
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, January 22, 2013

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 22, 2013.

PRESENT

The full list of Members present is to be inserted from the Votes and Proceedings. Members identified from the record of this Sitting:

His Honour M. A. CARRINGTON (Speaker)

His Honour K. St.C. BEST (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN (Minister of Environment, Water Resource Management and Drainage)

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE (Minister of Transport and Works) (Leader of the House)

Mr. J. D. PAUL (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY (Minister of Youth, Culture, Sports and Family)

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER (Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Hon. P. M. T. TODD

PAPERS

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: The Duties, Taxes, and Other Payments Exemption (Michael Holder) Order 2012. The Duties, Taxes, and Other Payments Exemption (Gymnasium Limited) Order 2012.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of today's sitting.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 7 – SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 15,
2012 – 2013

Mr. CLERK: Order No. Seven, sir. In the name of the Honourable Leader of the House, to move that the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of this island.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Yes, Honourable Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of this island.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. J. D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CLERK: A resolution to grant the sum of \$524 385 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 2012 to 2013 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 15, 2012 to 2013. Reform the schedule to the resolution. Head 30 - Attorney General.

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

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This supplementary is with respect to salaries for various parts of the Ministry of the Office of the Attorney General. But it gives me an opportunity just to address a couple of issues and just update this Honourable Chamber on the work of the Office of the Attorney General.

Sir, over the last four, probably five years now, we as a party and as a government have been saying that Barbados is not just an economy, that it is a society. And I noticed that recently a writer in one of our local newspapers suggested that it is about time that we as a government and as a party stop saying that and move on - that it has become a bit of a cliché. Now, driving home yesterday, I heard a song by the president of St. Philip, Red Plastic Bag, where he was saying that Barbados - I don't remember the name of the song - but basically he was saying that Barbados may have big highways and fancy buildings, but what if we do that and the people are getting worse every day? And that song is a couple of years old.

And we have been saying as a government that in fact we have a responsibility to indeed build back this society, because the emphasis was on accumulating wealth - the emphasis on the other side was to put a car in each household and on wealth creation. And what we saw over a couple of years was the decline of the moral fabric of our society. We have therefore identified that - we identified that in 2007 and certainly over the last couple of years - as something that we need to build and address. And I believe that my ministry has been playing a significant role in ensuring that we bring Barbados back to a level where we feel that morality and our Christian values, that seem to be under attack, can once again be upheld - that we can once again say that this is the Barbados of all, this is the Barbados of your father and my father, of your grandfather and my grandfather, where we took pride in everything that we did.

We are not saying that the creation of wealth is not important. Indeed, we recognise the importance of prosperity for society. But what we are saying is that they must walk hand in hand with our hold on morality, our hold on good manners, our hold on ensuring that once again we are our brothers' keepers.

I had an opportunity to go into part of my constituency on Saturday, in Sandy Hill, where I was heartened to see that even though persons have been transplanted from various parts of Barbados, over the last couple of years they have created a nice community with their neighbours - neighbours in a true sense, in that they know each other, they love each other, there is a real neighbourly love. And I have been saying in my constituency to my constituents that neighbourhood watches, for example, which have been part of the platform of the Royal Barbados Police Force in terms of encouraging neighbourhood watches - which significantly on their part was to assist them in the reduction of crime, to assist them in the solving of crime - but my emphasis has been on neighbourliness. My emphasis has been on being others' brothers and sisters and aunts and uncles, on building communities.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: But we then need to ensure that then transpose into the functionaries that a person who has to deliver the documents, the person who has to do the searches, that the fact that they do what has to be done. And there's an issue in Barbados and the issue in Barbados is the issue of productivity. We recognize as a country that we are not firing on all cylinders and it has to be addressed. And this is not just an issue in the public sector, it's also an issue in the private sector. It's not an issue in the courts of Barbados, it's an issue. Of course now it breaks down. The point is that it's a national issue that we have to address and if we're to move forward like we want to, the whole issue of productivity has to be addressed.

Last week I was in the conversation, sir, and I smiled when I heard an attorney mention the fact that from time to time he's engaged in transactions with individuals from Hong Kong and at morning that he's actually working. And I smiled because in a previous life that I had that was the norm. Because if you're doing work with someone who is 12 or 14 or 15 hours ahead of you or behind you, the fact is that you want their business and you cannot sit down at home and say well I will deal with it tomorrow when I get into office where they have a transaction going. Because if you don't do it someone else will. And if as a country you don't do it, some other country will. So this is why we are saying as a country that we need to look at Barbados in terms of that we are open for business 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

When I say seven days a week let me be careful because I know that my priest does not believe that on Sundays that one should be working and I don't want next to my CM for him to chastise me. But the fact is in this global environment - and yes I do have a priest - in this global environment I won't expect that indeed that we will be open for business if we be part of global transactions. So if you have a client in Hong Kong who quite well may be

asleep at this time but who might very well be in office still because they're thinking they operate almost 24 hours, so we have to move in that direction. We then therefore need the corporate affairs department to operate like that. I'm not saying to operate for 24 hours but to be available, to be online. The simple things that we have been saying that we need to get done.

There's no reason why you should not be able to sit in your home and go online and do a search. For example, there is no reason why our courts should not be recognized as the leading court in the Caribbean. But we are behind. The reality is, I wish I could stand here, sir, and say that we have the most efficient justice system in the Caribbean. I cannot say that, in all honesty, but I would like. And as a ministry, we are examining where the pitfalls are so that we can address them.

So to my colleague from St. Philip North, I recognize that it isn't perfect. I recognize that there's some work to be done. And let me therefore make this call to all Barbadians that when they come to work, when they come to work, turn up the duty, regardless of who's in power, regardless of whether or not they, like Michael Lashley, attorney at law, or Adrian Brathwaite, attorney at law, produce. Produce. Because that's what this country needs, sir, a higher level of productivity.

So while recognizing that the system isn't perfect, I say to you that we are working to improve these areas of deficiency. I say to you that the time will come when we will ensure that an individual has counsel when he's picked up by the Royal Barbados Police Force. I say to you that we will ensure that there is fairness and parity, in particular with respect to criminal matters.

I believe, sir, the issue of the Police Complaints Authority is one that I also must address from time to time. And as Attorney General, I receive lots of letters and calls from individuals complaining about treatment by officers of the Royal Barbados Police Force. I listen to them and I read them. But that's why the Police Complaints Authority was established - to make sure that there's an independent authority who can investigate complaints against police officers. And we must make sure that the Police Complaints Authority is functioning to its maximum.

But while I say that, let me say this - quite often, I wish I could say to these individuals, how come the police came to your house? In other words, quite often when one examines what is happening, the police has calls to go to the particular residence. And rather than dealing with the root cause, rather than addressing what do we have to do to ensure that the police doesn't have to come to my brother or my cousin or my uncle or my father - to ensure that there's no reason for them to come - the complaint is that they broke down the door and that they ransacked the

house, et cetera. I am more concerned about the fact that we need to ensure that the police does not have any reason to go to those homes.

That's why I've been preaching to my constituents that they need to stay away from trouble, they need to live life such that the Royal Barbados Police Force have no reason to come knocking on their doors. If someone knocks on my door at 5:00 in the morning, I know that they need direction or that they need some assistance, or it is my friend, the member for St. Michael East, now on his way home. So I can open my door. I can open my door at 5:00 in the morning without any fear - I'm going to say looking for breakfast - without any fear.

So again, I say that, yes, things are not perfect, but there is a system in place. There is a system in place for us to receive complaints. There's a system in place for complaints to be investigated. And I acknowledge that, again, that we need to strengthen the Police Complaints Authority. And I acknowledge again that, in fact, part of the reason why people are unhappy is because of the speed - rather the lack of speed - the fact that things take too long to be completed and we need to address it as a country.

And indeed, what we also need to do is part of it is keeping a dialogue open. Keep a dialogue open, updating people from time to time. If you have a matter before the courts, contact them and let them know what is the status of the matter. And this is not only from the police, on the prosecutor side. Yes, because indeed, sir, the member for St. Philip North knows that even on the private side, that in fact part of the failure and where you have complaints against lawyers is lack of dialogue, not advising clients what is happening. And clients write to me also complaining that they have not been able to hear from the lawyer for years, et cetera. All you need to do is write a little note saying, dear Mr. Paul, your matter still is receiving my attention. Nothing has happened over the last couple of months and I will update you further as soon as the matter is moving forward. A bit of dialogue.

Sir, I saw your signal and I assume that I might need to come back, because even before I wrap up, I know, sir, that there are members on this side who have some other issues that they want to raise. Where necessary, I will bring clarification to these issues and assist my colleagues and of course assist all those who are listening to this debate so that they know as a government that we are taking the criminal justice system forward. We know the areas where improvements are necessary and we know that in many instances they're not moving as quickly as we would like.

And let me end with this. I know, sir, that I'm over my time, but let me just deal with the issue of coroner's inquiries. I do not wish to have this issue discussed anymore. I wish I could stand here and say that they have

been abolished because indeed as Attorney General I've been saying that we must put an end to coroner's inquiries. It is taking too long to have addressed. It is taking too long to have addressed but I intend to have it addressed. Thank you.

Mr. K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Speaker. I rise again to speak on this whole issue, sir. Mr. Chairman, sir, it is only about feeling, sir, that we're discussing a head on the Attorney General, sir, and I think that when I check he's responsible for home affairs. You know, sir, that we're here asking for money - a supplementary, sir - and I am saying, sir, that in my first contribution to this debate, sir, I asked and I made a recommendation that we should have state attorneys who can visit police stations for individuals who the police for some reason or another are having in custody.

I've heard the Attorney General, sir, say that it is costly, sir. And when he said that I looked on my desk and I saw some jam-marked the Auditor General report of the year 2011, sir, and so it speaks to the whole question of races of money, sir - that every akin the races of money transfer under the last administration, the employers of this country who refuse to turn up again today for work, refuse to turn up again today for work.

Page 64 of the Auditor General report, sir, that if this \$2.6 million was available and not wasted, that we were able to have the attorneys available for this country. They waste government money and continue to have money. Want to receive a plan before coming to work. The truth must be told in this country.

