tried to destroy. That history of St. Clements, is very rich. It has given us Bishops. It has given us Governors of the Central Bank. It has given us many persons in this country, but in order to attack the political status quo in that area, they removed the name to try to make inroads in that particular area.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that we need the medical arm to train our doctors, et cetera, because at Mona we were only getting one out of ten, and at St. Augustine we were only getting one out of seven. Those are the facts, Sir. Now I am hearing it has increased to four out of ten. Sir, I am saying that we no longer worry about one out of ten, one out of seven, or four out of ten. We have our own institution with all the doctors we need which ensures that the Polyclinics in this country can be manned properly. There is no need to worry about whether you can find a doctor. Right now in Barbados there is a possibility that one is available one whenever you want one. Sir, not only that, it has demonstrated that we do not have to worry about doctors, neither do we have to import doctors anymore. We have the capacity to position have a doctor in nearly every area in Barbados in the next five years.

Sir, I am saying that no country can be worried about its educational system, when that educational system is such that it has produced the numbers to secure the health of the country.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party has nothing to worry about.

Asides.

His Excellency D.St. E. KELLMAN: There is nothing to be proud about when it comes to the Barbados Labour Party. That is what I was going to say, but I did not want to give them an Ad, but they begged for the Ad, so they got the Ad.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party has nothing to worry about, for the simple reason that we have set up Constituency Councils. Do you know what is interesting? If the Councils were not working you would have heard them all across Barbados cursing us about them, but because they are working, they are now calling them political, which means that since they are working on behalf of the masses of Barbados, they perceived things going to the masses of Barbados as political, but when they were in Government sharing out the overruns, et cetera, there was nothing political about that.

Sir, we need not worry about them. We will continue to ensure that we do not only have an economy, but we have a society. This Government will continue to ensure that the masses of the people feel comfortable in their country even though the world is in a crisis.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Miss C.Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be dwelling on a number of the matters that would have been raised by Members on the other side, except to the BLP. I was really very proud to see that the Honourable Member referred to no less than 10 projects that were in existence, which continue to be the pillars of the Youth Affairs Department to carry Barbadians forward. I am not looking at it in any political light because at the end of the day Barbadians are the ones who would benefit. Sir, when you are talking about a summer camps, again, we are talking about Barbadians. I have the 2005/6 document for the Youth Affairs. Easter camps were also introduced. Camps were held across the island so I am not dwelling on that at the end of the day, Barbadian children and Barbadians as a whole will benefit.

Sir, the Youth Achievement Results is something that I have been asking about for months. We have had the Stings Programme, where ordinary children got a chance to play the violin and the guitar under Mrs. Joy Knight-Lynch. This is another project that has been going. I believe it still is going. We know about the Peace Programme. We know about YES Juniors. We know about the Checks Programme and I do not know where that is now because it would have met some challenges. We know about the various clubs and NGOs that go into school, the

Optimist Club, the KAYs that help to enrich the product of our human beings, the human resource development component.

Sir, wish to go to an item that was raised by the Honourable Minister yesterday and to reinforce what was said. I am not dwelling now on who is responsible for the Sharon Nursery Project because that is now of the past. The fact is that the school is there for ordinary people's children in the first instance, I believe, to be accommodated. The concept of nursery education expansion came about sometime in 2004/5 because we recognised that a number of children were coming from homes with certain deficiencies, in their speech, their social activities and so on. We felt it was important, hence the expansion at schools to convert classrooms, exclusively for the nursery aspect of it and then the construction of All Saints Nursery, St. Bonavist, the one in St. Philip, the one at St. Giles. The Minister mentioned all of them. I am happy to hear that there will be one is going to be somewhere in St. James because you are looking at demographic shifts.

Sir, what concerns me most is that nursery education is a very expensive undertaking and a lot of parents would be glad to take their children to nurseries but they do not have the spending capacity because some nursery schools are \$75 a week or \$100 a week. If a parent is working \$250 then it is difficult to have to take out that \$75 or \$100 to pay so I am happy that the Government continues on that path on providing nursery education for Barbadian students. There was a further component to that exercise where the private nurseries we recognise still have to exist. Therefore, we considered it extremely important that some formal dialogue and planning should take place with the private nurseries, not only to bring them on stream but to make sure that they are conforming because conceptual development and so on are a critical part of the foundation for nursery education. When you teach children things that are wrong it is so difficult for them to unlearn. We would expect that the continuation of that discussion will take place, where parents who are not living near any of the Government nursery schools to benefit by that high quality service, the Government will perhaps sponsor a few children in the private nursery, who are needed and not having access to that education in the neighbourhood, or that some subvention would be offered so that they too, can purchase the necessary equipment. Sir, if you are talking small children, you must have equipment, objects and apparatus that they can manipulate to help with the language development.

I would wish to admonish those who are setting up nursery schools without the permission of either the Ministry of Education or the Child Care Board to be cautioned. Sir, people are saying that they would love to teach nursery education. They take in a few little children but if there is the lack of proper supervision, meals, speech

and other programmes being offered to them, at the end of the day you might as well let them stay at home and pay around. There is no proper aspect to it, if the nurseries are not properly registered and the staff is untrained. This is one that I would like to speak to.

The other one is to do with water tanks for schools, Sir, that is a terrible humbug, particularly for the schools in the northern and eastern areas, where there are water outages on end. We are not blaming any institution but we know that sometimes there are burst mains and they are not readily detected like some of the ones in St. Thomas and in St. Joseph where the pipe main may be burst in a gully and you are not actually seeing the water until the volume just goes down.

As a result, I have seen schools in the parish where I live closed off sometimes for two days a week because there is lack of water. I know that the Ministry previous to this administration had been implementing a project to ensure that water tanks were installed so that it would minimise the disruption of schools for children to have to go home. In our day, we did not even have running water at the schools so you know how old I am, Mr. Chairman, but we used to have a big pan with EC in it that would not now perhaps be seen as a healthy aspect of living but we never went home.

When children have to go home if the school is closed because it is detected that the pipes are off at 9.30 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. we are sending those children back into communities where there is no supervision, therefore one cannot tell what may happen to them. I think that the school needs to be a little more proactive. We have to ensure that all schools have water tanks and if the Government does not have all the funds, we can call on corporate Barbados to assist us. The people who are managers, the people who are working in corporate Barbados have children in our schools and they have a responsibility to assist in that respect. I believe that a lot of quality time is lost as a result of outages and schools having to close.

Mr. Chairman, I want to comment on testing for impairments. I want to congratulate the Minister because I am seeing that in the Estimates again this year as that is significant. For too long, we have had children who have impairments. Sometimes they do not hear well but they are sitting at the back of the class. They are not seeing well and they are too far away and it is not always easy for the teacher to detect it, therefore the training that was done by Dr. Taylor then and the training for a couple and teachers to be able to do the testing and then refer was an extremely important exercise. I believe that this should continue because more children are coming into the schools with difficulties that sometimes not even the parents detect.

I taught a child called Jennifer who is no longer in the island that we thought she had a crossed eye but when the nurses came to make their checks back in the 70s, they found that the child was totally blind in the eye. Therefore, perhaps if she had been able to get some kind of testing done before, that problem may have been corrected. I do not know but I am saying that it is a very important exercise and I want to commend the Government for continuing on that particular stream.

The final comment with the limited time I have, Sir, is associated with secondary schools. While I agree that our secondary schools may have their own budgets, I have witnessed over the years, some very heart-wrenching experiences and perhaps if the Honourable Minister is not aware, I think it is something that merits urgent attention. Sir, I tried to deal with this at the time when I had that privilege because I know that the economic situation would have dealt a terrible blow on families, not only in 2008 to present, but previous to that there were families that were unemployed and could not always meet the needs of their children.

The culture from which I have come in the rural community, is that parents would suck salt before they go to a Government agency to ask for anything.

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We are were told that even though you are poor, I want you to show pride, do not show poor and therefore our parents would go to work in the agricultural belt and find the funds even if they deny themselves a pair of shoes or some other commodity that they would have wanted.

A lot of people would prefer not to go the Government agencies to ask for waivers for their children. They are embarrassed because more often than not they are not treated well. The major point is they are not asking for the waivers in the way that we expect them to. For me, there is no point with children in school in the middle of term II with no text books. If a child does not have text books, it cannot study in the classroom and it cannot do homework adequately. I know that some of them prefer not to get the text books because they cannot read and understand all of what is in the textbook and that is why I like the Alma Paris School because there was not that kind of text books regime in that school. The teachers did their own preparation of materials and the apparatus and so.

Mr. Chairman, why are some of our children not getting the text books that are necessary? I believe that if a parent does not understand or is worthless enough not to want to give the books or pay the \$75 that there has to be a proper measure instituted at the school that if children do not have the \$75 one time, they would be able to pay \$20 or so per month to accommodate that need. If that system is

not put in place, the child would still be running around without books. Sir, that system would eliminate a lot of the violence that we are seeing in the schools and it will minimise children walking the corridors and their names not being marked for a whole term. This is nothing new.

The point I am making is unless principals and management of our schools ensure that children have the adequate books and materials for preparation in school, it will destroy them. I know that some schools never ever let it be a problem. I am not calling the names of the school but indeed they are the ones that people consider to be prestigious that are for me the same as the others. If those schools are so creative and so much want to hide the plight of those children by offering them the books and making an arrangement with the parents, I believe that some of the newer secondary schools should do that too. It is wrong if our children are going to school every day, they got the free bus fares now, but they still cannot get the text books because they have not been able to access the waiver or the parents were indifferent and did not treat to the children like that.

Sir, I recognise that I still seem to have a minute and I so would want to look at children at risk. I want to commend the Minister as well for continuing to offer the money to the two special schools, in particular the Challenor School and the Learning Centre. Those are schools that really need a lot of assistance from the Government. Our special children must be given extra attention. They are not responsible for their plight and if we are saying we are a Government that is inclusive, then we need to make sure that everything is done to make their lives easy and therefore that is one I would wish to continue to commend the Honourable Minister and the team for.

Sir, I think that the Edna Nicholls Centre merits the \$408 082. It is a school that a lot of children are being sent to because they might be rude to the teachers or they might be walking the same corridors and so. Sir, more often than not, the first time they get there, they put up a little big man, big woman show but then when they go back the second time, they do not want to go back to the regular classroom because they feel, well look down here we are comfortable, we are working at our pace, this is what we like, we are being treated differently. The worse thing in the world, Mr. Chairman, is for a child to attend the school and because of what I consider a simple insult, we got insults when we were going to school too, that may be extended or meted out to a child, the child says; "You see them teachers, I do not care about them, I would like to blow up that school." It is something that is going across the length and breadth of Barbados when you see the young people especially those that are unstructured. They do not like a comment that was made or something they saw and

they just hate the school. I do not know what is responsible for it but it is something that we really must look at.

Mr. Chairman, I want to commend the staff at the Edna Nicholls School in particular for the strides they have made over the years in ensuring that our young pregnant mothers, our deviant children and so get a second lease on life and an understanding that they are to conform with the rules and the regulations not only of the schools but the institutions. I will therefore want to say to the Honourable Minister that the numbers are growing by leaps and bounds and the school cannot carry much more. It is all the way in St. Peter. It calls for a lot of funds to transfer the children for whatever else has to happen. They used to meet at the Ministry for the bus and go down. I think we have reached the stage where we need to have a second one somewhere in the East or in the centre of the island so that another section of our children can be accommodated because the Edna Nicholls School has really gone beyond its capacity and I do not think that our children who have run afoul of the law or whatever should be left out, they all deserve a second chance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I want to enter this debate just to make a few points because I think that the discourse we are having on education is very important and I want to address a couple of issues that have been on my mind for some time on this matter. Obviously, the time would not allow me to speak exhaustively to them.

Mr. Chairman, I think that when one considers the process that has unfolded in the post-independence period in Barbados as it relates to education, one can readily accept that Barbados has done reasonably well as a country in creating a platform from which not only social mobility but economic advancement has been able to be obtained by several persons in our society. We like to boast that our greatest resource is our human capital. This is entirely true even when one considers the fact that today we live in an environment globally in which the advance in technology, even self-operated technology or self-propelled technology, is becoming so pervasive that the continued education of our population is to the extent that we have to look very seriously at how we do education in the country.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip West making the point about training in technology, which is absolutely critical. I think that is a microcosm of really what is happening generally, globally in terms of education but also locally and regionally, that the entire discourse on education has to shift almost completely. It is to my concern that in 2011, the debate on

education in Barbados is essentially the same debate or discourse that we were having 25 or 30 years ago to the extent that we are discussing issues pertaining first to capacity: Do we have enough capacity to deal with the growing numbers of persons who require education particularly at the tertiary level and otherwise? Secondly, to financing: Do we have enough resources to finance the education needs of our society? Thirdly: Is the education that we are imparting to our population both young and old both in the formal educational sector and the informal sector really relevant? Is it effective? Can it impact on moving and transforming the society in a way that will raise the society to a level that it could become itself impactful in a global environment? Those are the three critical things that we discussed in education in the past and those are what we are discussing now and probably what we would be discussing for a very long time to come.

I think that in the context of that, we have to look within the Estimates that we provide every year for education to make a determination as to whether an education policy is really transforming itself fast enough to meet the requirements of a modern 21st Century society. Mr. Chairman, I will give a couple pointers to what I am talking about. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas speaking. I thought that the Honourable Member was going to go in a particular direction but she made a slightly different point, which was a valid point, and I will make a corollary to what she said. I think it was a very good point.

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Mr. Chairman, the general tenure of what I am seeing now, if we take the middle point first, the issue of financing education in Barbados - and I heard the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter speaking about this repeatedly, about entitlement programme...

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately sometimes we try to see things only through the prism of finance and economics but we have to see it in a holistic sociological perspective. Mr. Chairman, while we debate how we finance education the question is not so much the issue of affordability, the question is not so much the issue of affordability only, because we have an expanding education plan, we have to fund it and to fund the education plant the process the programme is expensive business. Education like health care is not inexpensive but the issue is how effective we are in expending those resources because our resources are not infinite, we have a limitation on how much we can spend, so the question is not how much more money we can spend but how effective the money we are spending on education is and where are the emphases being placed on that bunk of money we spend on a yearly basis in our education budget. This where the debate has to go because whether or not it is \$250 million, \$350 million or \$450 million, you can spend

\$1 billion in education and spend it entirely in the wrong places and do not achieve the results you want to achieve as modern society. Mr. Chairman, the world has shifted dramatically not only in technology but in information and how do we equip our population to be able to calibrate to be able to contend with a global environment that is moving at such a rapid, that failure to comprehend, failure to design, failure to act, failure to monitor and evaluate in as quickly a manner as is possible could lead to you either taking an opportunity or wasting that opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, I am not speaking about computers I am speaking of the applications of new methods of learning by use of techniques that may include technological techniques in the sense of hardware and software but also maybe a new methods of how you apply knowledge, how you gain knowledge and how you apply it. Mr. Chairman, and that is where we want to see as a Government the educational expenditure going, that is why the human resource development strategy which we will discuss in this Honourable House some time soon in the future I expect, that is how that has to be framed, the effectiveness of the resources, how much money are we spending at the primary level. Mr. Chairman, there was a study of some Cambridge university students of children in Scandinavian countries, compared with children in an English society, they looked to see the age at which children were introduced to the fundamentals of English and in the English schools they started the children as normal in nursery, primary with the grammar; in the non-english-speaking countries they started to teach the fundamentals of their language at a later age, ages 7 and 8 and the result of that study revealed that by age 11 the children who started to learn the fundamental of their language in terms of the grammar at age 7 and 8 were at the same level comparatively as the students who started to learn the dynamics of their language before.

Mr. Chairman, we have to seriously think about how we approach and manage the process of learning to find how people learn, why they learn and in what conditions they can best inculcate that learning which is imparted to them. Sir, I make the point that much of what we are doing in education unfortunately needs to be really focused fundamentally at that primary school level, a lot of it has to be focused at that level.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I will come back because there are a few other things I want to say on this matter but I am going to conclude on the point, that it has to be focused on that level and for another reason, that if you look at it there are a lot of poor people in this society, mothers and fathers particularly who are having an extremely difficult time moving their children through the

primary education school system, not because the system is difficult but because that system is becoming complicated and expensive. We all as Honourable Members encounter parents almost through the year but certainly around back-to-school time... Sir, when I was going to school you got the West Indian Reader, a slate with some drink stoppers of 'mile tree' or casaurina seeds or shack-shacks. Today you now have a parent is given a booklist which contains many books. Sir, these teaching aids are absolutely necessary because of the way in which the curriculum has been built out but it is expensive and people are struggling to meet that and we have to find a way to work with parents, so that they can get their children navigated through the primary sector of our education system.