Page 64 for 2011, sir - this is a document in this House and a document that every Barbadian who understands the issues that occur in Barbados' Labour Party should have. A new home and Joseph fabrication which was under sir, the Attorney General, Minister of Home Affairs - I already did it ahead today so I can do it again. After repeated problems with the original contractor, a new contractor was engaged to complete the police station at a cost of \$2.5 million, sir - 24 weeks, sir - and this was not the Attorney General, sir. The police station contract was not issued under the Attorney General, sir. It was issued under Michael Dorphy who refused to come to work today. And the contractor left the project with remainder work requiring hundreds of thousands of dollars to be undertaken. The construction cost of this project eventually exceeded \$4 million. This was over \$2.6 million more than the original contract amount, sir.

But sir, the problem - and that's not one of the greatest problems, sir - on the whole question in relation to law and order in this country, the fourth Auditor General report noted there was no evidence that the ministry could take any action to recover the amount due as a result of

substandard work, and this was a cause of concern. The lack of a formal and binding contract was also a cause of concern with possible implications for recovery of funds due before the construction work, sir. That's what happened, sir, and this is what - no further action has been taken on this matter in terms of cost recovery from the contractor who defaulted in his contract, although the real work has been completed by a subsequent contractor, sir.

And I'm saying, sir, that \$2.6 million, sir, could have gone, sir, to improve the justice system in this country, sir - improving the justice system and providing a state attorney for accused persons, coming for the season to improve the police station where, under the Evidence Act, provision is made for video recording of confessions, but because of the police stations, that part of that provision has not been proclaimed, sir. It is more critical now, sir, based on what's happening in the world today, that that section - and with great haste, sir - we should ensure that all the police stations in this country have the necessary conditions, sir, where persons can be interviewed, video recorded, sir, so that this whole question of lack of proper evidence and consensus - because you have a state attorney there from the very outset, sir - that listens. Here's the legal state attorney. You choose one, sir. You make a phone call, sir, and the state attorney will become available for any sort of question that occurs, which means, sir, that one would recognise that at least we are making a step in the right direction to improve the justice system in this country.

It is critical, sir, but you cannot improve the justice system, sir, without money. And I believe and I will say again that \$2.6 million could have gone a long way, sir. Look, sir - looking at personal emoluments for persons - that's all I relate, sir, to salaries. Salaries. Put the necessary programmes in place, sir. They want to make Barbadians believe, sir, that they're the best thing that ever ruled this country. When Jeremy was speaking about crime and violence they brought in a marketing specialist to make sport - make no sport - of this individual speaking about terrible crime and violence. But, sir, the world and the Lord knows nobody answered that. Everybody knows concern went down the road, sir. That is the time that we should have been concerned, because there will always be a little warning on the horizon before things happen, sir. You say that there's this trough knocking around, but the world - there's this trough knocking around and then it builds up. It is the necessary thing, sir. There is a warning. This statute was warned, sir.

Now this whole question - cash for gold. Cash for gold. It means those are - that you can't - every piece of gold you have and every piece of property that you have, sir, you have to take it, hide it and carry it down to the bank and put it in a deposit in the bank if you want to save it, sir, because you can't know where things are, as you want to, sir, where people believe that they have a right to other

persons' property. It is not the correct way, and I believe, sir, that we need seriously - I don't believe in this long talk, sir, about legislation coming, sir. I believe, sir, that the legislation should have been here. The Attorney General, not sir, is now passing, sir, the NSA two, sir, to get the same motion. I am glad, sir, that at least he has the belly and he got the goal to decide - I need to do something about it - because, sir, it's affecting this society. It is seriously affecting this society. And you hear saying a person - somebody takes some of their earnings and purchases an expensive piece of jewellery and decides, listen, I got to wear this jewellery. I don't need to take it off. His mind - somebody who believed that they got a God-given right. Stick them up. If you resist - [Inaudible.] - legal firearms, sir.

I am wondering, sir, despite the stiff state penalty, sir, that we have in relation to firearms, that we still have these modern firearms in this country. Something is not working, sir, and it's a serious breakdown, sir, in the moral values of society and we need to get it back up there. How do we get it back up there? The church has decided that they're going to hold hands with government, sir, which is a good thing. The church alone, government alone, cannot do it. Society has to assist, sir. But how can we do that, sir? With politics and good governance, sir. We need to eliminate obstacles, and people raise an answer when we talk about eliminating obstacles. What we need to do, sir, is to create the atmosphere, the opportunities - let the society in Barbados know, sir, that as far back as the beginning, sir, that education - education, sir - is the key to the upliftment of mankind. And if we understand that as a fundamental principle, that we need to - that through education we can rise and rise up, rise up - that we make ourselves in a place where we do not want to depend on one or two individuals, but we serve, we operate in a system where we can help ourselves.

Education provides. Because of this education you have the opportunity, whether very early or very late, sir, to decide - listen, I cannot give up on life. I cannot resort to a life of crime. What I need to do, sir, is to use the talent, that talent that was given to me, that talent has been given to me to make a better life for myself with the assistance of policies that the government put in place to ensure that government proposals are in place and politicians form part and parcel of government. So for people to believe, sir, that politicians are the persons who come to parliament who initiate policies to make a better society. So when they do that, sir, persons who grab the opportunity that the politicians put the policies in place for the better development - you understand? I want to reiterate. So I believe, sir, that we really, really need a drug court. We definitely need a drug court. And I believe, sir, that this \$2.6 million that was wasted in [Inaudible.], sir, could have also gone to the headset of the drug court.

Remember, as one minute - this is critical - because we need, those are not only now to - we have recognised that we have a problem. There are solutions to the problem, but nobody, nobody wants to stand up, nobody wants to stand up to enforce those solutions, because they're saying if I put the necessary things in place that I will not return to parliament because I am going against the grain of what is granted. But you're not going against - you're going against the Law and Order report, sir, of 19 - the National Commissioner of Law and Order, sir, June report of 2004, sir - bringing the whole question, sir, of the need for the law to be fair and substantially applied, sir.

This is the example, sir, at page 20 that they gave, sir, for the benefit, sir, of those parts. And I believe that this is a document, sir - I believe that there's a document that should be taught in school - that let people understand the problems that we have in this society and that the solutions, the recommendations that have been made, sir, to help solve some of the problems that this society, sir - an example of unfair, sir, which was drawn to our attention is the disparity between the statutory right to compensation available to employees who lost their jobs through no fault of their own, and the generous contractual right which mandates staff succeed and negotiate even when the company fails. And also the fact they point out that managers get big handshakes but the employees fail. Another example of unfair application concerns the frequent street service in which individuals are arrested and charged and convicted for smoking marijuana and those who supply themselves were free. And this complaint is a good picture that only this week - let's talk about the government owing all this money to persons.

But the Law and Order report as far back as 2004, sir - when I say we're talking about the question of fair application, this is how they complain. I'm going to come home now, sir. Let us compare with the failure to prosecute employers who deduct national insurance contributions from employees and fail to pay them to the national insurance system. Sir, please. Yes, sir. That the government department made a more deliberate effort to recover monies owed. The main areas of concern - income tax, national insurance - and should not be warm, sir, but a lot of people say we'll stay away from the whole package. But so I will come back because this is too important a debate, sir, to remain silent in this House today. And I want to say, sir, that I support this money resolution, sir. I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Members, this full sitting of the House has resumed. Members, your chairman has reported progress and asked leave to sit again. Yes, honourable member for Christ Church South.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move the sitting suspension to 2.00 this evening.

The question that the House be suspended until 2.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Sitting of the House is resumed. Honourable Members. When the suspension was taken, we were in Committee of Supply on Order Number Seven, and to that we shall return.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply. Honourable Member for City of Bridgetown.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Chairman, I rise to support this money resolution before this honourable chamber, and I would wish to state that I am very supportive of the community policing efforts to date of the Royal Barbados Police Force. I can speak with authority on the tremendous track record of the community, the officers over the years who have manned the community post of the Royal Barbados Police Force, located at the old public bath at the corner of New Orleans, opposite to the playing field of the West Bay Primary School, because we've had, for example, Sergeant Carl Williams, who has moved on to another part of the Force, who would have worked over the years. He was a former teacher. And I remember Sergeant Williams playing basketball with the lads of the New Orleans and West Bay Road districts at the hardcore south West Bay Primary School, you know, building a good sense of belonging among the young people to something positive in terms of developing interpersonal relations, conflict resolution and so on, in terms of the team spirit involved in organised sports such as basketball.

But over the years, the police community force at New Orleans has also done work. Currently it would have been headed by Sergeant Cisnet, himself a member of the Constituency Council of St. George South. And they are supported by Constable Mahon. And they have worked over the years in terms of the provision of reading classes, sponsorship of kite flying competitions, road tennis, tape ball, cricket, at areas such as Emmerton for the adults. And recently they have held competitions for the school children, including children of the Muslim faith, along with children from the other primary schools in the constituency. And this is much appreciated. I myself, as Member of Parliament for the constituency, have supported in terms of provision of trophies and other prizes. And of

course, the annual children's party held at Ms. Wilcher's guest house at Third Avenue, Pickwick Gap, which I have attended as Member of Parliament for several years. And this just last Christmas, the turnout was the largest ever, over 300 children from as far as Emmerton, including Pink Wake Gap, Westbury Road and all the avenues in New Orleans and their parents. And we also had the presence of senior members of the Royal Barbados Police Force, including senior crime prevention officers.

So being proactive, Mr. Chairman, in terms of community policing is nothing to be frowned upon or ridiculed as too soft policing, because on occasion robust policing may be required, but prevention is better than cure. And community policing helps to really develop a symbiotic relationship between the residents of the various communities and the law enforcement, where they see the role of the law enforcement officer as a guardian of peace and goodwill among the people, to ensure that there is mutual respect for each other and for law and order and good governance. So that - not that the Royal Barbados Police Force must take on the role of community development. There is a particular department within the Ministry of Social Care with a long track record of work in this regard, but they can enhance and complement the work of other agencies, be it in social care or within the Ministry of Family, Youth, Sports and Culture, so that we see government as a cohesive entity where law enforcement is seen as an integral part of building good community relations.

I remember, Mr. Chairman, years ago in the mid-80s being selected as one of three Barbadian youth leaders that were selected to be part of a regional exchange programme funded by the US Government, where we took leaders in the fight against drug abuse from the Caribbean, Venezuela and Pakistan. And we toured several areas in the United States for about a month where Youth to Youth, based in Ohio, were the hosts. And when we came back to Barbados, a Youth to Youth branch was set up here in Barbados with thousands of young people meeting at Queen's Park many weekends to engage in positive behaviour in the fight against the spread of drug abuse. We actually visited the then First Lady Nancy Reagan at the White House and she was the champion and leader of the Just Say No fight against drug campaign. And on that tour we were able to meet in California leaders of the Teen Challenge programme even before it came to Barbados. And we learned then that many of the Teen Challenge counsellors are actually recovering addicts. And their modus operandi is very strict in terms of the residents of Teen Challenge programmes because these recovering addicts who are counsellors would know the pitfalls and the very strong addictive pull of drugs, both psychological and chemical dependency. And so they are very tough on their clients to ensure that they do not fall back into the use of drugs.