Mr. Chairman, another point, and I will give you an example because this is where I thought Honourable Member for St. Thomas was going but it is a corollary to the point the Honourable Member was making about having water and other things at school, for example that we have a situation in which if you have a child who is out of school for longer than two days, you have to leave your work and take that child to a doctor's office or the polyclinic, you have to practically spend the whole day away from production in a working environment to get a doctor's certificate to give justification to the school as to why the child was (1) out of school and (2) should be allowed back into school if that child was ill with whatever illness.

Mr. Chairman, this is something we have to address very seriously and so the situation is that maybe we have to look towards maybe the training if not of one teacher in the system, maybe working with the public health system so that the polyclinics can interface with the primary schools at the nursing level where something can be given a lot sooner, either on plant or elsewhere.

Mr. Chairman, I will also finish on this point because I have a student in my constituency who has a problem like this, where the parents were working not too far from the school albeit, the child is a diabetic requiring insulin to be administered at certain periods of the day and that child could not continue in that environment of the school because the teachers (1) are not trained to administer it and did not feel comfortable doing it, and there is no other alternative because the nurse from the polyclinic could not leave to come to the school whenever it was required, usually three times a day so that parent had to leave work to go up there, and then the person that they were working for said it was too often, three times a day, so they had to take the student out of the public system in Barbados and put it in a private school to be paid for by parents who cannot afford it.

4.43 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, these are some of the fundamental issues at the primary level. Sir, I am going to come back because I think there are some other things that we need to discuss in relation to primary education in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East. (1:19)

HIS HONOUR K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, I rise at this stage, again, to continue in this educational debate. Sir, I want to say at the outset that I would like to see the expanding and improvement of a comprehensive early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I preface that by the words of Lyndon B. Johnson, President of the United States of America in 1965 and him was speaking on the whole question of early childhood care and education and, Sir, this is what he had to say:

"Five and six-year-old children are the inheritors of poverty's curse and not its creators. Unless we act, these children will pass it on to the next generation like a family birthmark."

Mr. Chairman, what Mr. Johnson was saying there is that we must look for the way out and find financial resources and social resources to ensure that one generation who is born in poverty does not remain in poverty.

Mr. Chairman, early childhood can create the foundation for a life of expanded opportunities and if we fail to have an efficient and a proper early childhood education programme it can lock children into a future of deprivation and misguided future. Sir, we need to really look at education where it provides for the vulnerable and disadvantaged a chance to escape poverty, build a good future and realise their potential. It is critical that we look at education in this light because the Bible says that if you train a child in the way it should grow that when it gets old it will not depart from it. Sir, if at the very young age, we dig deep to find resources and all the necessary social programmes to look after those young minds then we can say that our educational system and our society will be going on the right track.

Mr. Chairman, I want to also look at it because retarded growth in the womb, early childhood stunting and anemia are not typically viewed as a mainstream educational issue. Sir, that is a fact but there is a connect between what happens in the womb and what happens on the outside. Sir, research has shown that the whole question of because retarded growth in the womb, early childhood stunting and anemia is an educational issue and, Sir, each

of these conditions has a profound and irreversible effect on a child's ability to learn. Sir, we must connect between proper health and education. Sir, you find that young mothers of today are pregnant and you see them eating corn curls. Sir, they eat nothing of nutritional value to the children and then when the children are born and different problems developed you ask yourself why these problems are there.

Sir, I believe that we should have a serious educational programme to educate young mothers and pregnant ladies to ensure that the young fetus is fed the very best. Sir, when I say the very best, something that would cause the young mind to be expanded to such a degree where there would not be that deficiency.

Mr. Chairman, I am calling on the Ministry of Education, now that I am on that point, to carry out a survey in all the learning institutions in this country to ascertain how many children leave their homes on mornings, particularly primary school children, not very well fed or, in other words, without breakfast.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that if we carry out the survey, the principals, head teachers or senior teachers of those schools can provide with the necessary information so that we can come up with a realistic programme where we now have all the stakeholders, in both the private sector and the public sector coming together that we have, and we build a proper society.

Mr. Chairman, we are hearing all this talk about a generation that is lost. Sir, if we say that we have a generation that is lost, we must look at ways and means of finding this generation or finding avenues to bring back this generation into the mainstream society.

Mr. Chairman, yesterday I heard someone spoke about the whole question of the community policemen who were attached and they used to the D.A.R.E. Programme but, Sir, that is not all. The church, the mother, the father, everybody has to play their role.

Mr. Chairman, there was a time when the grandmother, the grand father, the senior and the shopkeeper in the village were seen as the icon, someone that persons look up to for knowledge but now, Sir, we have all these different fractions in society and I am saying, Sir, that despite all this modernisation, globalisation and all these things, we need to really and truly get back to the basics. Sir, if you have a solid foundation you can really be assured that things would be better.

Mr. Chairman, the whole question of malnutrition, which might sound like a strong word, but it needs to be recognised as both a health and an educational emergency. Sir, we also need to improve access to maternal and child

health care and these should be seen as a high priority for education as well as for public health and, Mr. Chairman, Government needs to tackle the inequality in access to early childhood education.

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Sir, you have within certain constituencies or districts, persons living next door to certain schools, experiencing difficulty getting their children into those schools. Sir, I want to see this whole question of inequality to access certain schools become a thing of the past.

Sir, every day I get requests from people to get their child into Charles F. Broomes School, but they live close to this school. Mr. Chairman, if they cough too hard they will go into Charles F. Broomes School, yet they are saying they cannot get their child into Charles F. Broome School. Sir, we need to tackle this whole question of inequality. It is not reasonable to have children who live next door, in The Ivy, Rogers Road, being told to use Belmont School or that your school is not in the catchment area, but you get children from St. Philip, St. Lucy, St. Lucia and Guyana having priority to enter that school. Mr. Chairman, it grieves the parents and it also caused the Parliamentary Representative before me, to go through this same issue and problem. Sir, we agitate in here and on the outside, but I want to see this question of inequality and access to early childhood education, not only in St. Michael East, but throughout Barbados addressed.

Sir, in St. Michael East you have situations where parents have to provide an address, a light bill and a telephone bill in order when applying to these schools. So a light bill and a telephone bill have now become a prerequisite to enter a school that is a stone throw away.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has four minutes.

His Honour K.St.C. Best: Sir, it is critical that we really sit down with all the stakeholders and look seriously at this whole question of early childhood education. I am going to reiterate that I believe every school in this country should have a Social Worker, every school, as well as teachers who are specially trained. I am calling for every school in this country to have the facility to accommodate persons with disabilities to be able to access the classrooms. Sir, I know the Honourable Minister is working hard on that, but I believe I just have to remind him to work a little bit harder. Sir, we will understand the economic restraints, but I do not that believe those persons should not be disadvantaged at all.

Sir, with those brief remarks, I thank you.

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

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I also relish the opportunity to participate in a debate on education, and I think I can safely say that the work and the time that I spent in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture ranks among the most rewarding time of my working life. One of the hazards of being around for a long time, and I think the Prime Minister, if my memory serves me correctly use to shadow education when we brought the education White Paper here between 1994 and 1995, and we had a very constructive debate on education in that period. I came away from that debate with the clear understanding that there is really no philosophical divide on education, and that there may be issues that may crop up as it relates to implementation, or execution, or priority every now and again. I think that gave us the strength to understand that we can undertake a multi term reform effort.

The Minister of Education was one of the key players working with the Ministry in those early days, too, in trying to implement the White Paper on Education Reform and EduTech. People may see it as a programme that while I was Minister I implemented, but let me remind people the genesis of it. We met with all 4 000 teachers in the system over a three-month period, and over a hundred Principals, to come to what was then the Education White Paper. So it was not my paper or the Government's paper. It was the reflection of the output of the entire system, and it took us a while to do it.

Sir, what is clear, and I listened to the Honourable Minister of Finance speaking just now and I smiled, because it may well have been the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the Honourable Prime Minister speaking and others in that debate. In fact, the former Prime Minister who is now the Ambassador to China, played a role in that debate, and he perhaps until then had been the longest serving Minister of Education until after then I had seven years.

Sir, the point that I want to make is this. I believe that we are trending in the right direction but our problem comes back down to the pace of implementation. It is not so much an issue that is a political issue, but it is an issue of being able to manage four thousand bodies over 120 schools, primary and secondary, and getting some kind of uniformity of application on the basis that we all recognise that those reforms that were introduced in the 1940s by a colonial Government, could no longer take Barbados into the 21st century.

Sir, the truth is, when you go through, I sent for the White Paper on Education Reform. The Honourable Minister spoke about the need for educating people for a

global society and being able to think and innovate. The Prime Minister yesterday spoke about being able to have people who are properly educated, and not just exposed to education. Those are things with which we are all in agreement, but we recognise the how we were going to change the system, why we were going to change the system, what we were going to do, and essentially that was what EduTech was about.

I confessed that perhaps the use of the technology as part of the marketing tools, caused people to focus on that element of it rather than the curriculum reform, the teacher training and the teacher evaluation. All of those are components.

The Minister of Education has indicated that the new Barbados National Certificate of Secondary Education is coming out in 2012. Now the truth is, we never thought that it would take twelve, and something has to be wrong that it could take that long to be implemented. The question of testing of our children at five and seven years old for hearing, sight and speech issues. That child who may have had a hearing problem remains in a classroom, somebody refers to him as 'duncey' but nobody realises that he is not hearing, and for matters that can be easily resolved by the health system. Sir, we became the first country in the Hemisphere to have that testing across our primary school system.

I see that in the Estimates the Minister has an allocation still of \$75 000, albeit down from \$150 000 last year, but he has assured me that they will be able to go for funds, because I believe this programme to be pivotal, because if you do not understand why children are not learning you cannot enhance the learning process.

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There are physical reasons, there are emotional reasons and there are what I call sociological and social reasons why children do not learn and if we can tackle each one of them one by one, which was at the core of the White Paper on Education Reform, which was at the core of recognising that successive Governments, having assured a place for each and every Barbadian who wanted to go to school that we had to move now to issues of quality. It is not only that they could get into a school but that the quality of education derived would be such that they could be readily re trainable at any stage of their development, particularly on a self-learning path because some of the greatest minds of this country were people who came out of a seventh standard education but taught themselves. I believe a previous education officer, Rudolph Goodridge ranks among those numbers of persons who was able to lift himself up and provide a level of education for himself that was the envy of most in this country. Sir, I think we are ad idem on that.

I am concerned as I said about the pace of implementation, largely because when Ministers change within Governments far less across Governments there is a hiatus and we have to find a way of ensuring that education which essentially a non partisan sector can operate smooth along an agreed path of objectives. I note that the human resource development strategy is focussed more on the general H.R. Development of the country and labour market conditions and tertiary education and training but the White Paper still remains there, in relation to pre primary right back up to tertiary.

The truth is, what are some of the objectives that we have achieved? When the White Paper came in 1995, only 40 per cent of our students were leaving school with four CXC's or more. The last number I have in 2007 is 67 per cent and the Minister is now saying to me that it has risen to 72 per cent. The country of Barbados should congratulate itself that in less than 20 years we have moved from 40 per cent of our students leaving with four CXC's to 72 per cent now leaving with four CXC's. Now if we achieved nothing else, this is a phenomenal index for achievement and that did not come from one side that is the point I am trying to make. The system received what it needed to receive. The teachers expressed what they needed to get, we put it in place and they have started to deliver the results for us. The problem is, that we have now become a victim of our own success because with 72 per cent now leaving secondary school with four certificates or more, the pressure on the post secondary institutions such as the Community College, the Polytechnic, Erdiston and the University of the West Indies is such that thousands are being turned back every year.

I believe, Sir, that you cannot have in a country such as ours with one university. The truth is that it may well be that there are excellent opportunities now for private investment not by foreigners but by Barbadians and Caribbean people to establish another post secondary institution moving up to tertiary level because in today's world, the partnership with established institutions and universities is that much easier.

The New York University is now delivering a law degree in Singapore. There is nothing that stops us from partnering with universities in Canada, the USA, any part of the Commonwealth to be able to deliver to help meet that deficit and quite frankly, our students may not be prepared to go to University of the West Indies but they are prepared to pay to go to private educational institutions. The truth is for profit education is actually one of the largest growing sectors across the global economy.

I say that for what it is worth, Sir, and I want to urge us that there is no divide on those issues because we have to give confidence to those same players in the educational system. Teachers must know that they have achieved a

fantastic goal for this country by moving that rate from 40 per cent in 1995 to 72 per cent in 2011. This is an amazing achievement which must be lauded by this country and we must salute them for so achieving.

Equally, the continuation of the testing for hearing, sight and speech and I appeal to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education. I know you have cut it by \$75 zero but quite frankly that is the most important investment you can make. Test those four zero children at five-years-old and at seven-years-old because we found that on average, about 8 per cent to 10 per cent of the children had some kind of problem that if remedied would improve the pace and efficiency of their learning experience. The truth is, if you go through school and you are being marginalised, you are more likely to end up being a social problem to the country, than if you are being engaged and enthusiastic about the learning process.

I also heard him speak about the example with Scandinavia. Well, Sir, we introduced conversational Spanish for primary school, not to expect the children to be fluent at the end of primary school but to have an awareness as well as a curiosity for the language because they were exposed to the music, the culture, the pinata all of the things that children like, such that when they reach secondary school, they could then grapple with the language. I would love that we could afford an emerging programme at the primary schools because Barbados lives in a hemisphere where the majority of people speak Spanish and those students who have gone to Cuba, have a competitive advantage over those who have studied in the University of the West Indies system because the opportunities for jobs are not just in the English-speaking Caribbean but also in Central and Latin American.

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

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

I think that is something we can work towards, Sir, there are some issues and maybe, I should just ask the questions. I am one of those who believe that the major investment of primary is the right way to go in terms of Government's resources, pre primary, primary and then, of course, secondary and tertiary. I already said that I would like to see a statement of account sent to every single parent in this country such that they know what the Government is expending for their child to receive education at every level, as part of an appreciation for the efficiency gains that must come.

Sir, we have to recognise that the numbers are galloping on us and perhaps the Minister can help me because part of the difficulty that I see is that the cost for temporary teachers, statutory teachers, teachers appointed

has moved from \$95.9 million in 2008 to \$112 million in 2011. This is all right, 16.9 per cent and that is within the range of what the increments probably are, because teachers are always studying and hence, you are always going to get increments being added on. The temporary teachers have moved from \$10.1 million in 2008 to \$18.6 million in the next financial year. This is an 85 per cent increase. Therefore, we need to understand where the numbers are coming from and I say this in all sincerity.

The biggest problem we had when we went into the Ministry of Education, myself and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, was to come to grips with the temporary teaching roll. There was a lot of misinformation, miscalculations and I wonder whether it has crept in again. Either that or the Government has hired a whopping lot of teachers but we had to literally go through it. It took us six months to go through the OPE, the temporary teachers list, but that kind of increase of 85 per cent is not what you would expect in a three-year period.

Sir, if it is something that is happening that we are not aware of, then we need to come to grips with it because I would prefer to see \$1 million spent on making sure that the comprehensive testing for hearing, speech and sight is there, as well as for us to be able to do an emersion for Spanish for our primary school students but we need to know where the money is going. Sir, we need to continue in the direction in which we have been heading because whichever way we slice it, we are who we are, largely because of how we are raised by our parents and the quality of education that is instilled in us from an early age and that does not change.

Sequence 19, 5.13 p.m.

If we make those investments as a nation... Barbados did not had land to give ex-slaves but it gave them education, 200 primary schools across 166 square miles. In the year 1899/1900, there was more than one primary school per square mile and that has accounted for our stability as a nation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Sir, I will come back.

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

On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the Speaker and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. Speaker, resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 5.35 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 5.35 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

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RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon, Honourable Members, this Sitting is resumed. When the Suspension was taken, we were in Committee of Supply, to that we shall return.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East-Central.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, truly I have been enjoying the debate among my colleagues regarding Head 54. I want to agree so far with many things which have been said. Sir, education is one of the social dynamics which tend to garner a lot of attention and so it should because when you recognize that education has formed the foundation for the development of this country we cannot afford to many mistakes as we continue to roll out education at its various levels and with its various needs to satisfy the development agenda of the society.

Mr. Chairman, I want to pay attention to a few issues which have been raised so far and I want to start possibly with one raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East and that has to do with how students at the primary level are allocated across the country. Barbados tends to be a very dynamic society and persons create sometimes illusions about the school that is good, the school that is bad, the school that is mediocre, the school that can make my child learn and the school that cannot make my child learn. Therefore, as a consequence there are some schools that face tremendous pressure in order to have students admitted. I remember in 2008 addressing a speech day of the St. Paul's Primary School, in the constituency of St. Michael South-Central and there are also mobile students who go to St. Paul's because St. Paul's is consider as one of the better schools of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I am bold to make the claim that all schools when given the opportunity to perform are all good. There are some schools where you would find greater

pressure being place on because (1) of its location (2) because of the output of the school. Those outputs tend to galvanise persons in the direction of those schools. It would go back to what used to happen in the early part of the mid-20th Century with schools like Wesley Hall, St. Gilkes, those schools in those days faced tremendous pressure as well because again there was the assumption that as long as you send a child to one of those schools that child is going to blossom and be the best fruit that comes from that school. That has not changed and therefore historically there has been a pecking order relatively to schools. Therefore, everybody wants to get into a school that can only house maybe about 600 students. So the 25 000 primary school students, the majority of parents want to get 25 000 into a 600- students school. That is absolutely impossible. I believe the ration of maybe 1 to 42 would be the situation there, so every one child of every 42 can gain access.

Mr. Chairman, it is unfortunate that the Honourable Member introduced the notion of birth certificate or passport and that has happened in schools from time to time over time because it is to verify because persons have become very creative in order to get their child into a particular school, who may have a friend living next-door to the school while they come from 30 miles away they would put the child as living next-door to the school or within the catchment area. I am not blaming parents for that, we always want the best for our children and where schools can create the image or outcomes then that is correct. Therefore, one cannot deny that schools such as Charles F. Broome, Roland Edwards, All Saints, St. David's, Christ Church Girls' have been performing admirably over time. I know that people come from as St. Philip to try to get their children into school. I have always said you try to satisfy your local population first but some people make the mistake, at the beginning of the calendar year, in the second term January/February that is when most schools do their registrations; If you are going to plan adequately you have to have time to do registration but some people in the immediate catchment area sometimes wait in the third term or in the summer vacation to get some of their children into their school and school cannot wait while some one may be delinquent in their registration and when they come especially where there is excess space, they might then take in some of the mobile students of those parents who practice their craft in Bridgetown. Therefore, when you say you want to get your child registered the school may tell you to look somewhere else because the extra 60 or 100 spaces are already taken in. It is not that you are taking in 600 across the school you might only be able to take 80 students per year in the

nursery or infant classes. Therefore, you have some issues which will arise from time to time.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make the point, and I have seen the statistics, we have recently done quite a tremendous study in looking at 70 primary schools and see how they are moving up the chart and the profile. Sir, there are some that will still remain according to the average at position 47 but position 47 in 2010 is not the same percentage wise as position 47 four years ago because the base is pushing very strongly upwards and squeezing more and more up but what has to happen is that a school that was at position 47 in the so-called lead tables would have to run twice as fast in order to eclipse persons ahead of them but the average changes every year ...and I think my mind tells me for last year's examination was in the region of more than 50 per cent and so it is pushing higher and higher. The same thing is happening at secondary schools and I remember discussing with my colleagues what I call the anomaly of what some persons would refer to as delinquent students in the society but yet the academic and technical performance of the student does not bear correspondence to that behaviour and that is an anomaly because we have students in every secondary school, and I want to underscore the point... that we have students in every secondary school pushing higher and higher and you are seeing not only changes in the number of persons who are accessing between one to four, five, six, seven, eight and nine CXC's or whatever.

H:No.87D (21)

We have people with as many as 15 CXC's because they might have broken it into two bites or three bites and graduated with 15 CXC's.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, at the Springer Memorial School only about a year or two ago, one student left with 15 CXC's and you find this kind of situation at Parkinson School as well. Sir, wherever you turn, there are these students who are able to do that because you might just do five or six at age 15 or age 16 because in fourth form, especially among the older secondary schools, many of our students would either English or English and Mathematics, they all perform very well and then they do exams in January. Sir, sometimes when the schools say they are not going to allow them to do the exams, their parents let them do it privately, so they are some dynamics happens across education in Barbados that you cannot simply stick a pin and say this is it because it is too fluid and it is too dynamic. (1:32)

some at third form, some at fourth form and some at fifth or when they are ready. It should not be about forcing students through the school system but by allowing them to

go test at the point of readiness. Sir, the Barbados “O” Level Institute has shown time or the Academy of Commerce, these “O” Level institution. I know that he Honourable Member for St. George North knows what I am talking about since he has taught there, or the Honourable Member for St. George North who has taught there as will. Sir, students would leave fifth form with one or two CXC's and go to the Barbados “O” Level Institute or any of the other institution but that one readily comes to mind and within one year of existing school, especially when they did not return, end up with four at good grades. Sir, all that is simply saying is that the point of readiness for the maturation of the mind of those students just needed that additional year to make that spur. It is pedagogical thing and it is a maturation things and, Sir, a lot of this is happening in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I will wrap up in one minute.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have earned some time.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, therefore, you come back, and some of those students go on to get eight and nine CXC's.

Mr. Chairman, I know there is more time I am going to have to talk. I have given my colleagues a whole chance to speak earlier because it is important, as a country, we come to grip with this reality of education and training in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, do not let us fool ourselves, there are great things happening in Barbados. Sir, our Grade 1 are going up. We keep pushing to move Grade 2 to Grade 1, your Grade 3 to Grade 2 and those who have accessing Grade 4 to move them as well to Grade 3 and, Sir, it is happening.

Mr. Chairman, we are going to share the statistics with you. Sir, I thank you.

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

Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the intervention of the Honourable Minister. I believe that he has touched some of the key point in education today. He has spoken about the opportunities that are existing today, he has spoken about the dynamics of children going on from the primary level to the secondary level, children leaving secondary school with one CXC or two CXC's and then moving into private institution like the Barbados “O” Level Institute or the Springer Memorial School or one of those other schools and within one year or two years, they are gaining six subjects or seven subject and, Sir, that is important.

Mr. Chairman, want to compliment all those head teachers, those principals and those persons who are involved in preparing students for the CXC examinations, how dedicated they are to move children beyond that level because it seems to me that there is a concept of late development among children. Sir, we need to continue that practice of helping children especially in their early years. Sir, 16 years or 17 years is still a young age and we need to be able to prepare them for the world of work and, Sir, the CXC's are very vital.

Mr. Chairman, most of the institutions like the Barbados “O” Level Institute have been preparing students for years with little or no reward and we hope that the State can help to prepare those students who have left schools by providing in these Estimates some form of recognition or some form of reward to help those students, especially those schools that are floundering that do not have the technology or the wherewithal to help pay teachers and help provide the technology .

Mr. Chairman, my intervention here is really to pick up on a point that was mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East. He spoke about the inequalities of education but he did not go to the extra length. He talked about the inequalities as it is to do with placement, that children coming from his area are not placed readily at one of the best known “primary schools” because it is a myth that one or two schools are better than the other. Sir, this is where the Minister of Education needs to print booklets and they need to show why it is important that all schools be treated as equal. Sir, this is where the Minister of Public Works needs to collaborative with the Ministry of Education in helping to sort out the transportation system of this country.

Mr. Chairman, I will tell you why. Sir, years ago, we detected in the Ministry of Public Works that children from Dash Valley could not get to St. George Primary School and it was only as stone's throw away. When we introduced the Dash Valley bus, it was able to move the children from Dash Valley to St. George Primary, so that children from Dash Valley now, do not have to go down to Government Hill.

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That is where the dynamics must come in. So the whole question of equality must be seen not only in the geographical situation, but it must seen as more than this.

For example, how do you expect a child at eleven-years-old sitting the Common Entrance Exam whose parents are not as educated, not as gifted, whose parents work maybe in the sugar cane belt, whose parents may be moving to Bridgetown, St. John, or St. Lucy on mornings to find a job, and cannot be there with his or her children.

That child cannot excel like a parent who is there with their children. Sir, you cannot expect, therefore, children in a family setting to do as well as another child who is not. There is where the inequality comes.

Sir, I am saying for sixty years both that side and this side have perpetuated the Common Entrance Examination to such an extent, that it is now part of the cultural phenomena of Barbados, so nobody wants to let it go. So it is part of our culture. The Common Entrance which started in the 1960s is now part and parcel of our society, but the greatest inequality started there.

Mr. Chairman, do you know something? We cannot find any replacement. Over the years we have not been able to find any replacement for the Common Entrance. It was developed in London, but London has done away with it. Canada does not have the Common Entrance Examination anymore. There is a system of continuous assessment, but the thing is, we cannot introduce it in this country because Barbadians do not want it, for there are great inequalities not only in the Common Entrance Examination, and there are inequalities as you go through the system. That is why it is important for those students who may get less than 40 per cent in the Common Entrance to spend the extra year at the newer secondary schools, so those teachers who identify students who are willing to learn but are late developers can get the extra CXC's at age sixteen and seventeen.

Sir, I was glad when students were returned to the school system after age fourteen. I think that the Government should extend the age from 16 to 18 in certain new schools. They must do that. The Government must identify an area where students must not be kicked out, as I am aware that there are some Head Teachers who are only waiting until the child reaches the age of 16. They say, by law I cannot kick you out at 16, but as soon as you reach 16, on your birthday, you go through the door.

Sir, yesterday evening I spoke about early detection. I have spoken to the fact that there is a need for psychological and other testing in the school system, because there are deviant behaviours and sometimes a child might be behaving badly not because of himself, or of what is happening in the school system, but may be what is happening in the home, what is happening in the society, or what is happening in his church. All of these things must be detected. This is where the inequality comes. Sir, Government cannot do it alone. Government must empower the Private Sector. I do not want the Government to feel that they must do everything. Government cannot do everything. Government must empower the private sector to get onboard, and it must provide incentives for the Private Sector to get onboard to help in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, in early times Barbados had a comparative advantage over other island. That is a fact. We had a comparative advantage over the OECS. We had a comparative advantage over St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica, Antigua and Jamaica. Teachers from Barbados went to teach in other islands. We sent our administrators. We trained policemen. We trained lawyers. Do we still have the comparative advantage now?

Asides.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: I am hearing you say yes.

Sir, do we have the comparative advantage today over the other OECS islands? Do we have the comparative advantage today over Jamaica? Where is our niche? Is our niche in sports? Is our niche in health? We do not have a niche. If you ask me, I will say that we are a service economy. Are we preparing people for the world of work?

For example, I heard the Minister of Labour lamenting the fact that she is not getting enough workers onto the Farm Labour Programme. Do you know that Jamaica is hogging the show?

Asides.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Because they are preparing their citizen for the niche market of service. This is where the comparative advantage must come.

Asides.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Therefore, if it is no, should we not be providing our people for service?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has five minutes.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Should we not be preparing for service? We have to ask ourselves the question.

Asides.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: I never said labourers. We must be preparing our people for the world of work.

Mr. Chairman, we have the Vocation Training Board. We need to know what is happening at the Vocation Training Board? We need to know. What are we preparing our people for? For example, in the 1950s and 1960s, that generation was preparing us not to be labourers. We heard of Prime Minister say, "I do not want my people to be working in the sugar cane belt", which was a good thing, because we wanted to be teachers, lawyers, and so on. I am asking, what are we preparing our people for? What are you preparing your children for? Are you preparing them to

have an advantage in health? Are you preparing them to have an advantage in the service industry or technology? Where are we preparing. This is where this debate is important. At this juncture, I believe, the Ministry of Education should - I am glad that the Minister brought a Paper here on Human Resource Development because we need to look at that. That is a good Paper. We need to critically analyse it. I hope that the debate comes soon for us to look carefully at what we are doing as a society. We need to look at new ways where we can have the initiatives way ahead.

Mr. Chairman, I believe it is alright to say that most of our people have now received four or more CXC's, but is it not true that it is not the same thing in the OECS? Is it not true that it is not the same thing in Jamaica? We do not have a comparative advantage today as we had years gone by.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I rise on condition that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South speak. That is a condition attaching to my condition that as soon as I finish the Honourable Member for St. Philip South should be permitted to speak.

Mr. Chairman, 75 years ago, in Barbados, it would have been nigh impossible to forecast or predict the composition of this Honourable Place in the year 2010 and 2011. Many of us, almost all of us, are here through schooling and education. Some through the university of life, some through formal academic universities, many through discipline and hard work. There are Honourable Members in here who are exceptionally disciplined even though it may not necessarily show up in the heat of debate, but the point I want to make is that education in this Barbados has been a veritable platform on which the country has been built. Sir, education is a complex thing, you know.

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Some people see education in terms of text book learning. Some people see education in terms of practical training. Gladstone Holder spent half of his life trying to figure out the difference between education, instruction and training and he said there was a distinction among them and that anybody who disagreed with him clearly was being illogical but he said that education, training and instruction was not necessarily one and the same. He did not give any ground that they were related. He wanted to so cut hairs and to try to say well there is training at a certain

level, there is education at a different level, and then there is instruction.

What I wanted to say though, Sir, is that whatever the situation beyond the cognitive aspect of matters in the classroom there is something called the affective component. Now what is the effective component? The effective component within the educational system has to do with attitudes and why are attitudes important now? We witness today, Sir, on the TV early this morning a situation where through an attitude of fatalistic fear and lack of patriotism and being habituated to defeat, a West Indies Cricket Team snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. We need, Sir, to engender in our people that sense of determination. Shakespeare himself said perseverance never fails or perseverance seldom fails.

Asides.

Mr. R.E. EASTMOND: In those days they did not call it perseverance, it was perseverance in those days as the Honourable Prime Minister knows.

Now with the effective domain and attitude, Sir, one thing is patently clear in this Barbados and it is that some youngsters who ought to know better, have problems with something called anger management. I do not like to see young people on the streets all provoked, shouting and screaming and cussing and swearing, Sir. You would have seen it, Sir, throughout the whole of Barbados. Sometimes a young fellow is walking alone and all that happens is that somebody passes him and some type of paranoiac fear strikes him and that person goes into this anger problem and anger management is one of the issues that we have to confront because I apprehend, Sir, that the angry children in our school may be driving fear in our teachers. If teachers find it hard or impossible to control angry students, then some teachers are going to be intransigence between teaching and another career. They will opt for other careers. Sir, the time has come when this whole issue of anger management has to be looked at. It often is the result of intolerance, it often is the result of feelings of frustration, and a lot of angry persons feel angry, not necessarily because an angry man is a hungry man but a lot of people feel angry because they blame external circumstances for their failure.

Some people feel that it is the people like us that fail them. I am serious. Some people feel that rather than accept that they made a mistake on that they did not work hard enough, they feel that the politician from X constituency has not bestowed on them a secured job in Government for secure income, on terms which the employee to be would dictate, and those terms would be to draw periodically but not to do anything for a wage.

We have then, Sir, to look at this whole question of attitudes, attitudes, attitudes. The need for a work ethic has to be inculcated early in our school system. In addition, Sir, at some stage in our young people's development they need to identify two things. They need to know what the social goods in their society are, of what these social goods are comprised and to what degree they themselves can help the growth and the further evolution of the social goods. At the same time, Sir, they must be aware of what the social goals of their society are. Our people must be aware of what the social goals of our society are. They must first of all know at what stage of development we are and where we want to go to, and the extent to which we are going to have to rely on them or some of them to help to carry the country forward.

Sir, in this respect, the whole question of human resource development comes to the fore. The reason the question of human resource comes to the fore amidst all this, is that we have to look to see what are the threats to our human resources, why were 600 or 700 able people insulated or incarcerated at Dodds for lengthy periods of time when by every objective test as has been said, some of these people are highly intelligent but equally highly deviant. Years ago, Sir, the two things did not go together.

Mr. Chairman, years ago a highly intelligent person was expected to perform, consistent with a certain expectancy that the intelligence would have brought on, especially when the intelligence was accompanied by achievement but nowadays you have people who are absolutely intelligent in their deviance and that is a threat. We need to identify whatever threats there are to our human resources and to work out those threats. Are they threats caused by health factors like HIV/AIDS, are they threats caused by drug abuse, are they threats caused by parental abuse, are they threats, Sir, which are caused by internal factors?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Mr. R.E. EASTMOND: Thank you, Sir.

I conclude, Sir, by saying this that nobody doubts the worth of the University of the West Indies but in recent times we have set up an Accreditation Council which is doing brilliant and outstanding work. I would want the Accreditation Council fully embraced and embodied in the further planning of this country's development because of the fact that there are St. Lucans, Vincentans, dominicans, Antiguan and Guyanese who are trained by reputable institutions who pass the criteria set by the Accreditation Council and who still are not permitted as educators in the system but made to wait too long while, as I said earlier, lawyers, doctors and dentists get in easily.

With those remarks, I am deeply obliged to you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Sir.

I would just like to make a brief intervention because I believe we have had a very interesting and in many ways, exhaustive comments under this Head but the Minister of Education referred to the 70 per cent of the students who were doing extremely well. In fact, he said that the band is actually tightening. It is really to that 30 per cent I am concerned about, in particular some of whom end up at the Government Industrial School that I want to just share a few words about because they concern me. I am not for once suggesting that in fact that 30 per cent is being ignored by the Minister or by the Ministry, it is just that I thought I would focus for a couple of minutes on that 30 per cent.