So I am very happy that we have seen Teen Challenge and similar programmes here in Barbados. And therefore I was very elated that at the national service held at the gymnasium last Sunday, the organisers publicly indicated that half of the proceeds from the offering made at that service would be actually provided - given to the Teen Challenge programme. And this is to be commended because obviously this would supplement the work of Tamarind House at the psychiatric hospital, which is the ward dedicated to the treatment of persons who are addicted to mind-altering substances in terms of chemical dependency on alcohol or other drugs, including illegal drugs. So that this work is commendable.

And while I am at it, I would also wish to say that as part of that tour of the United States, we also met - I remember at the University of California, Irvine campus - an officer, Bowles, from the Los Angeles Police Department, who told us about the DARE programme. And so I was very happy that this programme has been adopted by the Royal Barbados Police Force in recent years. And officers of the New Orleans community have been actually going into the schools such as St. Mary's Primary, West Bay Primary, and I believe Wesley Hall, teaching the young students at those schools about the dangers of drug abuse and showing them the straight and narrow. So the work of the community police forces is very commendable and it creates a sense of trust amongst the residents of these communities in the good work of those brave men and women of the Royal Barbados Police Force.

And so we wish to congratulate them for extending their work, given the recent issues in terms of challenges between two neighbouring communities. And I believe that their efforts have paid off tremendous dividends. And so I would wish to congratulate them and other stakeholders, including the young people of those communities in the city who have answered the call for good sense to prevail. And so I am happy to report that this friction has more or less dissipated and long shall it remain. And certainly as Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown, I support the call for there to be peaceful coexistence, since many of these young people would have gone to school together at the various schools - St. Mary's, Wesley Hall, St. Ambrose, Westbury and so on. And really they are our brothers and sisters and we really have too much in common to accentuate the negative and get involved in any conflict. We must see the city as one community.

And therefore the David Thompson Memorial Constituency Council Football Classic, in my view, Mr. Chairman, is another element of good governance in terms of using sport to create a greater sense of community togetherness. Because again, as a Member of Parliament for the city, I was invited by the Inter-American Development Bank to participate in a forum set up by them in, I believe, Colombia recently, which brought together

mayors or equivalents of IDB member countries in the Latin American Caribbean region to look at the use of sports, football included, in terms of reducing the likelihood of violence and negative behaviour, drug abuse and so on in inner-city communities, so that this is internationally accepted and acceptable. And therefore the David Thompson Memorial Constituency Council Football Classic is nothing that this administration will be ashamed of. And it is something that is very commendable because what it has done - when the good young men in the city have been able to win that tournament for two consecutive years - it has really brought them together in terms of being disciplined. They prayed together and huddled together before each match. This Member of Parliament went throughout the length and breadth of Barbados, attended every match to give them support. And I saw the camaraderie, the good brotherly love existing between players who came from throughout the city - Chapman Lane, New Orleans, Nelson Street, Dunlow Lane, all over - and their fans. Hundreds of people from the city flocked to these venues in support of their lads who represent the entire City of Bridgetown. Thereby, as I said, bringing the entire community together as one city community, thereby engendering a sense of togetherness and respect for each other. So being proactive, Mr. Chairman, in terms of good governance and reducing the likelihood of crime is very important. And so I fully support this issue of community policing.

Mr. Chairman, I would also wish to say that the money resolution here also talks about crime prevention and forensic services. And we have noticed in recent years in the television media, through Hollywood, we have seen modern programmes - CSI Miami and CSI New York - and before then we used to have the chap who played Oscar in The Odd Couple who went on to star as a forensic pathologist. So over the years we have seen the use of modern technology, be it DNA testing, be it testing for gunpowder residue and other modern scientific practices, testing the remains of deceased persons. Sometimes the body is burned beyond recognition and one has to rely on dental records to identify the deceased person. And various tests for blood and other substances that would help in solving these crimes is a modern best practice that we in Barbados have been exposed to by way of the television and international media. The OJ Simpson trials we would have seen day after day on television, the reliance on modern forensic science in solving these crimes. So that it is very pleasing to see that the Royal Barbados Police Force is keeping abreast of these modern, state-of-the-art approaches to crime detection and solutions. And we see in recent years their forensic vehicle and their well-equipped officers, clad in their special uniforms, and they have gone to crime scenes - the Campus Trends affair and other areas of incidents of crime in Barbados. And so the fact that even at the highest level, the Royal Barbados Police Force is encouraging its officers - those who are engaged in first

responses to crime scenes - to not rely solely on confessions, but to have the forensic evidence as a major plank upon which convictions can be brought forward, Mr. Chairman.

So that this definitely would give again confidence to the Royal Barbados Police Force and their detectives and investigators in terms of the view of the public, in terms of their professionalism and best practices. And this, again, would engender greater respect for the law enforcement officers. And therefore, greater peace and national security will not be compromised. Because if there is no respect for law enforcement, then people can be tempted to take matters into their own hands, and that can create anarchy. There must be an organised approach to crime, detention and law enforcement and the criminal justice system. And so when best practices obtain therein, then there is tremendous public confidence in this system. So, therefore, when we see that this resolution also looks at the criminal justice system - clearly the Justice Improvement Programme funded by the IDB - then clearly these funds will assist tremendously in ensuring that the entire criminal justice system is augmented and kept abreast in terms of modern best practices and modern approaches.

So, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would also wish to encourage Barbadians not to get involved in negative behaviour and in terms of the approach to illicit drugs. As I said, this oral member was a founding member of Citizens Against Narcotics and Combined Organisations Against Drugs from a teenager. And I think it is very important to understand that even alcohol can give rise to chemical addiction, where an alcoholic needs assistance, be it Alcoholics Anonymous, or actually going cold turkey within the institution of a hospital. Because the withdrawal symptoms that occur when people are trying to get away from chemical dependency are very, very severe. And one can get convulsions and cold sweats and need medical supervision. And even psychological dependency, for example, with the use of crack cocaine. And cocaine is so strong. I remember as a leader in the fight against drug abuse, seeing a documentary where the famous Jacques Cousteau, the French underwater explorer - he and his team and his boat Calypso - ended up in Peru doing their oceanographic work. They came head on in contact with the coca production, the coca plant, which is heavily grown in certain parts of Latin America, which is used to produce cocaine. And in that documentary, Cousteau and his team were able to come across persons that we would call in Barbados pharaohs that were heavily addicted to cocaine. And what happened is that in Peru at that time - this is at least ten years ago - the addiction to cocaine was so severe and so widespread that exploratory surgery was being conducted in terms of actually removing certain parts of the brain in an operation of those persons addicted. Because the addiction was so strong. I think they call it a cingulotomy, where a section of the brain responsible for

feeling pleasure was removed in an attempt to get the addict to break that addiction to cocaine.

So we in Barbados, Mr. Chairman, must be proactive and be frank as a society to really ensure that with the cultural penetration coming out of certain more developed countries in the world via the media and other connections, the music and so on, that we really hold on to our young people and ensure that we as adults really set examples to them, be role models and give them love. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman, as I conclude, to give them love and support so that they do not yield to negative prayer, pressure and experiment in these uppers and downers and other mind-altering drugs because when they become chemically addicted a whole generation can be lost. And so I would wish to congratulate the people like the late Dr. Brandy Nez, who within the prison system taught those prisoners CXC so that there will be no recidivism and when they come out of jail they will be able to get back into mainstream society. I thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, sir, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this resolution, supplementary for the Head 30, the Attorney General, strictly to deal with, as the Attorney General so carefully pointed out, personal emoluments, supplementing personal emoluments for different departments under his direction as Minister for Home Affairs - the Police, sir, Royal Barbados Police Force, the Task Force on Crime Prevention and Project Office. And, sir, the entire debate this morning and this afternoon has allowed for honourable members to deal with the broad issue of crime and justice in the Barbadian society. So I want to take the opportunity as Member of Parliament for an area which has become increasingly important in the development of the Barbados tourism product or the maintenance of the Barbados tourism product and indeed the issues which occur daily as we try to deal with the very difficult and challenging mix of entertainment and the many residents who still live in the areas of Oistins, on the one hand. And then, of course, the Dover St. Lawrence area where the famous St. Lawrence Gap is located.

Sir, the question of being an entertainment capital or an area for recreation, especially to the wee hours of the morning, brings with it many threats, but not least of all the issue of crime. And regrettably, as we continue to develop as a nation and we attract visitors from all parts of the world, the truth is the whole exposure not only to the wonderful things that may be derived from this kind of contact, but indeed from the negatives which inevitably have been brought to our shores and which have been

nurtured to some extent. And the Royal Barbados Police Force and all the connected departments have to be complimented on the way in which they have been able to contain this negative environment and to promote an atmosphere which is safe and is conducive to the development of our society and continues to make our nation attractive.

We boast a very good relationship with the major countries from which our visitors arrive, the United Kingdom and Europe, the United States and Canada. And it is important that these relations be maintained. The Attorney General, of course, in his presentation, spoke to issues which will inevitably, from time to time, occur, that challenge these relationships and require very careful intervention by the state and its agencies. And we are proud as a nation, certainly up until now, and indeed, as I can determine for the foreseeable future, we can look forward to the kind of maturity which has attended these situations in the past and will attend in the future.

I want to spend first a few moments on the Dover area, because this is an area which is constantly brought to my attention and indeed requires regular intervention. The intervention is not always public and in the press, because sometimes we need to deal with these issues very quietly and make sure that they are properly handled. And as I said, the Dover area continues to face the situation where we have a growing business community, mainly in entertainment, but indeed in other businesses, in shops, in hardware, et cetera. And yet we have the mixture of residences and an elderly population, young people too. And the threat, therefore, of noise has always been real. And from time to time, we have to appeal to those who provide entertainment to make sure that they understand who are their neighbours, and they understand that people still have to exist in a living community.