Sir, let me tell you a story of a boy just no more than nine-years-old, who is going to one of our secondary schools. He was caught with some marijuana in Six Roads and he ended up at the Edna Nicholls School for two weeks and now he has gone back to his secondary school. How do we intervene to ensure that this young man receives all of the counselling and guidance that are required so that he does not regress to the type of behaviour that got him into the situation that he did? I fear, Sir, that we lack the kind of cohesive response that is required. In many ways because we have too many agencies that are involved, as opposed to just having one champion that ensures if you have a case like that, he is taken from point A to point Z all along the road, as opposed to being passed off to different agencies without one person or one agency having overall responsibility to ensure he receives the best care on a continuous basis.

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This includes not only care when he is in our custody or control because quite often one of the issues is that same individual has to go back to the environment that brought him to the State's attention and it is that environment where the issues reside and that is where our intervention is quite often lacking.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in her presentation suggests that we might consider having another institution similar to the Edna Nicholls Centre in the East or in some other part of Barbados. I believe however that in the Estimates under this Head, provision is being made for a special all-day centre which will cater to at risk youth between 10 and 16 years old so that they

could continue to receive a continuous education but with specialised training.

Sir, my understanding is that what has been happening is that these children will go to the Edna Nicholls School for a week or two but that is not enough for them to have a serious intervention and they return to the classrooms and sometimes they are not welcome as they should and sometimes they feel as if they do not belong where they are, so they end up with the feeling why have I spent my two weeks away, so the problem continues.

Sir, we do however have to be careful what kind of institution we set up because we still do not want a stigma attached to it. We want to ensure that they are given the specialised training which would will not happen if in fact they are in a classroom with 28 or 25 students but there are one or two who are disrupting the other 25, so you see the difficulty in terms of a teacher having to address these two or three individuals that really need specialised training, care and understanding.

Sir, if we set up an institution that is going to deal with these 10-16 years old at risk individuals, we must ensure that there is not the type of stigma attached to it that creates an issue in itself so that when they are walking the streets of Barbados in their uniform or whatever they are wearing, they do not end up being ridiculed by students from elsewhere. We know how children are, Sir. I am sure that when you were at school you had issues just like all of us so we just have to be careful. Mr. Chairman, I do support the recommendation that we need to look at these at risk individuals and we need to set up a specialised institution that deals with them and addresses all of their needs.

Sir, to go back to my point, in terms of one of the problems with our intervention is the fact that we do not have control over their overall environment so if possible and we can have a residential component we should. If our finances do not allow us to have a residential component, then we have to ensure that we have the kind of support mechanism in place that when they leave they just do not leave at 3 o'clock or 5 o'clock in the afternoon and go back to Six Roads or wherever the problem arose from and then they come back into the institution the following morning no better off for the intervention, so we have to get it right.

Sir, I also want to ensure that there is a better coordination between the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and the Government Industrial School where the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development look at our programmes or for the Government Industrial school to bring in the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to ensure that the programmes that we are giving is for the

benefit of as many of the students as possible that come into the Government Industrial School because we have a responsibility that when these children leave our custody, that we have provided them not only with the best physical care but we have allowed them to emerge better young men or young women.

One of the things that we as a country have to agree on is this whole notion of us being born equal or having equal ability. I believe that the Honourable Member for St. James North suggested the whole issue of preordination, that is not the issue. The reality to me, and we must accept it, is that not all of us would ever have the ability to fly a space ship to the moon. I do not believe I would ever have that ability. I am not very technical. I probably would never learn German because language has never been one of my strong points. I do speak English though. Sir, what I have tried to do and what we all try to do is to ensure that when we have talents, whatever talents we have, or when persons come to us with talents that we bring them to the best of whatever they can be and provide them with the tools so that they can be the best at whatever they can be as opposed to suggesting, which to me is very hypocritical, that we should put them all through the same system because we are all equal and therefore they would emerge, they would not emerge just like that. We have to identify the talents.

Mr. Chairman, I went to a physiotherapist a couple days ago and she said to me that she has no artistic talent whatsoever but from early her daughter displayed outstanding artistic talent so she nurtured her, she sent her to an architect during the summer when she was 14 or 15 years old and today that is what she is doing. You identify whatever talent there is, you nurture it and you bring it along. That is what the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and education should do.

Mr. Chairman, yes, I know that the Minister is always speaking about holistic education. I am not suggesting that we do not teach persons certain basics, maths, English, humanities, because at the end of the day they still need life skills. I, however, reiterate that we must not fool ourselves that we should push everyone into doing the seven or 15 CXCs that I heard about, et cetera. If they cannot, they cannot. We need to look for whatever talents they have, nurture them and bring them along and develop those talents, that is what I am suggesting.

Sir, there are two other points that I want to touch on quickly. The first is the whole issue of Barbados looking at education not only for our own people but education as an opportunity to contribute commercially to the development of this country. I believe that we have been looking at the whole issue of medical schools as an example. The second one is that presently we have two international schools in Barbados, one is in St. John and the other is in St. George,

which I am advised, have an international curriculum so that the students can basically leave Barbados and go to Canada, the United States of America or to wherever and be admitted. I am being advised that there is such a demand for such an institution and that certain parents are looking at the possibility of relocating to Barbados for the duration of the education of their children. They would like the possibility of being able to live in an environment like Barbados, have their children educated and then continue their lives from whence they came.

Sir, it is an area that we should look at as a country to see whether or not there is not a possibility for us to incorporate that into our offerings. Sir, it serves two purposes. Not only do we expand those schools or maybe even a couple of additional schools but naturally given the cost of education, an institution like that will be attracting the types of families that would need a home, they would need to buy food, et cetera, so there will be add ons, so I am suggesting to the Minister that the area of medical schools and the whole issue of boarding schools once again...

I remember when I went to the British Virgin Islands that I was surprised at the number of individuals who actually came to boarding schools in Barbados. They are no more because most of them as we know have died out over the years but there is no reason, based on what I am hearing, why we should not once again explore that opportunity.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has three minutes.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Sir. In the three minutes, Sir, I just want to touch on a couple of personal issues. When I say personal, I mean personal to my constituency. I have come across recently the fact that there have been a couple of young boys and girls who have not been going to school for various reasons, for example, they did not pay the school fees the term before or the term before that and they have not been to school. Now, certainly there must be some mechanism that the school should be able to intervene.

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We should not have a situation where anyone in this country could be under the age of 16 and not going to school because they owe a school \$1 600 because fees are owed to the school and those schools should bring this to the attention of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and let the ministry address it immediately because in most cases if you take them to the Welfare Department or go to the Board of the same, in fact the Board will say let us find a way to get this young boy or girl into school. it makes no sense for us allowing these

young boys and girls to remain at home, to remain under trees or in environments where they should not be because they owe a school \$1500 or \$1 000, that is one area I came across that I want to address immediately.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I rise to again congratulate the Government and the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East-Central for making commitment to rebuild or substantially rehabilitate the Wesley Hall School, which is in the heart of my constituency, the City of Bridgetown, and this has a tremendous history of producing over decades hundreds of outstanding Barbadians of various vocations, the school is heavily subscribed with students from all around the island, with very high academic performances each year and we are definitely looking forward to rehabilitating that campus on Kings Street because a number of the buildings, including the hall itself has a tremendous age to it and there are several buildings, to the west for example that would need urgent work.

Mr. Speaker, I know there is a notion that by having a rebuild we can improve the utilization of the limited land space available in the urban corridor because in the urban corridor population density is very high and so available land is very limited. Mr. Chairman, I also take

this opportunity for congratulating this Government for within budget and on time the construction of state-of-the-art complex at Cyprus Street for the St. Ambrose Primary School. I would take this opportunity to invite Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to collaborate with Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development to use those facilities there including the IT hardware to provide the community education programme in terms of the computer awareness programme that is offered to members of the public. I know it is currently offered at Community Centres and at various locations throughout the island but incidentally none within the City centre and so I believe that these facilities which will be properly secured and managed to ensure that we do not have the abuse of these very expensive resources can be implemented with collaboration, even with the Constituency Councils getting involved to give support. This would definitely be welcomed by the member of the community.

Mr. Speaker, I remember Vineland Creative Workshop tapping into resources from international agencies such as UNESCO to conduct classes at the same location, the St. Ambrose Church hall for unemployed persons, single mothers, welfare recipients, in English for Common Entrance Examination, in airbrushing, tie-die, empowering them to be able to lift themselves up by the

proverbial bootstrap and being able to be more marketable in gaining jobs and being entrepreneurs so definitely access to the use of the school plan on evenings by the community would definitely be welcomed.

Mr. Chairman, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development for providing playingfield facilities at West Terrace, in the constituency of Honourable Member for St. James South and by the same token look forward to Government providing some playingfield facility at the St. Ambrose School. Sir, the Barbados Labour Party were not forward-thinking in the initial designs of that plant and have not provided the land space for playing field. I know that we would not be able to have huge playingfield but I have identified some land to the east of the school wall which would mean that we would just take a small piece of land available at the School of Tercentenary site so that we can get the children having at opportunity to at least play a few games of rounders. At St. Mary's School which this Democratic Labour Party constructed at Mason Hall Street we had limited land space and we were able to meander around existing shops and buildings on Baxters Road and Spencer's Gap, to give those children a little area in which to play. Mr. Chairman, people argue that Springer does not have a playingfield but that is not the ideal situation. Sir, physical activity is very important for the overall well-being of the children and so I urge the Minister to use

his good offices to ensure that we can have a small playingfield before the tercentenary complex is taken up by the University of the West Indies or some other stakeholder.

Mr. Chairman, I would wish to support the argument of Honourable Member for St. Michael South with regard to the possibility of earning foreign exchange for Barbados by way of reestablishing boarding establishments. As I said earlier, I attended the Lodge School in the 1970s and back then the boarding establishment was in place and in fact the Minister of Tourism in Antigua, the Hon. John McGinty was my senior, a boarder and was well-known for lawn tennis.

At that time Lodge School was single sex, unfortunately, and so we students were very happy to go over to Codrington High School to see some boarders and some Venezuelan girls.

Asides.

Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I do not support single-sex schools, I believe it is really cruel to those children and that it is an important part of their development to be able to interface with persons of the opposite sex, of course in a totally productive and platonic manner so that their education is not compromised. Sir, I

support the upgrading and assistance of these private schools. I know currently Codrington High School, as Honourable Member for St. Philip South mentioned, is engaged in the international baccalaureate programmes so that many of their students range from children from diplomats from various countries and international agencies, children of persons working for international agencies such as United Nations because they know that after graduating they can return to their respective home countries and be assimilated into their tertiary education system having gained the international baccalaureate but I would only encourage the management of these schools to be fair because they would apply for Government assistance in terms of what we give to private secondary schools, we pay the salary of one teacher per so many children and they would apply for that and still we see in the newspapers, from time to time, too often in my view, the same schools applying for work permits to bring in expatriates to teach the same subjects that Barbadians are qualified at the highest level to teach. I believe that even if they have to bring one or two in the first instance there should be parallel training to take over so that the Barbadian graduate would be able to tap into these sources of employment.

Mr. Chairman, I would also wish to congratulate this administration for pressing ahead with the Caribbean Vocational Qualification and the National Vocational Qualification programme in the technical and vocational areas.

6.36 p.m.

Sir, as I understand it, this would not be limited to newer secondary schools but would be able to be implemented in all of the secondary schools in our country. I believe this useful in terms of showing the holistic view to education. Sir, I am not satisfy that, as we speak, at Harrison's College, for example, there is no agriculture science offered. Sir, fortunately, they have opened a green house recently and that would go a long way. I do not buy the argument that it is not attractive because we must promote these areas. Sir, one could become a very highly qualified to Ph.D. level in agricultural science which is offered at the St. Augustine Campus, and as we go towards the use of hydroponics and greenhouses and so, we need to have these skill-sets highly trained in modern agricultural techniques to improve food security, food sovereignty and demonstrate to Barbadians that you can make a lot of money in agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, we see on television in the Greensome Programme run by CBC and the Ministry of Agriculture a young dynamic, male agricultural economist trained at post graduate level abroad and doing very, very well.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this NVQ/CVQ Programme being implemented throughout these schools, including Harrison's College and Queen's College would enable those students to be exposed to basic practical skills be it electrical installation, plumbing, carpentry, so that they would be Jack of all trades, and we can then transfer entrance, for example, into engineering. Sir, you may be involved in electrical installation to sort of wet your appetite to going into a career path in terms of electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. In fact, in this CVQ Programme which is at several level including the professional level, as you go into the world of work, as occurs in Europe and so on, you then transfer to degree level programmes. Sir, for example, for years at the Barbados Community College ...

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

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Sir, for years at the Barbados Community College even before the Associate Degree was offered students would have participated in the City and Guild Programme in the Ordinary Technicians Diploma, the OTD Programme, offered by City and Guilds in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and building and civil engineering and then graduating and winning to Cypress to do the HNC or the Higher National Diploma (HND) which would be equivalent to a degree in engineering. Sir, we can see that technical and vocational studies is not secondary and should not be frowned upon.

Mr. Chairman, I congratulate the team at St. George's Secondary School as an example. I attended their Speech Day while in the Ministry of Education and they have a tremendously well organised programme in the technical and vocational areas in collaboration with the business sector where the students are exposed to these technical and vocational areas. Sir, the Garrison Secondary School. I have been there to see them partnering with hotels like the Hilton Hotel and Brothers Barber Shop where the children are trained in hairdressing, barbering and, therefore, actually can earn income while at school. Sir, it is very exciting and they are building self-esteem so that they are not seen as second class citizens because they are attending a newer secondary school.

Mr. Chairman, I can assure Barbadians that I have taught in many newer and older secondary schools and the compliment of teaching staff at all of these schools are on par with each other. You have people with PH.Ds and other degrees with lots of experience in these newer secondary schools and, in fact, many of the children currently attending the older secondary schools go to some of the same teachers in the newer secondary schools for extra lessons but they do not get the credit. The older secondary schools get the credit when they are Barbados scholars and so on.

Mr. Chairman, as I conclude, I would really take this opportunity as well to encourage the management, the principal and other members of the management team of these secondary schools not to limit the children in terms of insisting that a child cannot be entered for no more than five CXC subjects. Again, while at the Ministry of Education, we were able to meet the top achievers at CXC with 14 CXCs and 15 CXCs general proficiency passes at Grade 1 at one sitting from Guyana and Trinidad. Sir, we talked to them and they were not nerds, they were well-rounded children.

Mr. Chairman, I, myself, was fortunate while at Lodge School to pass all eight of my G.C.E. "O" Levels including Grade 1 all at one sitting. (5:00)

(Continue here)

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

MR. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wanted to come back in for a second occasion, as I had indicated I would, to address the second part of what I wanted to speak about. Sir, I spoke very briefly but I could not continue, on the issue of effectiveness of the spending which we are doing in education, spread across the four major sectors, pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that the area of capacity which I have mentioned is something that we also have to pay very close attention to. What we have noticed for a number of years, I think, in many World Bank studies and in many studies on education in Barbados is that we just do not have sufficient capacity. Sir, also in terms of the distribution demographics, we have too many children in one class room as opposed to certain other areas and then we have to deal with the issue of migration, so from a body count perspective, capacity is an issue and from a physical plant perspective capacity is also a major issue in the education system and one that we are going to have seriously deal with, as a Government, going forward in the short-term and medium-term.

Mr. Speaker, we have started to have preliminary discussions with the Honourable Minister of Education to look at how we build out new capacity to allow us to do not only the generalised things in terms of having children in schools but looking at specific capacity requirements in areas of education particularly in some of the technical areas of education.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister is very sweet on the agriculture school at St. Lucy. Sir, this is not to be political on this debate because I think we are having a very good discourse that is not too political but when one looks at the facts, in the last 10 years to 15 years, we have

not kept pace with putting in new additional plant in the educational sector to growing needs of our population. Sir, not only have we not put in additional plant to the extent where we now have challenges at Barbados Community College in terms of capacity, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and other areas, but we also have not utilised the plant which we currently have to the best of our abilities and as innovatively as is humanly possible.

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Sir, it is indeed strange that with a fantastic educational plant in Barbados schools really are only used for about ten hours a day. After that the school is shut tight and people cannot get access to schools as they did when I was a boy. You find that it is increasingly now more difficult to get in to plan to be able to do things that would benefit the community, evening classes, continuing education classes, not only in academics but technical areas as well.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: We will hear, even though I must say, when I used to work at the Caribbean Policy Development Centre, in a previous dispensation, I used to marvel, now that the Honourable Member for St. Philip North has mentioned Springer Memorial School, about the number of persons who went into that school after hours for education, and pay, but what was even more startling was the disparity between the number of women who went in there to learn and the men who came out at 7 O'clock to pick them up, lined off in the cars.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, that was one of the most startling points about that exercise. It really told you something about what was going on in Barbados in terms of education. I am saying that situations such as that can be used to the benefit of this society to put this outstanding educational plant that we have at our disposal to good use, to bring productive benefits to the society, but there is this kind of sacrosanctness about the school plant.

I know our Principals and Head Teachers guard the thing so jealously, like the Wardens shut down the Community Centres.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: That is true. You could not get into the Garrison School at all.

Sir, like how the Wardens closed the Community Centres and go home at 4 O'clock and you cannot get into some of them. I think that as a country we have to look not

only at building out new plant to accommodate the growing education needs, we also have to look at utilising the plant which we already have to the benefit of this society.

Sir, the other point which I think needs to be made is this whole question of Teaching Aides in the schools. I am speaking about capacity. The techniques that we now use, the methodologies that we employ, the resources that we deploy to ensure that we can impart education in a smarter, more efficient, and more user friendly manner... I know the previous Government undertook the project on EduTech which was not a bad idea. I do not think we can say it was a bad idea. We might question the implementation of it overtime, but it was a useful idea to bring some of our schools into the world of technology. I know the Ministry of education, under the Honourable Minister, has been trying to bring schools online to get them connected, because there is so much learning that can happen outside of the traditional type of teacher in the classroom approach for children.

Sir, most of what children are doing in the schools now can be found on the internet. My daughter comes home with assignments, most of them are internet based, and therefore we have to find a way to utilise these skills.

Sir, when I was Minister of Social Care, the Bellville Grammar School has a specific classroom for Distance Teaching, where they connect with different Close Brothers Schools across the Caribbean and bring all the students together and do integrated teaching. These are things that we need to be able to do, so that the children in Fifth Forms or a Second Form at Harrison College should be able to interact with their student colleagues at the Garrison School on the same day through the technology, so that you can benefit. You do not have to worry about which school has better teachers, or whatever the case may be, because all teachers would be available to all students, providing that level of capacity that we have in the system. That is wonderful.

Sir, we have very well trained teachers. We train a lot of teachers. They are very well-trained. They are very well educated, but their skills may be contained to one physical space, when in fact through technology it can be spread across the entire system.

Sir, indeed, I would like to see, as Minister of Finance, and I know the Minister of Education would like to see it, as well as other Members, the day when the people in the Ministry of Education can sit at their desks and see a class being taught in any school in this country, doing assessments and evaluations based on that without having to leave and go anywhere, record it and play it back for evaluation.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I am talking about new advanced ways of education through building new capacity.

Sir, the area that we also have to look at is our management capacity in schools. Management is a major issue.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: The Honourable Member is saying 'the issue' in the schools. Sir, a Principal, a Board of Management, so styled, Senior Teachers are part of the Management of really what is effectively an enterprise. They may not see it that way. They may very well be teachers who come up through the system, who go to Erdiston Teachers Training College and get a Masters in Education and Administration, but educational administration is not management. We have to ensure that there is a standardisation of skills sets across the schools to ensure that one school is not better managed than the other, because the personality who is in there is better. So you have to have School Managers. People responsible for the management of the school, the supplies, the plant, the interaction, the human resources.

We put, for example, Human Resource Managers in companies, or Personnel Officers in companies, but you have a school which has teachers, they have the same issues, and they have ancillary staff. They have the same issues as any other workers, but they expect the management in terms of those personnel issues, in particular, to come from down in Constitution Road. Now we have to move away from that and get into the stage where there is on site management of human resources. On site management of plant. On site management of the children and the organisation of the school need to be looked at, at all levels.

I know the Ministry is working to put Boards of Management, or Committees of Management for primary schools, at the primary level, the Advisory Counsels.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I will say one of the things that the Ministry of Education, and the Minister of Education may want to seriously consider, is a Management training exercise for members of the Boards of Management, because they are dealing with a lot of major issues that you would not imagine. Somebody selects you to go and sit on a Board and you have to deal with a major issue like we had recently of alleged sexual abuse. These are not easy issues.

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The issue is I have spoken to people who sit on Boards at school and they tell you they cannot believe the kinds of things that come before them on a monthly basis and a daily basis that they have to confront, and have not really been prepared how to manage those types of issues.

I think that is the level at which we have to begin to think and take this educational thing as we consider new capacities for building out a better educational system in Barbados but, Sir, we will compose, decompose, and we will re compose the way in which we do education in Barbados if we continue to examine constantly what we are doing with the hope of improving it going forward for the future.

I will, if I have the opportunity, come back at another time with another intervention. The final one that I want to speak about is in relation to tertiary education in Barbados.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Asides.

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

On the motion of Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE, seconded by Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE, Mr. Chairman reported progress to His Honour the Speaker and asked for leave to speak again.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chairman of Committees has reported progress and asked for leave to speak again.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 7.45 p.m. today.

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

The question that this Sitting do now suspend until 7.45 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

Sequence 29, 6.59 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this Sitting of the House continues. When the suspension was taken, we were in Committee of Supply and to that we shall now revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Order No. 6 (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I want to make another intervention regarding this Head. The angle that I would want to introduce at this time would be that of analysing the Barbados educational framework in relation to how it should be viewed in the context of Barbados' present economic and social development. I would want to posit the position that it is best for us to interpret the contribution of public finances to education as an investment in the future as opposed to the traditional view economically of the educational sector as being a consuming sector. The view of education as an investment therefore underscores the thesis that it is a part of the productive sector because it is the pillar of education that supports all elements of production in a developing country. From that type of orientation, Mr. Chairman, I would want to look a little bit at this whole notion of education as an investment for us to understand and for us to contemplate how we determine our return on that investment.

Mr. Chairman, we have to be very careful if we view the return on investment in education simply in terms of whether an individual has a job after being trained or whether an individual who would have been trained in Barbados would have left the country and is now working in the international arena and is sending back home remittances or food and so on to help drive the Barbados economy. I think we have to be very careful when we start to interpret the investment in that type of very narrow position. The reason for that is that if you were to compare poorly educated persons and highly educated persons, there is a vast difference between the wages and salaries that are earned by educated persons as opposed to those persons who are poorly educated, therefore there is a direct correlation and a positive correlation between education and your salary and by extension there is a direct correlation and a positive correlation between education and your capacity to consume. Once you start to interpret the investment that you put in an individual in that light, then it becomes quite clear that part of the capacity of an economy to consume is directly linked to the educational opportunities that would have been offered to the citizens of that country.

Mr. Chairman, why that becomes critical is because one has to now link that to other elements that are obviously placed within the Human Development Index. If one is to disaggregate the Human Development Index, the basic underlying premise that defines many of the factors are those that are related to educational attainments and the benefits derived thereof. For example, I would have spoken

to the enhanced earnings by those persons who are more educated but secondarily educated persons are more productive persons because they understand how to better utilise the tools and equipment around them to enhance productivity and that obviously has national importance. In addition, Mr. Chairman, the more educated person by extension is a more innovative and a more competitive person and therefore that again drives to the basic underlying notion of economic development and productivity.

Mr. Chairman, there are two other critical components. One of them that I would want to raise is that education has the capacity of creating gender neutrality once the education opportunities are equally available to both male and female. Going along with that, it also promotes health and other types of social developments but again there is a positive correlation between poverty and a lack of education and between healthy lifestyles and education.

Sir, it is from that context that I would want us to appreciate that the allocations within the Estimates are not just simply about how much money is allocated to refurbish a school plant or to provide for new materials and technologies or so on. I want for us to understand that once we start to see the output of the education sector as an investment in the development of individuals and an investment in the development of the country in terms of economic and social terms, then I think that we can do the comparators in relation to the Caribbean and we can be justly proud of our achievements over the last 20 to 50 or so years.

Mr. Chairman, I would also want to add that one other area to be considered is the whole notion of education as a

public good because when you start to speak of the tenets of democracy and you start to evaluate societies where education has become a dominant feature in their public finances, these are societies that are more democratic, they are fairer societies, they are societies that tend to adhere to the international rubric of law and order and also to the various international conventions, what is therefore important for us to understand is that we cannot underestimate therefore the importance that education plays in relation to not only the social and the economic but in relation to the political dynamics within a society.

You would see, Sir, that in societies which are dominated by dictatorships and other types of autocratic or oligopolistic type governmental structures that there is a lot of poverty in the face of those countries sometimes having large quantities of wealth and there is also a relationship to keeping the population in those societies somehow undereducated and that helps to foster and to maintain the

type of autocratic governments that benefit from that type of arrangement.

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Mr. Chairman, it is from those types of arrangements that I would want to ask us to reflect on the large contributions that education would have made to the social economic and social stability of Barbados and at times I therefore shudder when persons do not understand that even though education may take in our public finance budget the largest proportion in relation to its expenditure I would want us to appreciate by the discussion I just introduced the broad set of positive contributions that education would make simply outside of how we see it as a persons coming out and getting a job. It goes significantly beyond that, it touches all elements, from the economic, driving competitiveness and

productivity, it affect equality, gender matters, health distribution matters, political stability in the ways I would have discussed.

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

Hon. Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, i want to ask our Minister of Education and Human Resource Development to bear those types of interpretations in mind and essentially to stay focused at the task at hand because the challenge is one of making sure that we build on the benefits that would have accrued from the positive outputs in the education systems over the last 20 to 50 years in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Minister for bringing the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the agricultural side to St. Lucy and to stress the importance of a move like that. There is one thing to talk about agriculture but it is another thing to be able to have a polytechnic, not only a polytechnic with a building only but one that has substantial amount of land which demonstrates we are not only serious about the theoretical side but we are also serious about the practical side. Sir, when one considers what is happening in the world today, regarding food shortages, it is clear that this Government is serious about tackling the food shortage, not only in Barbados but ensuring that it empowers its young people an appreciation for feeding themselves. I also want to thank the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development for the renewed interest that has been demonstrated at Half Moon Fort Primary School. Mr. Chairman, you might not know but a number of years ago the impression was given that this school was not needed and that it should have been closed. I want to thank the new

Principal, Mrs. Sobers, for being able to create an atmosphere at that school where we have now seen some of the best results coming out of that primary school over the last year or two.. I am sure that the result will continue.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank Mr. Trust and his charity for supplying the computers to that school because that has also changed the approach of the students at that school and I am happy there will be the possibility that there will be computers at other schools in St. Lucy. Mr. Chairman, it shows that here you can have the private sector and the Government coming together to achieve a goal and this particular goal has created excitement and has caused other primary schools to want to be part thereof.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to say that there is a gentleman by the name of Mr. Broomes who lives in Six Men. I believe that Minister of Education and Human Resource Development should also speak to him because he wants to start teaching students the art of knitting nets and also having the opportunity to throw nets. he wants to have the opportunity go into schools and teach students. I think we have to ensure that those skills are still part of it and that we do not lose those good old values.

Mr. Chairman, also the art of boat-building, I believe we should also expose those things because we have to educate our people how to survive. It is not only the theoretical aspect of it but also the practical aspect that is important. I am happy that there are people who are quite willing to come forward and demonstrate that they have the capacity to help with the young people of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, there is also another of my constituents who have come up with a programme which I believe when the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development gets the opportunity to study it and I hope when the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development is able to take this to the technocrats within the ministry that they see it as a useful working tool that can be used within the ministry and that is the ability to capture when students are late but not only the ability to capture that but the ability for the parents to know what their children are doing and what times they are getting to school.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud not only of Government but of this agency called the Ministry of Education for the forward-thinking and advice and offers that are now coming to this Ministry from normal people in society and what is important about this is that previously everybody wanted to shy away from the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development but now we have people who want to offer solutions and to help this Government to solve the problems as they relate to education.

Mr. Chairman, it is alright for the Opposition to talk about negatives what is clear is that there are Barbadians who are prepared to work hand in hand with this Government and to ensure that they solve all the social educational practical and productive problems in this country and I want to congratulate Minister of Education and Human Resource Development for having an open door to these offers because I am sure that because of this open door policy that has been adopted by this the citizens of Barbados are interested in sharing their views with this Government because know that doors are opened. Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, just to make an intervention in this debate on Head 54, Minister of Education and Human Resource Development any debate on education is very important because as has been observed education is at the base of everything we do and all debates therefore on education are in some degree very enlightening to the extent that they help us better to understand how to confront the issue of solving human problems which is really what education is about. It is really the acquisition of knowledge and the application of that knowledge to the solution of human problems. It has a very long history dating back to that period in human history when man transitioned from that stage where anthropologists called the stage of savagery where men just moved around from place to place for food and shelter, to the stage in human history called barbarism where man became settled, developed agriculture, domesticated animals and began to produce his own food and he was required then to study the seasons and to understand nature better if he was going to plan his life in any systematic or sensible way and there the whole process of systematic education began and it has continued from then until now.

8.12 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I have always a little wary of equating education with attendance at this institution or that institution for the very simple reason that any time you see two people talking school is taking place, teaching is happening and learning is happening so that all education does not take place in institutional setting, that is the first point I want to make.

Mr. Chairman, the second point I want to make is that there is distinction between being well qualified and being well educated. There are many people, not only here in Barbados but across the world who are not well qualified, as we understand the term qualification but who are very highly educated and we err grievously, I think if we make the assumption that because a person does not have qualifications he or she is not educated.

Sir, the C. L. R. James, for example, who at the time of his death was called the Plato of the black world never

had a university education yet was one of the most brilliant minds to be purchased anywhere in the 20th Century, and there are many examples that I could cite. Sir, our own George Lamming here in Barbados, as far as I am aware has never had a university education and, therefore, cannot boast certification but is, certainly one of the most highly educated men in the entire Third World. Sir, that is a debate for another time.

Mr. Chairman, there are just two points I want to make about what we are discussing. I want, of course, to congratulate the Minister of Education for the very solid leadership which he has given to this Ministry ever since he has assumed it in January 2008. It has not been an easy task to manage a lot of the changes over which he has been presiding and, of course, a lot of the restlessness in the society that has resulted from many of the changes taking place worldwide and his fixity of purpose has always been a source of inspiration to me. I think he has given the Ministry very solid and very focus leadership.

Mr. Chairman, the teachers in the school have been doing their part. It is my view that our schools have a critical role to play. They have always had a very critical role to play in the development of our societies and our teachers have always played a very central and, certainly, strategic role in the development of our societies.

Mr. Chairman, an area of concern to me has always been that in terms of the upward movement of teachers in the educational system there is some anomaly, I think, that flows from a very good teacher of physics, mathematics, French, history or whatever the subject may be being forced to leave the class room to go to become either a deputy principal or a principal of a school because that is the highest form of promotion.

We have had too many examples of teachers who would prefer to be in the class room but whose only source of upward mobility would be to give up the class room, which they enjoy and for which they were admirably suited and go to assume administrative positions very often for which they are ill-equipped and then they end up doing something they do not really enjoy and, of course, the losers in all of this are the students.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East when she spoke in this debate earlier this afternoon reminded me that I was Shadow Minister of Education in 1995 when the White Paper on Education was introduced in this House (6:00) and I said then, and I repeat now, that in the same way that lawyer does not have to become a judge to say that he has reached the top of his profession or a doctor does not have to become a head of a hospital or a Minister of Health in order to say that he has got to the top of his profession but you get to the top of your profession by the according to you of a designation, in the case of a

lawyer, a Queen's Counsel, in the case of a doctor, a Fellowship of the Royal College of this or of that, and I believe that engineers have their own designation as well. Sri, I said it in 1995, when we did the White Paper debate that the time has come to rescue those teachers who would prefer to say in the classroom from the torture of having to become administrators by designing a designation which they can wear as a badge of honour for having reached the top of their profession as teachers of physics or as teachers of mathematics or whatever and when they get to that stage they then become available to the entire education system.

Mr. Chairman, let me give an example of what I mean. I am aware that at St. Leonard's Secondary School there is a very good teacher of Spanish and that school has been doing quite well in the area of Spanish. Sir, a teacher in that situation, having put in the requisite amount of time and having been accorded the appropriate designation because it is thought that he has got to the stage where he can be considered a leader in that subject area should not find himself in a situation now where he has to be strictly time-tabled at a particular school when there may teachers at other schools teaching Spanish who are having difficulty communicating to their students a particular area of Spanish. Sir, I believe in the 1995 debate I called it a consultant teacher, the designation was CT but, Sir, it does not have to be that but they should be able to call on this specialist, say that they are having difficulty getting their students to understand a particular area and, ask him to come down, give a double period on the subject so that the issue is more clearly understood by the class. Sir, this should be happening across the system with teachers in the various subjects, those teachers who have got to the top and who are regarded as the experts in the areas in which they teach so that two birds are killed with one stone.