And indeed, where the noise is not the problem, or where the noise is not so severe, then we have the real issue of the presence of a large number of vehicles seeking to park in residential areas. We at the Ministry of Transport and Works have undertaken the task of putting in place at least no-parking zones and no-parking signs. The truth is, as we are all aware, there are persons who will not respect these signs, and they take the chance that there are not enough members of the police force necessarily around to execute a conviction or a charge on these matters. This is not good enough. And I want to appeal to those who attend events in St. Lawrence Gap and in the Harmony Hall St. Lawrence area to remember always that there are residences in these areas, and we need to be considerate and to make sure we leave access for these residents to get in and out of their homes.

On the question of noise, of course, I believe that technology can play a large part in ensuring that the noise

that emanates from the entertainment areas in Dover and in St. Lawrence and at Oistins can be contained to the extent that they do not cause the kind of disturbance which often is referred to by the residents. And I want to appeal once again to the owners of these establishments to work towards this goal. I have held meetings with them and they have assured me - I don't want to call any names of business places at this time because I don't think it would be suitable. Indeed, I haven't sought your permission to call any names at all. The point is that we sit down and we have agreed that we can so attenuate our speaker systems so as to keep our noise within the establishment. Of course, there is still that view by some operators that

the more noise they keep, the more likely it is to be heard by persons in the area who are looking for something to do, and then they will come to the party, so to speak. I do not think we must discourage this approach, and I believe with a more mature approach to the use of technology, as I indicated, this can bring about a win-win situation where the residents of the area can rest on evenings and still the establishment can maintain its entertainment like every other business.

The business of entertainment in St. Lawrence has suffered as a result of the existing economic depression worldwide, and there has been a decrease in the number of visitors to the area. And indeed, even where the visitors are still there, there is the obvious decline in spending. And it is no secret that indeed, on the south coast, the image of the visitor is changing to the extent that they are beginning and tending to occupy houses which are available for rental. The beaches are sometimes inland, because in moving around the constituency you come across a number of these situations. And that is the strength of what I think the honourable member for St. Lucy has certainly been championing on many occasions. That is the question of community tourism, where landowners and property owners in the vicinity of the tourism centre have been able to take advantage of the opportunities which are offered by visitors in terms of occupancy and, of course, spending of money.

We have also developed a number of the apartment hotels and the condominiums and the small care hotels which have been encouraged to develop and to engage in the business of tourism, so that as tourism in Barbados continues to grow or begins to strengthen again, it is very likely that we will have a slightly different kind of visitor who is prepared, as they say, to put their backpack on their shoulders and walk around the country, explore. They surf in the daytime, they use our public transport in the evening and go to dinners all over Barbados. And this is a very good sign. And indeed, then our former hotels with the fancier offerings, the more expensive offerings, would then obviously have to seek to build their own new clientele. And this can help us to expand our entire tourism product.

The business of entertainment in the Gap is also threatened by what I call crime. Let me use crime to be as kind as possible, but it comes, as I said, in all forms. There are those who want to peddle drugs. This is against the law. The reality is that once there is a market, then persons will seek to supply. So I understand very clearly the challenge of our police force and those who keep law and order in the country in terms of dealing with this situation. The sophistication which these persons know, the sophisticated communication systems, for instance, which these persons now use to draw attention either to their product, would boggle the mind. I mean, I hear stories about listening devices which can be brought into a crowd of persons - put it that way - and then by listening to the conversations, those who peddle know exactly where to focus their attention. This is to demonstrate the reality of what our police force face in fighting crime in Barbados today. And this crime - the snatching of chains and jewellery, watches and the direct taking of money - is doing harm, will do harm to our tourism product. And we have to appeal once again to those persons who exercise this kind of indiscretion to really think about it, because it will ultimately destroy the very economy on which our country depends. And it will drive away our visitors, first of all from the direct area, and ultimately it could impact on the eventual numbers of those who visit Barbados.

So, sir, what are the solutions going forward? What can we look forward to in Barbados and in those small communities that I mentioned in terms of how we tackle this situation? I think that, first of all, we must have a joint approach to making sure that processes are put in place to effect positive change in those communities. And this approach will include the private sector, that is, the owners of the businesses and other interested NGOs. And I want to take time to commend a number of NGOs who have worked in the Dover and the Oistins area from time to time. The Oistins Fish Festival committee comes to mind immediately - a group who have constantly, annually taken charge of making sure that the Oistins Fish Festival is run in the Easter season and it keeps growing in terms of the offering. And indeed, we are very proud of the work of the committee of the Oistins Fish Festival, Mr. Dan Kiar and his team who organise this festival annually. And certainly we brought on board an artistic director in Mr. Cranston Brown, who again we need to commend for adding that additional flair to what is offered at Oistins.

And of course, the Oistins Bay Garden - well, not new because they are some five years old now - but certainly again, here is a body who are on the cusp of becoming property owners themselves when Government eventually transitions those properties to them, but who, because of their business acumen and the offering work that they have been doing since they have been formed, are prepared to take on the responsibility of providing entertainment, making sure that the facilities are clean,

making sure that the food that is offered is of the highest standard. And we really need to commend and encourage. And certainly I am grateful for the cooperation of the Ministry of Water Resources, the Environment and Drainage, who even recently, like two weeks ago, worked with me to make sure that the facilities at Oistins Bay Garden are maintained and are maintained in a healthy fashion. There are some issues which are of a much larger scale. The whole improvement of the drainage situation at the facility, and these are being worked on by way of plans. The challenge, of course, with the proximity to the ocean is in the fact that drainage cannot necessarily be achieved directly into the ground because of the high water levels. And as I have said in here before, and I keep saying, we really have in Barbados to look towards mechanical solutions in terms of some of the drainage issues we are having in situations where we need to take - not to depend on the runoff to the sea necessarily - but we need to start looking at taking the waste water back up further into the interior of the island for eventual filtering under our coral rock system.

Going back to the St. Lawrence area, again, I want to commend a recently formed group, the Dreammakers Millennium Foundation, who have been working with some of the businesses in the St. Lawrence area, with a view to again improving and maintaining the St. Lawrence Gap so that we have the assistance and the offerings of this private sector NGO under the name of Mr. Hal Austin - sorry, Mr. Hal Austin - and again, for his efforts, I think he needs to be recognised and commended, along of course with the Dover associations and the other associations of business owners in St. Lawrence Gap who work tirelessly to maintain a clean environment, who work with the Ministry of Transport and Works to maintain the infrastructure, both the lighting system, which is extremely important, the street lighting system, which is a unique street lighting system, carefully sculpted and wonderful architecture to create the ambience of which we are so proud.

And, sir, again, I think there is so much work to be done, it needs to be encouraged. As Member of Parliament, I want to maintain that encouragement and to utilise every sinew in my body to make sure that these facilities which offer such important entertainment and culinary offerings to our visitors and which help to build the character of Barbados are maintained in a safe condition. So I think that this money towards the Royal Barbados Police Force and other agencies which look after security and the management of crime in Barbados, this money will be well spent, sir, and it will redound to the benefit of this country as a whole. I am grateful to you, sir.

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

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have had, I think, quite a good series of interventions under this head. In my winding up of this head, I would just like to reiterate the government's continued commitment to strengthening all areas that deals with law and order in this country. I may this morning have spent some time on the Royal Barbados Police Force but certainly part of this money was to deal with the area of forensic services and I know that this is an area that we will indeed pay particular attention to, not only in terms of strengthening the forensic department, but certainly strengthening our police force so that they are indeed able to utilise technology in all areas that they now operate, because we recognise the importance of science to their work and therefore we will ensure that the requisite amount of training is done, sir, on this head.

Also, the Drug and Narcotics National Task Force on Crime Prevention. They have been doing a significant amount of work because without their work we are unable to sculpt the type of interventions that are required in this regard. One of the areas that we addressed late last year was there was a burglary study conducted which we have found particularly useful. One of the things that that burglary study highlighted was the connection between drugs and alcohol and perpetrators. In other words, what the study revealed is that a significant number of offenders indeed were either under marijuana or other drugs or alcohol at the time that they committed their offences. So with those few remarks and in thanking my colleagues, I therefore beg to move that Head 30 stand part.

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

Mr. CLERK: Head 19 - Treasury - in the amount of \$221 000.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, sir, this is the amount of \$45 000 under account code 752 for machinery, equipment and under furniture and fittings, some \$176 000. I don't think this bears any more details. And, sir, I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

Mr. CLERK: Head 73 - Ministry of the Environment and Drainage - in the amount of \$39 000.

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

On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the Resolution was read a first time and a second time and agreed to.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended for 20 minutes until 25 minutes past three this afternoon.

The question that the House be suspended until 3.25 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. Honourable Members, the sitting of the Honourable Chamber is resumed. We shall continue.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Bill 2013.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to move the first reading of the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Bill 2013.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 5 – LAND TAX AMENDMENT BILL, 2013

Mr. CLERK: Order Number five. In the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, to move the second reading of the Land Tax Amendment Bill 2013.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, thank you very much.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, sir, this measure is a bit of housekeeping that we have to effect to the changes which were made the year before last to the Income Tax Act to facilitate the rebate to pensioners in Barbados. As you would recall, Mr. Speaker, in the financial statement of budgetary proposals, contingent or

arising out of representations made not only by the Barbados Association of Retired Persons, but also by pensioners across the country who were affected by previous changes that we had made in relation to the calculation of the rebate on the land tax bills. Some categories of taxpayers, particularly as you elevated in the scale, tended to have a negative impact and, in fact, in a couple of instances, increased the rate. That was not the intention of the Government. The intention was to have the rate at least stay where it was or to reduce it.

And the recommendation from the Commissioner of Land Tax, following those representations, was that the adjustment be made which we in fact announced in last year's financial statement of budgetary proposals, and that was to give effect to the adjustment of the land tax rebate for pensioners, and that it should be calculated effective April 1, 2011, by inserting a new subsection 228B in the principal Act for those pensioners to move the rate from 50 per cent to 60 per cent in order to compensate, as I said, for the increase in the tax demanded. It also seeks to provide a waiver of penalties and interest on the arrears.

This is the Act which, of course, we have been doing for a number of individuals and companies as well, and it is something that perhaps we should pay attention to because many people in the society believe that we are too easy on taxpayers in the country and that we should adopt a more stringent disciplinarian position in relation to the payment of taxes. But as a caring administration, we are fully aware that whilst we want persons to meet their statutory obligations to the Crown, there are times, particularly in times such as this - difficult times - when Government must see ways to hold the hands of not only individuals but companies as well. Just as we would encourage companies to hold our hands when Government may have issues from time to time.