Mr. Chairman, the system overall benefits because all students in the system then, conceptually, have access to the best teachers in the system and also, teachers who are so designated enjoy a certain amount of professional satisfaction because they do not have to leave the classroom which they enjoy to go to become a principal or a deputy principal or whatever, something that they may not necessarily enjoy.

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That is a big problem in the education system at the moment.

I have talked to many teachers who love the classroom but whose only course for upward mobility is to apply to become a Principal, and to give up what they love doing to go and do something else that only has an increased salary attached to it. A system that treats people in that way is in my view fundamentally flawed. I should like to urge the Minister of Education to give some thought

to that suggestion, because I think it could solve many problems across the system.

The point I should like to make very briefly is the virus in our system that still draws the line of distinction between academic learning, which is supposed to make people bright, or to designate people as bright, and technical learning which is supposed to be something inferior to that.

I accept the distinction between academic and technical to a certain extent, but I just want to make the point that because the two functions are apparently different, it does not mean that one is superior to the other. In fact, both have a very critical role to play in the development of the human society, the advancement of human civilisation. It is very important that we remind ourselves that even though a man is technically inclined, he still has to use his brain. It just happens that he has a different area of emphasis and he directs his intellectual energies in that area, but he is not inferior to the persons whose emphasis is academic, as we like to use that term.

Sir, the distinction between academic and technical, between mental labour and manual labour, which results from it, continues to haunt our societies and to afflict people who are regarded as mental labourers with a sense of inferiority. Of course to imbue people who are regarded as mental labourers with a sense of their own superiority. I do not think that does our society a lot of good, and I think we have to continue to work to eliminate those distinctions and to recognise that ultimately all education is aimed at helping man to better understand, to tame and to apply the fruits of nature for his own advancement. Some people do that through artistic means. Some people do it through technical means, but there are both making the same kind of contribution to the treasury of human civilisation.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. H.F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, though it is very difficult to speak after a Prime Minister and particularly one who has delivered himself in such a magnificent fashion in this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, yesterday I said that there must come a time in this Parliament's history when debates like these should be televised on CBC. Today I have been exonerated by that statement by the quality of the debate in this Honourable Chamber that certainly has transcended political boundaries and lifted the debate in this Chamber to another plateau.

Sir, I also believe that this debate on education in this Chamber here today is one which exerts, because the

technology which is there should be used on a wider basis for CBC to capture a wide cross section of Barbadians to further this great discussion and turn it into a national debate on education. Sir, it could be done. I have seen it being done in the past, but I would hate to know that the type of contributions made here today were ones that would just be a temporary exercise, so that when we leave here the debate is forgotten, and only a few people, or listeners to the debate, would have heard this debate in here today.

Mr. Chairman, I also remember saying that I will come back to talk on a very crucial aspect of education. Sir, I was talking about compensatory education. I am saying that the point was made in this Honourable Chamber about varying levels of education, varying points of learning. I consider myself to be a student of life. I have learnt most of what I have know in the communities across Barbados from the time I left school at the age of fourteen, to work at the Civic, my whole learning experiences began then. Sir, as life has it, dramatic things happen in your life.

Sir, one of the most dramatic things that would have happened not only to me, but to the community of Pinelands and Wildey in particular, is when the Community Development Division, at the time, under the guidance of a gentleman by the name of Mr. Gordon Walters, sent a young outstanding community practitioner to the Pine to take over that community and run it, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Ralph Walker. At that time people used to refer to us as 'Rastics'. The community in itself was deemed a bastardised community. Persons never expected anything to come out of it. Therefore, he was sent to a community basically to take on a herculean challenge.

Then what?

Sir, when I talked about compensatory education I am really talking in a sense about adult education. Then what happened? Something like a miracle happened, because he brought a whole set of compensatory programmes to really educate those of us who did not get GCEs, at the time, and introduced us and gave us skills that would really prepare us for survival in this world.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that and pay particular homage again and again to this man by the name of Mr. Ralf Walker. Equally, as important as him was also Dr. Bradley Niles who was the Principal of the Extra Mural Department, next to the Parkinson Secondary School. He too came as the Principal, got involved in the community and also introduced compensatory educational programmes to those poorer people in the community and wider Barbados. I still believe, although it seems like this is a voice crying in the wilderness the Extra Mural Centre, in the Pine, should be renamed after him, because of his

outstanding contribution to the development of compensatory education.

Sir, I wrote the Principal of the University of the West Indies on this matter, but the response was not one that I really liked because I really feel that by now the Extra Mural Department should really be named after him. Then a number of things happened.

Sir, I also want to use this occasion to congratulate the Pinelands Creative Workshop for the work that they are currently doing in the communities, particularly down in Nelson Street, et cetera, as it relates to this whole area of compensatory education.

8.32 p.m.

Sequence 33

I am talking about it so what is compensatory education in the true sense of the words?

First of all it is really about giving people a second chance, it is about wealth creation mechanisms, it is about training, it is about enterprise development, it is about employment creation and it is about stopping people from falling through the tracks. Sir, part of this entire exercise and programme is also about teaching soft skills. You have heard members in this Honourable Chamber comment about the difficulties employers are experiencing with young people to adjust into a new social environment.

Sir, we believe that the teaching of soft skills are critically important in the job market. Issues, such as conflict resolution, proper communication, ethics and morality, something that we in this Honourable Chamber cannot legislate. God Almighty legislated those particular values. Sir, also issues such as HIV/AIDS and drugs. Sir, there is a difficulty that when we talk to some employers that they are experiencing they say that some young people and adults cannot take orders. Sir, they are these particular areas that I am talking about in terms of compensatory educational programmes that certainly would help in this whole exercise.

Sir, we cannot talk about education only in the context of the school and the university situation. There is another institution within this Barbadian society that has a very critical role to play as it relates to the stabilisation and harmonisation of our society. There is no way in this Honourable Chamber that we could talk about the development and the problems that we are having, without talking about the role of the church in the development in a society like ours.

Sir, in time, we have to look seriously at the role of the church from the perspective of instituting spiritual values and guidance.

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

Mr. H.L. LASHLEY: The church as also the classroom for not only religious value but the church as a change agent. Sir, I want to say that sometimes we deal specifically with the effects and forget the causes. In my view, we have to look at the problems within the family and that as an offspring goes into the communities and if the families and the communities are at the genesis of some of the most diverse problems that we are seeing in our society, then it is critical, Sir, that the issues of institutional strengthening and capacity building should now come into play. There must be a very important partnership agreement between Government and civil society, Government and the NGO sector, Government and the EBO sector. There must be a kind of holistic approach where all NGOs, CBOs, Government and the business sector coming together in a very practical way to discuss these problems and let me say why.

Sir, there is an organisation in Barbados called the Barbados Youth Action Programme that has developed a model, Sir, not only going into the schools in Barbados and talking to the youth but their programme has been so impressive that the Government of St. Kitts - which they are leaving this weekend - has invited them to come to talk to the youth in St. Kitts, and developed programmes there. They were in St. Lucia and are now doing exchange programme with Trinidad.

Sir, this is a group of returning nationals from the international prison system. I have heard talk like, we like the message but we do not like the messengers. Let us look at the messenger. If we are saying that we like the message but do not like the messenger then we are talking about not forgiving them although they have paid their dues, although for a fact they are doing wonderful work and people are astounded at the level of control that they have over the young people. Sir, then again, Sir, it goes back to the old biblical principles that if we cannot forgive then we ourselves do not expect to be forgiven. Sir, this programme by the Barbados Youth Action Programme is working and has been accepted in St. Lucia, St. Kitts, and Trinidad. They are these kinds of unorthodox approaches that are critical now for the development our young people and certainly the communities across Barbados.

As I wrap, Mr. President, at this point in our development it is so important now that we continue to foster these kinds of relationships as enunciated in the millennium declaration, in particular Goal 8 of partnerships for development. I am saying that with these kinds of

shared approaches, this shared types of covenants in our society, many of the social and evil problems that we are currently experiencing as a society could be solved.

Again, I want to seriously congratulate this passionate and articulate Minister of Education for doing a very wonderful job and I am sure when the Annals of Education is written this formal community practitioner, now educational practitioner, his name will be written as one of the best Ministers of Education that this nation has produced.

I want to thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. D.St.C. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on two occasion this evening in this House, Sir, the date 1995 was mentioned and it was rather interesting to hear both persons speaking about that particular date and I remember well while speaking on the White Paper for Education that I mentioned the need for having a land use policy. I made the point that White Paper on Education should not have been brought until we properly sorted out the land use policy of Barbados.

Around that same time there was a lot of discussion on whether there should have been a school at St. Thomas or not but now today, Sir, some 16 years after, one would have to reflect back on the decision by the Democratic Labour Party to build a school at Cane Garden in St. Thomas. When one looks now to see the development, not only at Welches but the development in the Warrens area one can only come to the conclusion that it was visionary, timely and that it was the impetus needed to help develop that area.

It is no doubt, Sir, that when one looks at that type of development, one has to consider the housing patterns, the educational pattern, the transportation pattern and so on and now, all those naysayers who were prepared to criticise the Democratic Labour Party for making and taking the bold step to put a school at Cane Garden in St. Thomas should really apologise to the Democratic Labour Party for the foresight given in leading the thrust to carry forward the educational system in Barbados and ensuring that they place a school in the right location.

Sequence 34, 8.42 p.m.

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Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: It is no doubt that the school is very important and that people have gravitated to it. Not only have people gravitated to that school but it has

been able to save the educational system when we had problems at the St. Leonard's School.

Mr. Chairman, it is no doubt that the Democratic Labour Party has always led in its vision, that went as far back as 1961. Our first order of business was about education so much so that a former Premier was able to look at his Minister of Education and say to the Minister of Education that if you do not know how to implement free secondary education, I will find somebody who can do it. Sir, that Minister of Education did not wait too long to find out how to do it because he was able to do it.

Mr. Chairman, we need not worry. We have always led and we have always demonstrated a capacity to be different to others and to take criticism. Sir, that is why when I hear criticisms coming from the other side, I know that you do not throw rock stones in empty trees. Sir, when you hear all the bellyaching on the other side you would know why because one thing for sure is that they had been able to compare 1991 and this period and they have recognised that we are in a greater crisis but we are doing better.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did not want to speak after the Honourable Member for St. Lucy because I think that we had a very lively debate and there was no partisan speech until the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke. He speaks as though education started in 1966, something is wrong.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I have never mentioned the year 1966 but if the Honourable Member wants to remind the public that it was 1966 that we gave independence to the people of Barbados, I do not have a problem with that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Proceed Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I want to remind the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that this is an educational debate and we had high standards until he spoke tonight.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: There is nothing irrelevant about that because the truth of the matter is I wanted to speak really on the remuneration package that the Honourable Prime Minister was speaking of for teachers. He was speaking of the fact that there are some teachers who have remained in the classroom or who have been in the classroom and have taught very well but then at some time they had to move on because they were looking for higher standard, better facilities and upward mobility.

Mr. Chairman, the reason many teachers want to move on is the fact that they must look for a better remuneration package. It is true that if you look in this Honourable House, you will find that there are a number of persons here whose profession is really teaching. Many of us have moved on over the years in order to do other things but of course our love still remains in the classroom. There are some of us who still teach for little or no money. We have had great teachers over the years and I want to remind the Honourable Member for St. Lucy again that this island did not start in 1961 or 1966, it started long ago. One Honourable Member said today that at the turn of the century there were over 200 schools dotted across Barbados. Sir, in one of my interventions today, I made the point that for comparative advantage purposes, Barbados always had that advantage in terms of turning out quality teachers all across the island.

Mr. Speaker, I would also want the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to have a look at the 1951 Manifesto that I have a copy of, if he cannot find the time or the research, I will find it for him, that was written in part by not only the Barbados Labour Party but by founding members of that side. Sir, that Manifesto spoke to a free school service, to free education and to a number of initiatives that were involved over time. Sir, I want the Honourable Member to understand that we do research over here too and that the big lie that was started years ago that one side introduced free education and the other side did not, is not totally true, that all of us...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Over the past years, both sides have contributed tremendously to the educational programme and this is where we are today.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make a more serious point that some time ago...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I was just responding to the Honourable Member. We cannot see everything in terms of partisan politics.

In the debate that we had in 1995, I made the point then that we have to look carefully at what is happening in the school system. I called then for a system where you could have quality teachers that have gone out of the system, retired teachers... There are a number of retired teachers who have made tremendous contribution to the system. I believe that a case could be made for some of these retired teachers to be called back to give some of their time. In other jurisdictions, for example, in Ontario, every retired teacher must give at least two hours per week, eight hours per month or 72 hours per year and that quality

teacher is paid and that quality teacher helps to guide the young teachers in the system. It is a good system in that in our society today there are many problems within the school system that can be ironed out when you have some of these retired teachers coming back into the system.

Mr. Chairman, I spoke yesterday of the fact that many teachers have to grapple with 20 to 28 children. I understand the Honourable Minister to have said that the ratio of a teacher to children is about 20 children. I thought it was more but that ratio is quite a lot. These retired teachers, if they come back into the system, can help guide the school and help iron out the problems.

I am sure that the Minister is aware that at every school in Barbados today children are gambling across the system and there is bullying in the school system, this is a fact. We must not hide. We have to listen to these problems and we have to iron them out. It is not a problem that the Minister has created, it is a problem that has existed but it is continuing. I thought it was only at some schools. We need to iron out the problem of gambling, the problem of bullying, the problem of the text books system and the problem of the correct uniform. These problems need to be corrected. I do not know what the Minister is doing about them. I mentioned to him some time in a quiet moment that these are things that I have observed at some of the schools and I know that many teachers are asking about them. How do we grapple with these problems? Is it the security that is lacking? Is it the problem for the teachers only? Is it the problem for the Government and not the Opposition? It is a community problem that all of us are inheriting. Those of us who have children, grand children and family in the school system, are concerned about it and I would hope that the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development would do something about it before it gets out of hand.

As I said yesterday, you have security at all schools now, which is a good thing. I would hope that the security officers and the school system can work hand in hand to ensure that these things do not happen.

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I know the question of bullying is a big problem that has been happening mainly in North American schools and has caused a lot of problems to children; in Barbados we had it and we need to correct it I am not saying I have the answers but we have to debate these things and see what we can do about it. Sir it is unfair for a child's first day at school, we all had it but in our days it was not as harsh as now but today we have a situation where young children are unfaired by the big ones. It is a part of life we know but it is to me it is getting out of hand and something has to be done about it. There are parents who are concerned about

it, the teachers are concerned, some of them have spoken to me about it.

Mr. Chairman, the question of correct uniform also needs to be addressed. I do not know if the Minister of Education usually set the standard, what it is that must be done in terms of the length of uniform, height in terms of wearing socks, the correct uniform, faded-out uniforms. The other problem that needs to be addressed and I spoke to the Minister of Transport and Works about it, I believe that children traveling on the school buses and that a driver alone on those buses cannot control a full bus load of children and Government must think about that, how do children get on the school bus they behave badly, the driver sometimes must take the buses to the police station to get some form of redress. We need to do something about it and I believe there may be a case for either a conductor or a teacher to be traveling on the bus. There needs to be something to help the system. I believe it is a good system, I do not think that we can criticise the free bus service but we need to go a long way in doing other things to ensure that the buses are properly protected, that children do not fight or behave badly.

Mr. Chairman, I also believe that the teacher training system needs to be looked at as well. I am not aware.. I know there was a time when young teachers would go into the classrooms only qualified with four Common Entrance Examination. What is happening today is that I understand you can go directly to Erdiston Teachers Training College to be trained, so we need to look at what is happening at the Erdiston College, is there a case where teachers are being retrained.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, there used to be an evening class for teachers. The summer vacation teachers were trained and retrained at the centre. I wonder what is happening at that institution if they are indeed turning out only Barbadians teachers or are they turning out teachers from across the region. Sir, what about the level of training, are they still being trained in science or the arts? Are they still training primary teachers? Are they still working in conjunction with the University of the West Indies? These are all questions to which I hope the Minister will speak about when he wraps up. Sir, this debate cannot conclude unless we talk about training and retraining of teachers, train and retraining of those persons involved in the ancilliary staff, those involved in the whole school system. What about training for those persons who have to perform in the school meals system. What level of qualification do we need for those persons involved in the school meals system.