So it is quite apt, if you think that this matter is being dealt with at this time when there is some lively debate in the community about the payment of taxes and who owes who or who doesn't owe whom. So we just wanted to give legal effect to the measures which we have taken to ease the burden of taxpayers in this country, both individual and companies, and to ensure that we are within the boundaries of the law in relation to this matter.

And so, Mr. Speaker, sir, without detaining the House too long, I wanted to bring this matter as a housekeeping matter to give effect to this. But I will say though, Mr. Speaker, sir, that it has always been the intention of this administration - as it will be not just in this term but, God willing, in our next term - to engage a process of comprehensive tax reform in the economy of Barbados, particularly looking at our direct and indirect tax systems which we know for some time have been in need of some review and reform. You will be hearing more

about that later, I am sure. But I know that people are anxious about these things and I think it should be incumbent on me as Minister of Finance to signal that to the community. But of course we will address those matters.

The reform process, of course, has started already, as you would know. Last year we made adjustments to the tax bands and to the tax rates, giving back to the community, of course, and to the economy of Barbados on an annualised basis some \$3 million Barbados dollars in disposable income. And you will see, Mr. Speaker, sir, even in our figures coming in from the Central Bank in relation to our performance fiscally, you will see that there has been some slight decline in collection of personal income tax. That is because we have done that particular measure.

There are people who say that this is a tax-all Government. Not true. We have given back rebates. We have increased the reverse tax credit. We have given back by way of increasing demand and lowering the rates. We have made adjustments all over. We have eliminated the tax on building supplies up to \$400 000 Barbados dollars. So where there are avenues for us to ease the taxes on Barbadians in a responsible way that does not discombobulate the economy of Barbados or imperil the public finances, this Democratic Labour Party administration has sought to do so and will continue to do so in a responsible manner.

So these rebates and waivers, as you have seen - whether it is through the WIC programme that we have done to hold the hands of businesses and individuals through these difficult times, waiving as much as 50 per cent of the penalty and interest to many across the society - in fact, last year we had a land tax amnesty in which we eliminated an entire amount of penalties and interest built up over years by many individuals. And I can say that we were successful in bringing in a few million dollars from taxpayers. And there has been a clamour for an additional amnesty to be done which we are examining. So we know what our record is. We know it is one that can withstand scrutiny at any level at any time.

And so, sir, it gives me the greatest degree of pleasure to move this fairly simple but obviously very important amendment to our land tax legislation. And with those few words I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and the Bill was read a second time.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move that your Honour do now leave the Chair and that the

House resolve itself into committee in consideration of this Bill.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. J. D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in committee.

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Stand part, as amended. That it be amended to read the Land Tax Amendment Act 2013.

Clause 1, as amended, was passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee with an amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Land Tax Amendment Act, 2013.

ORDER NO. 6 – LAND VALUATION AMENDMENT BILL, 2013

Mr. CLERK: Order Number six. In the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, to move the second reading of the Land Valuation Amendment Bill 2013.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, sir, again, this is one of the measures that emanates from the financial statement and budgetary proposals which we have had to do following representations made by the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association and by individual hoteliers themselves. The Ministry of Finance took on board counsel that an adjustment should be made in favour of hoteliers and those providing accommodation to visitors to the island to allow for them to pay their land tax bills over an extended period of time.

As you know, the notice for land tax bills usually goes out in August of every year - sometime around July or August - and there is a period in which you can get a discount if you pay the full amount early. Now, for hoteliers, the August period is the beginning of, or should we say the middle period of, what is considered to be the

slow period for hotels in Barbados and against the grain of better cash flow for those properties. And the hoteliers made a very strong case. I thought that if they were allowed to pay those bills - while still retaining the discount - during a period when they tended to be more liquid within their organisations, that it would do a tremendous bit to ease the pressure off of them in these trying and difficult circumstances.

And we took counsel and reviewed it and thought that was a useful thing to do. So we shifted the period or extended the period in which the discount could be claimed right down for hotels to the period at the end of the current financial year. So you would go down the current financial year - current meaning the year in which you are paying - so you could go down for a period from 1st April to 31st March to make your payment. And that of course would coincide with when the winter season was just concluded. And of course you would have received your best period of cash flow and intake of revenue.

Now, of course, with all these things, you always run into a little problem and subsequent to giving this, we have run into a slight problem with it. Not that it will stop us from going ahead with the amendment because we are doing it here today, but we have had to make an adjustment to the situation as it pertains to the administration of land tax bills, because hoteliers are required to produce a land tax certificate showing that they have paid their entire year's charge from the State for land tax before 31st December in order to get things such as the liquor licence. So when they go to get the liquor licence for the restaurant in the property, if they could not show from the Land Tax Commissioner a bill indicating that they had paid their land tax in full, the court would not issue them with the liquor licence. And so a lot of hoteliers were very anxious around the end of the year about how they could get this benefit, but still be able to continue to get the things which they require by way of instrument to allow them to function.

What we have done, though, in consultation with the Commissioner of Land Tax and other members of the Ministry, and in particular with the Office of the Attorney General, is that we will allow the Commissioner of Land Tax to issue an interim certificate that allows them - along with the bill from the previous year, which will be the current calendar year - to be able to get their liquor licence. It will be stamped interim and signed by the Commissioner of Land Tax and it will be time-bound. So therefore, if by the period of 31st March - the ending period for this claim - you do not or have not paid your bill, the liquor licence would automatically cease and therefore you would have to go and pay in order to get it back. So we found a way to close that little problem.

And I am sure the hoteliers will be happy to note that this will proceed as we had originally planned. And so, sir,

again, as you can see, Government is trying its best to work with business, as we have done over the last five years, to facilitate the smooth, effective and profitable running of businesses in Barbados. And we will continue to do so once it is within the four corners of the law. And of course, it is affordable to the country to do so because we value the input of all of our investors, whether local or international. And with those few words, sir, I therefore beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and the Bill was read a second time.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Your Honour, I beg to move that you do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into committee in further consideration of this Bill.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. J. D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in committee.

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I beg to move that Clause one stand part with the amendment that this Bill be cited as the Land Valuation Amendment Act 2013.

Clause 1, as amended, was passed.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee with an amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Land Valuation Amendment Act, 2013.

ORDER NO. 4 – SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND REPEAL BILL, 2013

Mr. CLERK: Order number four, sir. In the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, to move the second reading of what is known as the Social Investment Fund Repeal Bill 2013.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Minister.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, sir, the matter before the House is, by procedure, a relatively perfunctory matter in the sense that we are proposing to repeal the legislation giving legal authority to what was then called the Social Investment Fund under Cap. 15, which was set up by the last administration with fairly unclear objectives, reasonably uncertain purposes - at least uncertain to those of us who clothe ourselves in transparent and appropriate administration - which, in essence, Mr. Speaker, sir, because of those two reasons, collided in a fairly significant way with other institutions or mechanisms established to do precisely what the Social Investment Fund was established to do.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, sir, in and around the period when this fund was created, back some years - I believe in 1998-99 - it was fairly popular around the Caribbean for such funds to be created. I know in Jamaica, for example, from my work with the Caribbean Policy Development Fund at the time, one of the things emerging from the period of structural adjustment - the wave of structural adjustment in the early nineties, particularly in this part of the world, and in Africa and Latin America in particular - there was a fairly forceful representation to institutions like the IMF and the World Bank that so devastating were their policies on economies in relation to their impact on the social development of countries, that initiatives and mechanisms should be created to either act as a brake on that impact or to mitigate the impact of structural adjustment on societies, particularly those policies which we hear in modern-day times, particularly sometimes here in Barbados, people clamouring for. And those are policies to roll back the social gains of countries by instituting vicious and deep cuts in the social spending of economies.

We know the devastation that such can cause on women and children in particular. We have seen that and it is recorded in the annals of history and in current discourse, not just for academic study, but also by way of lessons learned on the impact of these things. And so coming out of those policies of expenditure adjustment downwards for social spending - in education and health and social welfare - came the clamorous call for the emergence of mechanisms such as social investment funds, located under what were then called poverty reduction growth facilities or poverty reduction management facilities, to be able to mitigate the impact of those cuts.

So, in Jamaica, for example, we saw the creation of a social investment fund which was designed to put specific financial investments in social programmes that would reconstitute and rebuild societies that had been devastatingly impacted upon by Bretton Woods, IMF structural adjustment policies - the building of schools, the repair of roads, the investment in literature and books for students, the creation of small businesses to assist persons to be able to make their way - those who had lost their jobs

- back into the mainstream of economic activity and social activity. And those funds in many countries - Chile, Jamaica, I said, for example, and in parts of Africa - those funds worked exceedingly well because they were properly focused, had a clarity of purpose, and were intended to build back the social fabric within the community.

Now, somewhere along the line, some person mentioned to the then authorities in Barbados - the last administration - that it would be a good thing to have a social investment fund. However, unfortunately,

such proprietors thought did not go into why we should have such a fund and what purpose for which it would be put in order to better the community. In fact, it is clear, Mr. Speaker, sir, from the practice of the fund, that there was no thought put into what other institutions existed that were already performing the functions for which the fund was created. And therefore, it left people to wonder, over the years in which this fund was operational, what was the true purpose of this particular fund? I am not going to say, Mr. Speaker, or try to create anything negative that this fund came about particularly and around the time just before the 1999 election. I am not going to say that because to say that would be to try to give the impression that it was created particularly for this purpose. But when we looked at the functions of it, rather than getting into deep sociological interventions within the community, the fund, apparently, Mr. Speaker, sir, from all of the research and all of the practice that we have seen recorded, denigrated into a slush fund used predominantly for the payment of light bills, the payment of water bills and such like functions that were already being performed by the welfare department and being done by the welfare department relatively successfully.

We know who was using it. Members of the last Barbados Labour Party administration used it to their best advantage. Indeed, they used it with such venom that perhaps it was reflected in the results of many elections that we had around. I don't know. But the point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, sir, is that the intention of a social investment fund ended up not being what it intended to be. And members who sat on that committee, which was indeed headed by the Director of Finance, realised some of them, and one or two of them, I believe, left the committee before it went into a state of paralysis that week by week or month by month. They were drawn not to discuss how the fund could substantially change the social makeup of the country in terms of assisting those persons that were in difficulty, at least fortunate to be able to build them up by teaching them how to fish rather than giving them a fish, but that they had denigrated into a meeting to consider whose light bill will be paid this month, whose light bill will be paid next month, whose water bill was cut off and needed to get a reconnection fee and those kinds of things.