Mr. Chairman, the whole system needs to be addressed and therefore I would want the Minister to tell us what is happening across the ministry so that we can be satisfied that the money we are spending, which is a lot, that we are getting value for it.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I would wish to raise a number of queries of the Honourable Member in relation to some aspects of education. I wish first to indicate that in the past I was aware that the Mount St. Vincent training for special needs teachers at the Masters Degree level was an integral part of what we call the EduTech Teacher Training programme and quite a few teachers were trained. It was a very expensive exercise but I want to find out from what I am manifested in our schools how have these teachers been deployed. I have a tremendous difficulty when persons trained in a specific area that we know we have the need for that kind of professional but then when they come back to the classroom they are then put back to teach a regular class. We have enough problems in the country with special needs and special needs now for the information of other Honourable Members are not only associated with children who have disabilities or are late developers, but gifted children are also included in that category and to see that some of those teachers with Masters Degree have been put back into a regular classroom defeats the purpose of the training. I would wish to know if they are adequately deployed and that is similar to those who do the TAPC programme at Erdiston where they do a lot of work in art and craft. How are they deployed? What about those who do the physical education programme, are they teaching physical education or are some of them going back to school to say the sun is so hot and I would prefer a regular classroom. I do not think we should be using the resources of the taxpayers in that way, people should be able to specialise and if they have to have a special salary, give them the salary because we need every last teacher, male or female, to be an integral part of the change agents in the educational sector. The other one I wish to speak to is associated with Erdiston Teachers Training College and I am not going into the politics of Erdiston, I just want to say that Erdiston has served us well. I think since 1948 the institution was established, we had people from all over the Caribbean coming here for training, that is the reason the residential aspect of it was there. It was called the Rawle Institute. I am trying to find out when I see children in front of me - do not forget I have my association with children in the community and in the church who talk a lot. I am getting the feeling that many teachers seem to be what we call 'booky-booky'. I think we have made a big mistake in some areas where we determine that there must be a book for English, one for Social Studies, one for Mathematics at the primary level, so that some teachers are not quite capable of teaching mathematics because you would hear

people having seven or eight subjects but none of them is mathematics. Mr. Speaker, I know at one point in time the ministry would determine if you are going to be the teacher at primary level you were expected to teach both English and mathematics because that is where the foundation is and that is where we want our children to be able to develop well with the conceptual development in mathematics.

Mr. Chairman, as a result I am finding that many children are going to school and because of the difficulties in the homes and communities from which they come, they are not always able to grasp certain concepts. Sometimes the methodologies do not match, sometimes the speech of the teacher does not match, so that when a child comes to us speaking Bajan only you do not dismiss it, you bring them to a level. Sir, the real art of teaching is to go from the known to the unknown and unless we are nurturing children in that way and not ignoring them when they speak to us in a certain way, we will surely meet further difficulty.

9.02 p.m.

Sir, I want to know how do you treat to a child in a classroom in front of you at a quarter to nine or even nine o'clock that comes into you hungry because the mother, the parents, or the guardians have to go to work early in the morning. How do you treat to those children who are ill? One probably had an asthma attack in the night and never slept but the mother or the father had Nebulizer because there is no gender thing about it now. How do you treat to that child if it is lying on the table but you say, "Your eyes look so red, you like you on drugs," because that is what is happening in some of our schools. Sir, the children are not given a chance, as small as some of them are, to be treated like human beings or rather than have a stigma associated with why the eyes might be red. The child might have cried the whole night because there was a domestic violence condition in the home when mummy and daddy fought and the children cannot sleep because they want to know if daddy is going to kill mummy or if mummy is going daddy, depending, and therefore, the eyes would be red and the child has to put its head down on the table.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that for teachers in the system who do not know...

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Erdiston has a responsibility to have incorporated in the training what we of the old school like the Honourable Member who is now the Minister would know, the hidden curriculum, so that when we find out what the needs are we do not just dismiss them, put the children at the door or tell them they are not ready for this yet but we embrace them and we nurture them. Sir, enough

of that is not happening. I know that there is segregation in some of our schools where depending on from whence you have come, you are labeled, so that if you come from a particular community of which I will not call any names but, Sir, let me say the Vault Road because that is where I came from. It does not mean that I will not learn as well as the child that comes from Hopewell, from Highland or from Belleplaine in St. Andrew or from in Christ Church West, wherever that community is. Sir, some children, because of the communities they come from where there might be a lot of strife, a lot of drugs, a lot of whatever that is negative, some children are labeled and, therefore, they are not able to cope.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to reiterate the importance of all teachers and care-givers emphasizing quality teaching and quality care for every child to reach its potential. Sir, that is the message that I would wish to put forward. I do not think that lessons that we see it now should be going on in the way that it is. It is a big money-making business for most of the persons who offer lessons. Sir, it is \$25 an hour for a primary school child and if the child does not have the money it cannot attend lessons. Sir, I am from the old school again where the principals and teachers offer free lessons.

Mr. Chairman, I had the privilege to work with children and give them free lessons because children of poor people will not have the money and it is so unfortunate that some schools are not doing all of the rudiments of mathematics, English and so on in the day-time teaching in the classroom but those who can attend lessons get the teaching because they are paying after school. Sir, I think it is wrong and I think it is something that needs to be properly examined and whatever text books are being used, they should be used to help to prop up what is done with the discussion, the explanation and the experimentation of aspects of the exercise.

Mr. Chairman, with the limited time that I have, the other area that I would wish to refer to is associated with health and wellness. Sir, unless we ensure that parents are on board with what we are doing, then we will lose the battle. Sir, too many of our children at primary level and some at nursery level are suffering from diabetes. Sir, a lot of it is to do with diet and exercise and I believe that to learn that a six-year-old has to be on insulin speaks to the issue. I know it might be a hereditary situation where a whole family is suffering from diabetes and, therefore, it might spill off to the children but exercise and diet are not being practised in the way it should. Sir, when we were young, we were trim because we had to walk almost every step, to school, to church three times, to the neighbourhood, we played games all and in the evening but our children now are on the computer, the Ipad and so on, and it is more sitting and manipulating those objects and while there is learning there, I believe they must get some form of

exercise. Sir, to those parents who are within hearing of what we are doing here, to stop their children from doing physical education because they have reached Common Entrance age and they want them to be able to study the mathematics and the English, I think it is an injustice to those children because, Sir, physical education for them of paramount importance and, therefore, we must make sure that the parents are aware and that they expose the children to diets that are appropriate. Sir, pizza has taken over, fast food has taken over and too many of our (5:24) children are sick and putting a tremendous burden on the schools because when small children are sick the teachers have to supervise them still. Sir, when they fall ill, then the health agencies are the ones that have to pick up the slack.

Mr. Chairman, if I could give my final comment, I want to speak about synergies with the school. When I entered the system, and I am not creating any more work for persons but I believe that any proud Barbadian would want to give voluntary service in any respect of life once it is has to do with human development. Sir, remember distinctly on the first assignment forty-something years ago that I was informed that as long as CERO is a part of what we are doing that we must tithe our time and be available in case there is a hurricane, storm, flood or so on. Sir, that is way back in 1970 so you could imagine, Mr. Chairman, how long ago I am talking.

Mr. Chairman, I think that we are losing the lack of volunteerism and I was appalled when we had Hurricane Tomas to learn that some schools could not be opened. Sir, a lot of that is to do with people living around the school not seeing the school as a part of their own development and, therefore, for a principal who may be teaching in St. James but lives all the way in St. Philip, as a chief shelter warden, you must have problems. Sir, sometimes the keys are not accessible, the principal or whoever is in charge cannot get to the location because the roads may be impassable, the rain is too heavy and I do not think it would be fair for that person to have to be there. I believe that rather than just say that teachers should be assisting with the Disaster Emergency Management Department and whatever is happening with emergencies and disasters, I believe that every Barbadian should be an integral part of what is happening in the community where they live so that they can offer their service.

Mr. Chairman, nearly every community now has a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher, a carpenter, a mason, so I can speak boldly of Mr. Elroy Carter, who lives just a few houses away from Sharon Primary School and every time a window needs to be fixed, he did it for free as part of the shelter warden process. Sir, for generations, we knew him but now he is going over the hill in age and there is nobody now to this because the principal from somewhere else and the senior teacher is from somewhere else. (8:14) Sir, these things happened when teachers taught in the communities

where they live but we must understand the dynamics of having a school open when there is an emergency and persons to offer some form of supervision to those who have to come because, at the end of the day, we have disabled people among us, we have vulnerable people otherwise and I think that their needs should be properly met.

Mr. Chairman, in the last few seconds, I want to talk about the Before and After School Care Programme. I think it is an excellent one but the Barbados Labour Party did not market it in the way it should have. Sir, it is not off the ground in the way I would like it but when you look at what was said by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East earlier and others in relation to children coming into schools that are not in their catchment, there has to be somebody at school to be able to supervise a child who comes at 6.30 a.m. before the parent works in bank downtown and has to be on the job 7.30 a.m. or 8.00 a.m. and, therefore, the Before and After School Care Programme should cater to those needs. Sir, however it done, I do not have a problem as long as the person is a person of good character and as long as the person is going to engage the children in meaningful activities before the school begins and they will wait there at the school after and the parents are going to give \$5 a day or whatever towards that individual. Sir, I am not saying to put any extra cost on the shoulders of the Ministry but parents will then have to lend support to that exercise in order to ensure that their children are safe.

Mr. Chairman, we have a lot of lawless people who go around schools and sometimes they have their turf fight and they shoot around school properties. Sir, some people go there and lure around to interfere with small children and so, I believe that the Before and After School Care Programme is an important aspect of living in this futuristic age we are in where we no longer can put our children to walk to school on lonesome road ...

S/A87D/9:12

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Miss C.Y. FORDE: ... I believe that before and after school care programme is an important aspect of living in this futuristic age, where we no longer can put our children to walk to school on lonesome roads as we did in the past. We cannot leave them unattended because we know that Satan is out there and so many things can go wrong. I think the Honourable Minister might want to have this done in more schools because of the situation that is in existence, so that we as parents and guardians feel or know that our children are safe because there are volunteers at the school

supervising them and keeping them meaningfully engaged in activities that would help to empower them.

I wish to thank, Mr. Chairman, for the privilege.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I would not be very long. I just want to make two additional points to the points which I would have made earlier to conclude the interventions on education from my end, at least. This relates to tertiary education in Barbados and how we approach this matter.

The first area I want to concentrate on is the issue of financing, because I think this is a critical matter that we have to seriously address. Of course it is one that does not come without some contention because of people, even though there is a general acceptance, deep as it is, that Barbados should continue to contribute, and this is across the political divide, that Barbados should continue to spend copious sums on our tertiary education system. When I say tertiary I do not just mean University of the West Indies. I mean Barbados Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and so forth and so on. There is still concern in the society from some quarters, all be it small, that some people believe that we should find a way for cost recovery in the educational system.

Now let me make it abundantly clear, I cannot speak for the Honourable Members on the other side, the other Party, but I get a sense that they too believe, at least I hope so, that the State should continue to provide education free at point of delivery for as long as the State can continue to do so, to allow for persons in our tertiary education system to access educational services without having to pay for tuition and those kinds of things even if they have to pay regulation fees in terms of amenities fees and those things that you have to pay.

Sir, even that is a matter that needs and brooks immediate attention, because when we look over the last ten or fifteen years, we will see that, for example, the University of the West Indies' budget has doubled. Some even say tripled, but I do not think it is that much, but it certainly has doubled in the last decade or so. As the university has expanded its intake of students as its offerings across disciplines have diversified, and as the plant of the university has expanded to accommodate the numbers.

At some point in time as we seek to provide educational services at that level, at the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic for additional students, we are going to have as a country to seriously look at how we finance post

secondary education and tertiary education in particular in Barbados.

Sir, I know, for example, that some years ago the Parliament of Barbados, working with the University of the West Indies, passed an Act that allows for the University to float bonds. I think it is an educational bond. I am sure that it is enshrined in the law now. The Statute provides for that to happen. As I was considering this debate, listening to Members, and of course as Minister of Finance having the very difficult duty of navigating the waters as there are, turbulent in terms of our own finances, and tertiary education generally, I thought about the possibility that across the political divide and within the education sector we need to have very shortly a high level serious meeting on the issue of tertiary education financing. I am not talking about something that is going to be speaking to five or ten years. I am talking about the next 10, 15, 20, 25, nearly 50 years from now. How do we accommodate the growing demands as a developing country seeking to get developed status, whatever that might mean. How are we going to afford this level of education? The costs associated with it. Sir, the amounts we want to in terms of persons and how that is going to be met. and if in fact it can be met from Central Government resources. In thinking it through, I came to a conclusion, though I am not entirely firm on it as yet, because I have to give it some additional thought, that just as we have done for other areas of our economy, and I consider education not just as a social development provision, but also to be seen going forward as very much part of our economic development. Sir, it is upon this that new skills, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip West has said, new levels of productivity would be determined from that basic educational platform, that we may want to consider in the future, even as we discuss tertiary education, similar to what we would have had for sugar a national tertiary level educational Bond that can be floated, say every five years. It does not have to be every year, but refloated every five years or so, may be every ten years, at a level of may be \$500 000 into the community in which members of both the local community and the diaspora can contribute to that Bond, which would be a medium-term instrument, to allow for the Government to build out certainly infrastructure to work with training, to work with research, and so forth, at tertiary level in particular. So taking the burden off the Central Government's budget, as it is going forward.

I am making this point very seriously because I think we have to begin to train our minds. We cannot just assume that 10, 15 or 20 years from now a Government of Barbados, as the State, is going to be able to continue to fund education at the level we are funding it and even to continue to believe that the level that we are funding it at is going to be adequate, because we may still be funding it at the level we are funding it, but the demands may be so great on the budget that our own limited resources do not

allow us to be able to fund what we need to fund. Therefore, we need to find a way to bring people in at a voluntary level to contribute to the development of our educational system by basically financing the future development of education in Barbados.

This is one of the things I think needs to be discussed very seriously at a high level intensive discussion among all of the stakeholders, in education, finance, and in social development generally to ensure that we begin, as they would say, to square the circle, in relation to tertiary education.

Sir, the second point I want to make before I sit is the whole issue of determining at the level of the stakeholders in education, at the level of policy makers in the State, at all levels to determine what is the direction we want our tertiary output to go in.

Now I know a situation has grown up in Barbados and in other countries. It is not immune to Barbados where...

9.22 p.m.

Sequence 38

Thursday, March 17, 2011

ESTIMATES - House A87D, Sequence 39, 9.21 p.m.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: The second point I want to make before I sit, is the whole issue of determining at the levels, the stakeholders in education and policymakers in the state to determine what is the direction we want our tertiary output to go in, Sir. Now I know a situation has grown up in Barbados and in other countries where universities are really almost driving tertiary level education policy but we have to do in our own instance, Mr. Speaker, mast investigations about what are the real requirements in a society such as ours going forward to be able to determine where resources need to be best spent to determine how best we contribute to the development of our society. I will give a classic example.

Right now at the University of the West Indies if you look in the social sciences, there seems to be an imbalance in the registration of the student population doing social sciences to the extent where you have maybe an over subscription in the area of management studies for example. Lots of students go to the university to do management because management is very popular. However, we also know that in the social sciences field in Barbados both at the level of study and the level but also at the level of practice that there are not sufficient students studying accounts. There is an under performance in terms

of registrations in the area of accounting. It is beginning to affect that practice in Barbados to the extent where if you go to any job fair, the people who set up the desk for accounting complain that they are not getting sufficient numbers but you do not have that problem in management because there are scores of people doing management and some begging to get into the management studies' programme that is already over full. Sir, we have to find a way of looking and examining similar to what they did in Asia and really planning out this thing. Managed interventions, we need these numbers of scientists, we need such and such to be producing such numbers of accounts and economics. Even the economics degree that so many people like to parade now as this glorious science has under registration. There are very few students going to the university doing economics as a pure course.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has four minutes.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, we are seeing deficiencies in some areas and over production in others, and we have to determine as a society, what are the subject areas, what are the disciplines that are going to be required to take this Barbados economy and society forward and find a way, not just that when people get to university level but the time they are in secondary school in particular, to start to move people in those directions. Create an appetite for study in those areas that are required in a modern evolving society such as ours that is aspiring to industrial status or developed status and ensure that the resources we spend at the University, at BCC and at SJPP, are specifically targeted to those areas and match that, Mr. Chairman, against the output to see that those areas are being serviced and that new areas, new processions, new practices are being serviced by the requirements coming out.

Mr. Speaker, these may be in the new cultural industries, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central has pointed out. These may be in other technical areas but we have to determine what those areas are, based on the development framework of the country going forward and I think once we do that, we would find that our spend is more effective, that our capacity is better and that the eventual gain to the country is that much more substantial and sustaining to allow us to be able to say 25, 50 years from now that we can probably go back and map our course and say, this is how this society was able to achieve this status because it applied its resources in the appropriate ways to get the results which it desired.

With those words, I thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. R.E. EASTMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sir, you would recall that many years ago, at the end of a person's career at primary level there was this thing called the School Leaving Certificate and then it was transferred to the newer secondary schools for people to go to third and fourth form and then it underwent the name Barbados Secondary School Certificate, Part I. No part II had ever been introduced. With that Barbados Secondary School Certificate Part I, the costs of administering it were very high and it reached a point where the Ministry was incurring a tremendous amount of cost and the certificate was not gaining acceptance, not even at the Polytechnic. Sir, it is fully abolished now.

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

Hon. R.D. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First let me start off by thanking all members of the House whom I believe contributed in profound ways to this discussion on education and human resource development.

I know there is a lot more which can be said relative to education but during the course of this year, as long as God spares our lives, we will have opportunity again to look at the Resolution which deals with the human resource development strategy. Then we would look at the White Paper on Education and I hope before the end of the year, if not early into next year, we would look at a new Education Act, so we will have other opportunities to speak to education in the country.

I found the discussion to be quite fresh, to be quite stimulating, and in fact, if one had an opportunity to look at Hansard shortly, there will be many great ideas that one can take and to use to help in the development of Barbados through education.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West is absolutely correct that education by and large forms the foundation for the development of the entire society. In fact, everything else links in and then flows out from education. Barbados has been reasonably successful because it has underpinned this development as a result of the investment we have placed in education. I know it has been noted over the past several hours and into yesterday evening that there are some persons who are not utilising education to such an extent that they, the communities and the country can benefit from the provision of that education to them.

Sir, many questions have in fact been asked and the time does not allow for a whole set of answers to be given. We have already accepted that Barbados is progressing in the area of early childhood education. I know I have on my

desk a study, and a continuing study on how much we have to do to satisfy that area of education in Barbados. We have also spoken to the issue of some of the difficulties or challenges which are being tossed up in education. I have always made the point that the school is not immune from the wider society. Those areas of social difficulties, social decay, social neglect or whatever else you want to call it, will find its way into the school system in some form or another.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St. George North that we cannot bury our heads in the sand. At the same time, I do not want to give anyone the impression that there is total chaos and confusion in the schools of Barbados.

ESTIMATES - House A87D, Sequence 39, 9.32 p.m.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: There are challenges that leaders in the schools, teachers, parents who want to cooperate and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, are working to resolve to ensure that it does not bring our system to a screeching halt.

Mr. Chairman, we have to have all persons in the society on board because at the end of the day it is our young citizens that we are talking about and if in fact many of them are damaged, then we are looking towards the future with a very badly damaged society and then those of us who might be able to reach the age of retirement will not be able to enjoy that period of retirement because we would be looking over our shoulders and further barricading ourselves behind our windows and doors.

Mr. Chairman, we have to give support, we have to give mentorship, we have to give encouragement and we have to motivate our leaders and teachers in the school system to do their utmost best to help us contain the tide which can sometimes wash over every one of us in our various communities and societies but more particularly in our schools.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South on the whole issue of what I think he was talking about, the concept of the master teacher, a designation which has been successfully adopted in such places as The Bahamas and one or two other countries within the Caribbean. As a member of the Trade Union Movement so many years ago, I remember that both the Barbados Union of Teachers and the Barbados Secondary Teachers Union had called for the development of the master teacher concept. I think that is nearly 25 or 30 years ago. We have not been able to advance that cause as far as it should go. May's Report again speak to that whole

concept and therefore we have some work to do. It will impact somewhat on the finances of the State and therefore one has to bear that in mind. The more and more things we call for, would have greater impacts on the provision of resources to education as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, earlier we spoke to building out capacity. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West spoke, I believe, in his second contribution on this Head, as well as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke, to the building out of that capacity. Yes, I have asked the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to look in the North to see what areas, particularly areas owned by the State, can be found for the development of a dual campus concept that will not only satisfy the needs of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic but also the Barbados Community College and if needs be that the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies would also be able to utilise the campus to deliver education rather than have one campus here and one campus somewhere else. We need to have a dual campus concept so that we can maximise not only land space but the investment placed in the infrastructure and many persons would be able to utilise that.

We have also been playing around with the concept of the establishment of a school for arts and sports within that same space in the North of the country either in St. Lucy near to St. Peter or somewhere around the general Speightstown area, that is to be decided. We know we have to bring on board some more capacity for the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic in this area. With the construction of, I believe, eight to ten classrooms, which would become available in September of this year, more persons would be able to access cosmetology, the aesthetics, which is in very high demand, as well as some other areas of the curriculum at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.

There has been mention of the Hope Agricultural Training Institute. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development from the inception have been working very closely to bring this project to fruition. As I told you, within a matter of weeks construction should start on dedicated classrooms at that facility. I have already told you that the road infrastructure has already gone in over a year ago. We had to step back a bit because of the obvious financial difficulties but we have the resources in these Estimates to push right ahead so that at least within another nine or so months we would be able to have that facility up and going as well as utilising existing talents within Barbados as well as talents that we might have to import to ensure that the kind of scientific basis of education is used within the context of that Agricultural Training Institute at The Hope.

Mr. Chairman, I have also mentioned that we need to find one or two spaces. I have said thanks to the Ministry of Housing and Lands which have identified an area in Christ Church which would give us the new secondary school. That would give us the capacity to move persons along Highway 6 into that area along the St. Patricks/Foursquare/Woodbourne area and moving persons as well out of St. George across Eggerton into the Lowlands/Leadvale area, so you would have a focal point for persons within that catchment area. It would take pressure off of the Deighton Griffith School, Foundation School, Princess Margaret Secondary, Parkinson Memorial School and The Lodge School.

Mr. Chairman, if you listened to the Principal of The Lodge School only yesterday, you would have heard that the number at The Lodge School is over 1 000 students. It is a sixth form school and even though we have started to spend the \$23.3 million on that facility, you still cannot carry the numbers up because we have researched that the capacity really for our secondary schools should be around 850 to 900 students. Management of the students and proper deployment of both the physical and human resources would be better done in that kind of base relative to the student population.

Mr. Chairman, I have spoken to about some 11 to 12 primary schools in the country where we have been having to spend more and more money on because the plant is essentially old. As plants become aged, you would find that you are spending a lot more and it is sensible to maybe spend \$5, \$6 or \$7 million on those classes, newly-built. We were not able to cover it under the Educational Sector Enhancement Programme because only 57 private/public schools were dealt with in the infrastructure. We know that there are over 100 schools in the public sector. When we first started out, we were also looking at the implanting of technology in some of the private schools in Barbados. I mentioned Wesley Hall Primary, Belmont Primary, St. Martins-Mangrove Primary, St. Marks Primary, Chalky Mount Primary where there are some challenges, Vauxhall Primary, the school at Welches and St. James Primary. Some will be newly-built on to the existing plant with a different footprint but some would be additional build along with what you have there to bring those schools up to scratch, so it would give those persons an opportunity to have better physical surrounding and adequate deployment of information and communications technologies within those schools. We are hoping that with the help of the Ministry of Finance and other partners we would be able to move along with that as rapidly as we possibly can.

Mr. Chairman, I have also spoken to nursery education and working with the Maria Holder Trust to ensure that our nursery education can be built out. The area of university education is an area which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West has spoken to. I have

in my possession the latest statistics from the University of the West Indies, which speak to the number of students in that institution.

House A87D Sequence 40

9.42 p.m.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: I want to make the point relative to that institution. The Honourable Members was correct there has been a rapid growth in the University of the West Indies number between 1996 and 2009/2010. In 1996 the University of the West Indies had 3 233 students across the entire campus. By 2009/2010 it had move to 8 342 and some of that relates to the lack of capacity at Barbados Community College and Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and therefore students with whatever qualification low level matriculation or normal matriculation wanting to access tertiary education placed the pressure on the University of the West Indies to respond. That was part of the lack of vision relative to educational dynamics within a country and this year 2010/2011 the numbers move to 8 647 students, a slowdown of the numbers going in but realistic numbers based on what is happening within the country.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Members also spoke to subject being done at post graduate level, we have very strong discussions which our Cabinet looked at relative to those areas of needs at post graduate level and the Government at this time 2008 provided some resources in that area in the post graduate, things like looking at renewable energy, looking at certain agricultural concepts. Those areas were identified but that is not fixed in stone, we will have to continue to look at the post graduate level as well as the undergraduate level relative to the University of the West Indies education.

Mr. Chairman, the issue of where there is greater demand and to some extent students help push what is happening at the University of the West Indies. The Honourable Member is correct with regard to the area of economics where there was only one person doing Pure Economics at the University of the West Indies but you will have 198 students across the campus doing economics and accounting; you will have 89 doing economic and management; another 32 who will be doing economic and maths. I believe that the qualification of the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown; accounting and finance, 174 students; accounting special, 582 students; banking and finance, 295. Sir, when you move to management studies, special, 494; management in its pure form, 265; management with psychology 153.

The Honourable Member was correct, the Social Science Faculty takes about 52 per cent on average of the number of students who apply to the University of the West Indies, followed by the Department of Humanities and Department of Philosophy, followed by Pure and Applied Science, and then backed up by Law and Medicine across the system. I agree with Honourable Member for St. Philip West, we have to do some development of further intellectual capacity to deal along the scientific realm, the entrepreneurial realm, relative to the University of the West Indies education as a whole.

I know we spend some money on national development scholarship identifying critical areas for national development in education and we will most likely continue to do that. Between 1997 and 2009/2010 we would have done over 170 persons who would have been provided with resources under specialised areas of education. In the last three of four years would have assisted some 30 or 40 persons in that area of endeavour. I therefore want to suggest that we are trending in the right direction but we need to gather greater pace, we need to have the information and communication technologies fully integrated into the school curricula. We have to ensure that teachers are competent to do the integration and that we get the adequate response from students in our schools.

We know that our young people are heavy into technology not only the hardware but the software as manifested by how they use the social media, how they manipulate the smart phones and whatever else they do and we have to bend a lot of that into adequate utilisation in education.

Mr. Chairman, I have spoken in other places on that and so I would not go any further. Earlier I quickly mentioned what was happening at SESEC and I just want to share a bit of statistics as to what is happening. I had made the point there there is pressure from the base pushing the grades relative to passes upwards and if you compare let us say 2006 to 2010, with Grade 1 in 2006 there was 8.79 per cent of those students who sat the examination getting grade 1. In 2010, there was 15.1 per cent, a 7 per cent movement in that period.

At Grade 2, 22.29 in 2006, 25.63 at Grade 2 in 2010.

Sir, because the Grade 1's and 2's are moving, the grade 3's were getting less. We have to keep encouraging our students because we know they have the ability. Sometimes it is the lack of focus, not putting in the amount of work that is merited to be put in and there are some teachers who have to be constantly begging students to do their SBA's. Nobody should have to beg a student to do their SBAs based on the Common Entrance Examination or Sseg model but this happens. What we need to do is also get parents to be stressing the value of education to the

human person and to the country and to its development, particularly those children coming from vulnerable families, children of the working poor, children of the working class, they have to bend themselves to the utilization of education.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to all colleagues we will continue to fight on this front of education because we know it is absolutely important. Mr. Chairman, with those words, and I know it has been a long evening, I can go on and on but we all have to return tomorrow to deal with another Head, I beg to move that Head 54, as amended stand part.

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

The question that Head 54 stand part was put to the Honourable House and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER, and beg for leave to sit again.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business for today. I beg to move that this Honourable House be now suspended until 9.30 a.m.

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

The question that the House be now suspended until 9.30 a.m. was put to the Honourable House and agreed in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

9.52 p.m.

H:No.87D (41)

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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

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BEST, HIS HONOUR K. St.C. (St. Michael East)
BLACKETT, Hon. S. D. (St. Michael Central)
BOYCE, Hon. J. D. E. (Christ Church South)
BRATHWAITE, Hon. A.D. (St. Philip South)
BYER-SUCKOO, Dr. the Hon. E.R. (St. George South)
CLARKE, Mr. G. A. (St. George North)
EASTMOND, Mr. R.E. (St. James North)
ESTWICK, Dr. Hon. D.C. (St. Philip West)
FORDE, Miss C. Y. (St. Thomas)
JONES, Hon. R. D. (Christ Church East Central)
KELLMAN, Hon. D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. S. A. (Christ Church West Central)
LASHLEY, Mr. H.F. (St. Michael South East)
MARSHALL, Mr. D.D. (St. Joseph)
MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M.A. (St. Michael North East)
SINCKLER, Hon. C. P. (St. Michael North West)
STUART, Hon. F. J. (St. Michael South)
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. Committee of Supply, Head 54, Mr. G. A. Clarke. Mr. G. A. Clarke's first speech (about 1,170 words, beginning 'Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the intervention of the Honourable Minister') follows Mr. Chairman's call 'The Honourable Member for St. George North.' without a speaker label of its own, so it prints under Mr. Chairman's label. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Committee of Supply, Head 54, His Honour K. St.C. Best. The last part of His Honour K. St.C. Best's speech follows Mr. Chairman's 'The Honourable Member has four minutes.' with the name run into the paragraph ('His Honour K.St.C. Best: Sir, it is critical...'). Similarly, Rt. Hon. O. S. Arthur's request for time to be added back is run into Mr. Chairman's ruling. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Committee of Supply, Head 54, Hon. C. P. Sinckler's third speech. Mr. Chairman calls 'The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East', but the speech that follows is Hon. C. P. Sinckler's, who is elsewhere called the Member for St. Michael North West; Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley is the Member for St. Michael North East. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Committee of Supply, Head 54, speaker labels. Some members' labels vary within the sitting: 'R.C. EASTMOND' and 'Mr. R.E. EASTMOND'; 'Mr. H.F. LASHLEY' and 'Mr. H.L. LASHLEY'; 'Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN', 'Mr. D.St.C. KELLMAN' and 'His Excellency D.St. E. KELLMAN'. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Committee of Supply, Head 54, close. Hon. R. D. Jones moved 'that Head 54, as amended stand part', but no amendment to the Head is recorded in the sitting. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Time references. Bracketed times in the text, such as '(4:32)', '(4:44)', '(8:24)' and '(1:19)', and the note 'ESTIMATES - House A87D, Sequence 09, 3.33 p.m.' do not run in order with the suspensions at 5.35 p.m. and 7.45

p.m. They appear to be reporters' tape references. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly resumed on Thursday, 17th March, 2011 in Committee of Supply on Order No. 6, the Appropriation Bill, continuing the consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure 2011-2012 under Head 54, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. Mr. Speaker noted that the House had been suspended the previous evening while on that Order, and Mr. Chairman took the Chair. The whole of the day's business was the debate on Head 54.

Hon. J. D. E. Boyce opened by quantifying the benefit of \$1 600 a year being made available directly to parents with one child at school. Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo welcomed the new school at Edgeton in Christ Church and reported what students had said about peer pressure. Mr. R. E. Eastmond spoke on under-achievement in primary and secondary schools. Rt. Hon. O. S. Arthur said Barbados spent at least half a billion dollars a year on education, said each secondary school needed \$5 to \$6 million from the Treasury, and urged social innovation rather than budget chopping; his criticism of the Constituency Councils drew points of order from Hon. J. D. E. Boyce and Mr. F. J. Stuart, who said the St. Peter council had not yet been set up.

Hon. S. A. Lashley defended the annual camp programme. Mr. D. D. Marshall questioned the \$5 million Government guarantee for a Chancery at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies and the housing of Constituency Councils, and Hon. S. D. Blackett replied that no council was housed in privately-owned accommodation. Dr. D. C. Estwick explained the origins of the Constituency Councils. Hon. D. St.E. Kellman's account of who built the St. Thomas Secondary School drew a point of order from Miss C. Y. Forde, who then reviewed the youth programmes and spoke on nursery education and the Edna Nicholls Centre. Hon. C. P. Sinckler argued that the question was whether education spending was effective, not its size.

His Honour K. St.C. Best called for comprehensive early childhood care and a Social Worker in every school. Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley recalled the White Paper on Education Reform and EduTech, said the share of students leaving school with four CXC subjects or more had risen from 40 per cent in 1995 to 72 per cent, and questioned an 85 per cent rise in the cost of temporary teachers, from

\$10.1 million in 2008 to \$18.6 million. After a suspension until 5.35 p.m., the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, Hon. R. D. Jones, answered some of the points raised, and Mr. G. A. Clarke spoke on preparing young people for the world of work and for service.

Further speeches came from Mr. R. E. Eastmond, Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, who was concerned about the 30 per cent of students not doing well, and Hon. P. M. T. Todd, who welcomed the commitment to rebuild the Wesley Hall School and opposed single-sex schools. After a second suspension until 7.45 p.m., Dr. Estwick, Mr.

Kellman, Hon. F. J. Stuart, Mr. H. F. Lashley, Mr. Clarke, Miss Forde and Mr. Sinckler spoke again.

Hon. R. D. Jones replied that the Social Science Faculty took about 52 per cent of the students who applied to the University of the West Indies, that over 170 persons had received national development scholarships between 1997 and 2009/2010, and that CXC Grade 2 passes had risen from 22.29 in 2006 to 25.63 in 2010. On his motion, seconded by Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, Head 54 was agreed to without division, progress was reported, and on the motion of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce the House was suspended until 9.30 a.m.