Not that there's anything wrong with that, Mr. Speaker, sir, but when one considered that you had the Rural Development Commission, the Urban Development Commission, Fund Access, EGFL, Poverty Alleviation Bureau and Poverty Alleviation Fund and all these other things existing around the place with little pockets of money pushing them for people to go and take out at their leisure for purposes other than what can only be considered nothing other than political. It was another way, Mr. Speaker, sir, to relieve the treasury of taxpayers' money to be used however it was desired by the then administration to be used. And the people who were on the committee, some of them clearly came to that realisation. And serious-minded people who wanted to make a substantial contribution to helping in the transformation of Barbadian society among the working classes felt that it was a waste of their time and energy to be performing functions that should be performed by social welfare officers at the welfare department and in other departments of government.

So when this administration came to office we found this plethora of little funds hanging around with money placed everywhere and the then Minister of Finance, the late member for St. John, quite correctly instructed that the fund be brought to a close. In fact, it was the advice, Mr. Speaker, sir, of the officials in the Ministry of Finance that the fund be brought to a swift closure. Whatever monies existed in it should be distributed to the agencies that could better execute and so said, so advised, so taken on board, I think correctly, by the late Minister of Finance. And so we brought that fund to an end and redistributed the resources among the institutions that were better placed to be able to contribute to that.

Mr. Speaker, sir, in fact some of those resources went into one of the things that we call the Micro Enterprise Fund to assist young entrepreneurs in Barbados, to be able to bring businesses and create businesses out of ideas they had, to be able to assist them to feed themselves and their families. And we have successfully seen many of them, with guidance from the Ministry of Small Business and Rural Development, be able to make better for themselves and their families and even employ one or two people too. In fact, one of the things that hurts us - but we can't give more money to it - because we believe that if there is one success story of this administration that has to be one of them, and we have to ensure that more resources go towards that particular fund.

So Mr. Speaker, sir, it is very funny when we hear all of the great economists and financial managers speaking about their backgrounds and how they have studied the discipline of economics and finance and they know all of this - to reflect, as we have done in the last five years, on the veritable mess and cobweb of institutions with money poking here and there and every possible place where you

have a lot of these institutions with a lot of little money hanging around. You don't know when the money comes out. We know when it goes in but we don't know when it comes out and who it goes to when it comes out. And one of the things that we did in this administration was to pledge that we would from day one clean up the mess left by the Barbados Labour Party administration. I have had a number of them to do in relation to other things, whether it is the prison, the court, the terminal company for the oil company, you name them, for Needham's, for the hotel. We have had to bring legislation here to clean up a lot of that mess and we've also had to come here today, as we will have to come, I am sure, in the coming weeks and months, to be able to clean up a lot of the financial mess that was left by the Barbados Labour Party, that not only was a drain on the public purse, but also a shame on public administration in Barbados.

And I want to say that with all seriousness, because it is not only to look at numbers on paper, but you have to look at the intent, you have to look at the content of what has transpired to get a better picture of exactly the type of mess that we have had to clean up as an administration. And so we decided that all of these funds, sir, and we are working towards that, should be brought under one umbrella organisation, even if they have specific designations varying, but that you could not have all these little funds all over the place costing us a whole lot of money.

And you know where, Mr. Speaker, sir, people speak about subsidies and transfers. I remind Barbadians, as I remind this House whenever I get the opportunity to speak on matters such as this, that under the last administration we saw the explosion of statutory entities and all kinds of little mechanisms that carry large-level establishments with them, that carry costs associated with them, that increase our subsidies and transfers. Urban and Rural, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Invest Barbados, Pan African Commission, you name them. Social Investment Fund, Poverty Alleviation Fund, you name them, they created them. It was almost like create a different institution every month. Put 20, 30, 40, 50 people to work in it, give it a few million dollars and let it grow. I know when I was a boy at school they used to teach us in general science - you get a pea and put some paper in a bottle and you put the pea down between it and watch the roots grow. But this is exactly germination. That's what they were doing, just creating these institutions and watching them grow, feeding them with numerous amounts of staff and then leaving them for the Democratic Labour Party to have to find the money to maintain these institutions.

You didn't think about it. Invest Barbados, Urban, Rural, Ancestral Barbados, Pan African Commission, you name it, they created it and caused a tremendous amount of financial strain on the public purse because these are

people for which we have an obligation, Mr. Speaker, sir, to support. And of course, Mr. Speaker, sir, we now hear from the opposition that it is their intention to undo all of what they did. So they're going to privatise all of these institutions and get rid of them, having created them in the first place. So this kind of upside-down policy - like an upside-down cake - is not the way in which public administration should go. We can't go around creating institutions to serve our political ends. That's the point that I'm making, sir. We can't just create institutions because they serve a particular political end of clientelism in this country when resources are as scarce as they are for small, open, developing economies such as ours.

And so, Mr. Speaker, sir, if this House could find more time to escape from having to clean up the mess of the Labour Party, we maybe, perhaps, would get even more work than we have gotten done completed. And we've done a tremendous amount, even in spite of all of that problem that we had to deal with. So, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make that point in relation to this. And I want to say that I'm happy that those funds that were in there, to the tune of the balance of \$2.468 million, which have been distributed, have now been put to productive use, particularly under the stewardship of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. And I want, Mr. Speaker, therefore, for those reasons, to beg to move that this bill be read a second time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the transfer of these funds and the closing of this fund, and to make the point, sir, that it is quite clear that this government, unlike the other government, understands the purpose of small business. And what is interesting about this is that now that this has become a buzzword internationally, this government and the Prime Minister of this party has been able not only to recognise it, but to set up a ministry to represent the interests of small business in this country. I want to say, sir, that as the Minister of Finance stated, it is no doubt that if there is one success story - and there are many - that Fund Access has been able to deliver, and deliver in a significant way, to this country. At the same time, they have been able to lend money and the delinquency rate they have been able to reduce, and they have been able to ensure that business foreclosure has not occurred in these difficult times. But they have been holding the hands of business people in this country.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago or so, Fund Access was lending \$3 million. I want to say that this has occurred a year before. Fund Access is now lending over \$5 million and in two consecutive years they have been able to lend to the small businesses in this country over \$5 million. Which means, sir, as much as you hear all the bellyaching on the other side, it is clear, sir, that the business sector in this

country, especially the small businesses, are playing that significant role that is expected of them.

Many years ago I made the point, sir, when the other party was in charge of this country, that small business people do not have anywhere to run and that it is very important that we find the resources to look after those businesses. In times of crisis, whereas you invite people to a country and when there is a little cold they pack up and leave, small business people cannot do that - they have to remain and fight it out. And that is exactly what you are seeing in Barbados today, sir, where international companies leave and the small business people are putting their hands to the plough and they are ensuring that they are looking after the interests of themselves and also the interests of this country.

I also want to make the point, sir, that if this country is to go forward, we are going to have to grow this country from the inward process and not the outward process. Too often countries make the error of giving all the resources and all the accommodation to the external side. But this government has been able to ensure that the resources are given to local business people and to hold their hands.

Mr. Speaker, it is even wider than that. We have put particular interest in the export sector and there is evidence - various manufacturers who are export-led - that we have also found resources to ensure that they have been able to satisfy their export orders. And I must send a warning to some people in this country who seem not to understand the commitment of this government to small business people and manufacturers. And that is that when we put a policy in place, that policy is not just talk - it is that we are serious about it. And if we say that there is a certain amount of money that these manufacturers should get, it is the job of the servants of the people to ensure that they get the funds to the people in Barbados, because whenever they drag their feet on it, all they are doing is dragging on the development of Barbados. And we do not have time, Mr. Speaker, to play around because we understand what it takes to develop a country and we understand what it is to develop manufacturing and the small business sector in this country. So when we put the policy we will expect people to fall in line.

The Minister of Finance will also bring all of these entities under one head. I want to report that the Ministry of Industry, Small Business and Rural Development, of which that commitment was given, is being seriously looked at. Discussions have started and we intend - because we understand that for us to help the sector we must be able to have control - instead of having scattered funds, we must have one entity to manage and look after these funds. And too often, sir, we in Barbados do things right and for some reason we allow international institutions to come and stop us from doing what we were able to create for ourselves.

And I want to give an example, sir. The Barbados Development Bank was a homegrown bank - a brilliant idea created by Barbadians - and we allowed the Barbados Labour Party and international institutions to stop us from having a development bank. And Mr. Speaker, wherever you go in the world today, the same international institutions are now touting that you should have a development bank. Just last year, sir, I was in Jamaica and I was most struck to hear the international institutions that asked us to close our development bank just praising development banks. And I had to tell them, I find it rather strange that we in Barbados were able to lay the foundation as it relates to development banks, you asked us to close our development bank, and now you are speaking about development banks. So you see, Mr. Speaker, I have no problem in defending the government sector bank. I have no problem understanding the Governor of the Central Bank when he speaks and he educates the international institutions. Too often in this country we tend to believe that we have to follow. I am saying that because you are from a small country it does not mean that you have to follow. You have the capacity, just like anybody, to lead.

And I am very happy to see, sir, that the international institutions are now admitting once again that Barbados has been able to set the lead and that they are right in the fiscal and monetary policies. And I think we should give ourselves a clap for that too. Too often, sir, you hear people - and you know it is rather interesting, Mr. Speaker - I remember there was an Attorney General who once said in this House, when I preferred that the Companies Act be changed for the simple reason that the Companies Act dealt with how to deal with losses and pay dividends as it relates to losses, but it never dealt with why and when you should pay a dividend when a company is making a profit. And the gentleman said to me, I have never seen that in any international offering. And I had to ask him, does it mean that we have to wait until international organisations speak for us to copy? We cannot lead anything, sir.

And that is why today, sir, we do not see the robust activities that we would like within our shareholdership in Barbados, because the structure of the way we deal with dividends and so on is wrong and we need to be more proactive and need to have a policy that relates more to Barbados. If we continue, Mr. Speaker, to have a policy that relates only to the international institutions, you are not going to find people in Barbados buying shares, because the structure of our capital market is such, Mr. Speaker, that we will not be able to attract persons who sit down on a yearly basis and work out the interest returns and know what they will get from the bank as opposed to what they can get from investing in companies, in shares. And that is so because we do not have a commitment to the shareholders, and we have to understand that if we are going to build a capital market then we need to do things like that.

So today, sir, I have no problem in supporting this. I look forward to the day, sir, when the Minister of Finance can give Fund Access as much as \$20 million or more, because it will be money well spent. Because if we are to right this economy, this is the direction we have to take, Mr. Speaker - whether it is in industry, whether it is in small business, whether it is in rural development - there are three chapters and all three of them have the possibilities of creating development. This country is great, sir, and it is regretful, sir, that I speak to you at times, sir, when the international market is short of cash and these three branches of the ministry, sir, cannot get the cash as they would like, sir.

There is a section called the Rural Development Corporation, the developmental section, sir. The day that we are allowed and the economy is turned around and we can get the money to deal with the RDC, this country will be transformed, because the area of most growth in this country is in rural Barbados. And the reason for that, sir, is that urban has already satisfied the demand for development and rural is begging for the opportunity to get development. And I have said many times in this House that you will be shocked to see that one simple road in rural Barbados can create development. And I am saying that we have to understand that if we are to take this country forward and to take it at the pace that we need to take it, we are going to have to understand and appreciate rural development.

So, Mr. Speaker, with a few words I want to say today, sir, that I applaud the move by the Minister of Finance of taking the Social Investment Fund, which was loaded with funds that had no reason to be there. The idea to take it and put it under Fund Access is acceptable to this minister, sir, applauded by this House, and should be applauded by the whole of Barbados, sir. I also look forward to the day when the Minister of Finance can also find some more money, sir, to give to the micro funds - those \$3 000, sir - that can allow many more small business people to have some capital, sir.

And you know the success story is that, sir, previously, sir, those funds were used to buy just equipment. But with the foresight of the people within the ministry we were able to say no, it cannot be only for capital expenditure, it has to be also for current expenditure. For example, sir, it does not make sense to tell a man to buy a chiller and he can only buy a chiller but he does not have stock to put in the chiller. And we changed that, sir. What you can get today, sir, is that the man can buy stock to sell, to buy the chiller, or somebody that supplies the items can give him the chiller when he has stock to put in it and have a business. And today I can tell you, sir, you cannot break the forms fast enough. But even the minister cannot get a form because there are some

members in here who are so informed of the system that before April 1st the forms are committed.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, sir, I want to congratulate the Prime Minister of this country for structuring the Ministry of Industry, Small Business and Rural Development the way he has been able to structure it. And I want to thank him for the vision because if there is one ministry that can take Barbados and take it to great heights it is that ministry, especially the Rural Development Corporation. A simple road can give you three different economic activities. For example, you can build a road and that road will not be just a road for people to go to the sea - it is a road for community tourism. And it can be a road also for the youngsters to form co-ops and go into fishing. That is what I am talking about. Or if you have the money you can build a bridge across River Bay which will cost less than \$1 million and can save the country millions of dollars, because when the tour buses come, instead of having to drive six miles they can just come to River Bay, cut across, go on to Little Bay, go on to Cove Bay, go on to Foul Bay and go. Or simply, you can have enough money to cut the roads from Frere Pilgrim and come to Army Hill instead of having to drive another six miles - you are saving revenue for the person. So there are wonderful things.

And that is a good example, sir - you can go to Lamacelle, and this is all part of enhancing tourism. You can go to Lamacelle, sir, where the mill was, and you can build something like a CN Tower. As you stand at Lamacelle, if you go there right now and you see that view, you have an appreciation of Barbados and St. Lucia. But just imagine you building something like a CN Tower and you have that view. If you have something like that, maybe the police can even go and view and see what is happening on the sea. But what I am saying, sir, is building the infrastructure to enhance tourism.

And that is why I keep making the point that we speak about tourism in this country, but we have to understand that if we want enhanced tourism in this country the tourism we have to enhance is community tourism. Tourism has a multiplier effect on the growth in this country, because with community tourism, sir, when the money is spent at our level it goes right through the economy. When the money is brought to this country at a high-level hotel it is one step to Frederick Street. What we need, sir, are systems in this country at this time, sir, where we can start from the base and it grows right to the roof - using building terms - and that everybody can benefit from it.

Remember the days of the crop season, sir. What we need is to go back and to find something that will have the same effect on this economy as when we used to cut sugar cane, because when we used to cut sugar cane this

economy was better, sir, because every weekend there used to be economic activity in a significant way in rural Barbados. That created the impetus for the urban sector of the economy. So I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that this country is fortunate and the politicians need to go back to those practical people and ask them how they were able to do the things they did. Sir, we need to send some people back to the cane fields and to learn from those persons who have been able to grow the economy at the rate that they grew it at, because those people in the cane fields grew and developed this country. We have tourism, we have the sugar industry, we have offshore business, we have many things. But yes, we cannot create the same economic impetus as we had when we just had sugar.

So Mr. Speaker, I want to say today, sir, that this country knows where we have to take it and we are only at the beginning of the success story for the country. And I want to say to my people in Barbados: just hold on, because we understand what to do in a crisis, and just imagine what we will do when we get out of a crisis, as we are about to do. We have what it takes to create the impetus to get out of the crisis and we also know what to do when we get out. We had a BERT programme to do. We did the BERT programme and now we have a developmental programme to do, of which we will do. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: I rise to make a short intervention in support of this bill before this honourable chamber and to add to what the mover of the resolution, the Honourable Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, alluded to in terms of the role which this administration has played in terms of pushing forward the National Micro Enterprise Grant, as alluded to also by the Minister of Industry, Small Business and Rural Development, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, because I have some experience in this matter, having served as Minister of State within the Ministry of Economic Affairs, led at the time by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, and to note that this National Micro Enterprise Grant is the brainchild of this current Democratic Labour Party administration.

Firstly, under the leadership of the Honourable Member for St. James Central as Minister of Trade and Industry, where the offices administering this National Micro Enterprise Grant facility were located, at the trade ministry's offices at Reef Road in the Fontabelle/Pelican area. And this grant, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy mentioned, gives the recipients - that is, micro enterprise entrepreneurs or prospective entrepreneurs in this area - a grant of up to \$3 000 to buy either equipment or stock. And this administration has invested millions of dollars to date in this regard such that hundreds of

Barbadian entrepreneurs or prospective entrepreneurs have been able to tap into this grant facility, thereby increasing the likelihood of success in their respective micro enterprise.

And I am happy as Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown to report to my constituents, the loving people of the City of Bridgetown and the country, that we have been able to help several residents of the city to gain this grant. Hairdressers from the New Orleans area and Uptown, the Nelson Street, Byne Street, King William Street areas, and persons who have been able to get chainsaws so that they can be engaged in landscaping, and throughout the country, entrepreneurs in photography and catering have been able to access these grants.

In fact, in the last financial statements and budgetary proposals piloted in this House by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, this administration pledged an additional \$400 000 to supplement and augment this National Micro Enterprise Grant facility, which would therefore give rise to over 132 Barbadian entrepreneurs being able to access these grants. And the reports from the officers of the business development unit within this ministry that has oversight for the administration of this grant facility have reported that in their follow-up and assessment of the operation of this facility, the vast majority of the recipients have been able to actually report how thankful they are for this injection of much-needed capital to move forward their businesses, and have actually seen growth in their businesses to the extent that they have been able to consolidate.

Because we know that many micro enterprises take five or more years before they can even break even. Many are unable to withstand the challenges of life and go under. So that this injection of funding to these micro enterprise entrepreneurs is very vital for their survival. And this was seen in the vision of the late Prime Minister - God rest him in his grave - David John Howard Thompson, who would have ensured that this programme grew from strength to strength. He established the Ministry of Small Business. And the current Prime Minister and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, in his most recent cabinet reshuffle, would have ensured that the small business sector is concentrated in a particular ministry, and created the Ministry of Industry, Small Business and Rural Development, ably led by an entrepreneur of outstanding record, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

And it was his vision to, as he mentioned, actually extend this National Micro Enterprise Grant facility so that recipients would be able to take the proceeds and actually purchase, or have purchased for them, stock for their businesses. So this is a commendable track record of this Democratic Labour Party administration, where we realise that not everyone would be able to, or in fact be interested

in, gaining employment either in the public sector or the private sector, but that their role as an entrepreneur - either self-employed and eventually actually being able to employ one or more members of staff - is an important niche within the economic mix of our society to ensure that there is prosperity throughout the society and there is general development within the economy and, of course, the society as a whole.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, this is nothing new to economic development worldwide. We heard of the Grameen Bank experience in the Far East, where in India and that part of the world - Bangladesh and so on - micro enterprise lending is pivotal for the success of millions of marginalised people in those countries. In fact, I understand in a BBC report recently - I think it was Richard Quest on Quest Means Business on CNN - making the point that in many of the major cities in India, the majority of economic activity is actually concentrated in small peddlers, hawkers, and vendors that some people see as nuisances, but who around the world are recognised as legitimate entrepreneurs who have an important role to play in the economic life and prosperity of any city or country.

And these entrepreneurs must be commended for taking the risk, not relying on or waiting on government or the private sector for a job, but actually investing their limited resources, taking that risk to invest in stock and equipment and seeking to carve out their niche and engage in and develop a viable business to support themselves and their families legitimately. And from many of these small businesses, some actually emerged to large multinational conglomerates. I believe Goddard Enterprises - they tell us, the historians - started in little more than a rum shop just south of Milk Market. As you leave Milk Market through the street going on to Broad Street, and now that is a multinational, successful Barbadian company. So of course there are other entrepreneurs who started as little more than a rum shop in Roebuck Street, and now that is a major company.

So, Mr. Speaker, we should not at all seek to ridicule - certainly this administration does not seek to ridicule - the important role to be played by the micro enterprise sector, Mr. Speaker. And I would also wish to state that this administration therefore realises that by injecting important state funds into the micro enterprise sector, not just through the National Micro Enterprise Grant, but also within the small business development unit within this Ministry of Industry, Small Business and Rural Development. I know there is a facility where small and medium-sized enterprises grossing an income of no more than - I believe - a million dollars can actually apply to Cabinet for approved small business status, which gives them certain concessions in terms of reduced corporation and income taxes, and so on and so forth, again to stimulate them and enable them to consolidate and grow and employ more persons, Mr.

Speaker. But again, there is a limit in terms of how many staff members they employ and so on, to ensure that the assistance is focused on the emerging small and medium-sized enterprises so that they can get a part of the economic cake as well.

But we go further through the BIDC - that triangular building that we see there at Fontabelle - within that small business section within the BIDC, we are able to provide small self-employed persons or small businesses office space at concessionary rates, as they are given an incubation period of several years to really consolidate their businesses. And they are given the necessary secretarial and administrative assistance in terms of access to office supplies, photocopying, access to the Internet, and also other assistance in terms of labelling. And I know there are efforts to procure raw materials in bulk at concessionary rates to the various small enterprises, be they at Pelican Industrial Park or other areas, so that these business facilitation devices really go a long way to make these small emerging businesses more viable.

And this administration is appreciative of the role to be played by these entrepreneurs, because we are not an administration that is simply concerned with giving handouts, perpetually giving rights, and engendering total dependence on the state. But rather, we are engaged in empowering these Barbadians to be able to lift themselves up from the proverbial bootstraps so that they are able to become independent and are able to have a high self-esteem in terms of seeing themselves as independent of the state, being able to stand on their own feet and actually succeed as an entrepreneur.

Mr. Speaker, so that this administration has nothing to be ashamed of, because we know that the electorate would have elected us - many people expecting, having high expectations in terms of getting a job - but not everyone can get a government job realistically. And we must be frank to the electorate and share this with them, because if we seek to employ everyone in the government sector, then clearly the state would be bankrupt. And this is not obviously acceptable. So there must be a mix between private and public sector employment and also the role of actually stimulating entrepreneurship in terms of the micro enterprise, self-employment, and micro and small and medium enterprises, Mr. Speaker.

And we should not think that this is limited to a certain ethnic group, but the masses of our country, through our education system. I know that the late Prime Minister, when he spoke at the University of the West Indies, challenged the principal and the administration at the university to relook the syllabuses and so on of the university to ensure that entrepreneurship is put on the front burner and seen as a viable option in terms of career development for graduates, because we have this

tremendous intellectual genius within our young people, our student body, and we should not limit ourselves to simply believing that when one gets an education, the best thing one can do is to get a job. Nothing wrong with getting a job. But as I said, entrepreneurship, the use of science and technology research to actually be innovative, to create, to invent, to create new ideas, new concepts, new products and services in terms of patents and copyrights.

I remember hearing on a radio programme a few years ago - the Calling radio programme - a Barbadian entrepreneur who has been able to establish several patents and copyrights overseas, who made the point that the person who is able to use their intellectual genius to create these patents and register the copyright does not necessarily have to do the manufacturing, but by actually selling this intellectual property, they are able to sell this intellectual property to the manufacturer for millions of dollars in terms of the proceeds and the rewards for this intellectual genius. So there can be this partnership between the scientist, the innovator, and the manufacturer who is mass-producing the innovation.

We know we have the National Innovation Awards. I remember one year while I was in that ministry, the second prize was actually won by a resident of the City of Bridgetown in Dalaw Lane, who was able to innovate in terms of the use of organic packaging materials. We know a former teacher of mine was able to commercially produce cocoa commercially - my former A-Level Biology teacher - and that business still thrives today. So we in Barbados should not think that we are too small to get involved in science and technology and innovation. The late Professor Oliver Headley was a pioneer in terms of the use of solar technology and refrigeration and other aspects. But sadly, a lot of his research work was not documented and perished with him as he expired. So I think the university has learned from that mistake and has pledged publicly to ensure that the necessary documentation of scientific advances is preserved for posterity and for future generations.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that this administration is serious about empowering the masses. Just in closing, it is a fact that this administration was able to employ, in two phases, hundreds of Barbadians in the NEEP programme - the National Environmental Enhancement Programme - phase two of which is enrolling as we speak. And this is no election gimmick. Phase two was on the cards. The necessary preparatory work has been ongoing for several months now. But praise the Lord, we have now seen the fruits of this labour, where hundreds of Barbadians, including dozens from the City of Bridgetown, have been able to get work in terms of the Ministry of the Environment in the NEEP programme.

And in phase one, for sure, what we did - this Honourable Member was in the Ministry of Social Care at the time - what we did is that half of those recipients, we are talking about dozens, were former welfare recipients. What we did is that we saved others and did not let those persons remain perpetually dependent on the state for a welfare cheque. What we did is that we gave them the opportunity, using those same funds, to pay them a salary or wage and employ them gainfully in the National Environmental Enhancement Programme. And this Honourable Member was fortunate to be present at the orientation at the then Sherbourne Conference Centre, where these hundreds of Barbadians - many of whom had not had a job in a long time - were very happy. Many with CXCs were very happy and thankful to this administration for giving them the opportunity, for having faith in them, to give them the opportunity to actually hold down a job. And 99 per cent of them have been able to keep their respective jobs after several years. And what we are saying is that they are now being able to be empowered so that they can hold their heads up high and say: I am gainfully employed. I am making my contribution to national development to support legitimately myself and my family, and I do not have to be dependent on the state perpetually in terms of a welfare grant.

Just another simple example of the seriousness of this Democratic Labour Party administration in terms of addressing the need to have the masses gainfully employed. So keep faith with the Democratic Labour Party because the Democratic Labour Party is faithful to you, the people of Barbados, as we look forward, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker, to another term of office to continue phase two of this work of the Democratic Labour Party to empower the masses of our people to take Barbados forward together, united, everyone succeeded. I thank you.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, sir, I just rise first of all to support the initiative and also to say that it is clear that in terms of the question of development, which party, sir, happens to be more serious about affecting real change, because the transfer needs fund, sir, at least to fund access, I am sure will help that particular enterprise or institution, sir, to have a more deeply felt impact, sir, on many businesses, especially small businesses in Barbados.

Largely because of the fact that within the constituency, sir, of St. Michael West Central, which I represent, sir, there are many businesses, small businesses, small business persons who from time to time, sir, they are. And even now, sir, they do have extremely good business ideas. And I believe that within the current environment where there are a lot of businesses who have these business ideas who are looking for opportunities to finance those

businesses, especially in a situation where the formal financial institutions tend to be very wary of looking at small businesses, I believe that it presents an opportunity, sir, for the government to give even further assistance to those small business persons who actually reside, sir, not only within of course the micro essential, but I invite you at the same time because I can think, sir, of many small businesses that exist within the constituency who can actually, sir, benefit from the resources that will be placed with the organisation.

And the other point too, sir, I wish to make, sir, what is clear is that in the past administration, sir, we had a situation where I called poster organisations. A lot of them were actually set up without actually considering, sir, or structuring them in order to help people. Because sometimes when you look at the Rural Development Commission, at the Urban Development Commission, both are really centred on the area of development, in terms of trying to develop persons to better handle themselves, in terms of having to rely to any overdue extent, sir, on the state. And to that extent, sir, I think that in a sense the Democratic Party is clearly showing that it can move. It is taking the concept of development in a more serious manner. Not only that, it is trying to target those persons, sir, who really need those development funds in order to advance their own interests.

And those are one of the other issues I think that we need to recognise. There are very many projects out there in communities, especially at this time, where it is clear that because of the environment that we find ourselves in, in terms of the whole economic environment, it is clear, sir, that we need to look at new options. We need to look, sir, at new ways of assisting people. And we have to move away from the concept, sir, that the previous ways certainly made people more dependent on government rather than trying to embolden people, sir, to try new initiatives on their behalf.

And sir, when you look at the kind of assistance that is normally required by small business persons, especially sometimes in the area of equipment, working capital, I have, for instance, a constituent who, for instance, she expressed the willingness to actually go into a barbershop. That is an area, sir, where, for instance, funds and conductors can actually help people like her. There are other persons who are very skilled in the area of food. And sometimes we underestimate the impact that the combined activity of a number of very small business persons can have on the economy. Because very often we are looking, sir, at the bigger impact, we are looking to see, sir, from the larger organisations. But even in terms of reporting on economic activity, sometimes one is left to wonder, as is very much said in the agriculture sector too, sir, the extent to which the statistics that we see in terms of economic performance are actually taking into consideration the kind

of activities that we are seeing, especially within the small business sector.

Because you find situations where some of these small business persons engage in different activities from time to time which actually generate business. I would only want to refer - we know Agrofest happens every year and that is something, sir, that even among small business people, sir, generates a large amount of business at a particular time of the year for small business persons within our community and even in communities themselves. What maybe we as representatives, and I believe that is something I intend to do as we go forward, is to organise activities that encourage small business persons within the constituency to actually come out and showcase their products. And again sir, it is organisations like Fund Access which actually caters to those persons in that group which needs all the necessary support in order that they can do it.

It is of course recognised, sir, that they have to do it in a very structured manner because one of the mistakes that we have seen in the past is where in some cases we have not done enough due diligence on the organisations themselves. We have not in some cases ensured that we provide those organisations or institutions or business persons requesting assistance with the necessary skills that they actually need in order to make that particular business successful. And again, sir, we have to applaud the government on the rationalisation of such funds in terms of placing them correctly where they should be.

And sir, one of the things that we have heard the previous administration bragging a lot about is the fact, sir, that they have been able to create all these jobs. But one of the points I think that the public need to recognise and take into consideration, by and large, when you look at the fact that they have created these institutions, all of the institutions that they created in the past were in some cases not sustained in any case. And not only that too - that is what they are worrying about in terms of job creation. On the other hand, sir, what we need to do, and many people know, sir, who are in the area of development, feel that what we need to do is to find ways to channel the resources to those persons who we are trying to impact.

We have, sir, a tendency in our society today that when we have a problem in a particular segment of our society, the first thing we like to do is to do a study and we appoint a whole set of consultants. Many times, sir, the persons whom we are targeting sometimes have the solutions. What we need to do, sir, is to be able to deliver the resources that those persons need directly to them. And that is why, sir, I believe that putting those funds in Fund Access at least puts it in the hands of persons, first of all, who have at least a history of involvement serving the small business sector. And not only that too, sir, who by

their long working relationship with those persons understand the nature of the issues that they actually face. So basically you have to really wonder why in the first place those funds were not probably placed with the institutions that are better able to impact on the very target population that you are going after.

So in other words, sir, what we should be seeing in the future as we move forward is the mobilisation of funds that will help those small business persons. And with that too, sir, I want to say that if we are able to do this, what we therefore will be seeing is a greater amount of economic activity among those small business persons. Sir, another issue I just want to raise is the question of entrepreneurship, sir. This government, sir, has promoted that concept in a very real way. And again, sir, I believe that the move by the Minister of Finance in that regard, sir, bears testimony to the fact that the Democratic Party administration, sir, is very serious when it comes to the question of entrepreneurship, because we have heard this being touted by the previous government in a very real way. But on the other hand, sir, in many cases, the resources that are required to support entrepreneurship and to support the initiative of small business people, sir, have not in many cases been provided.

Instead, what we have seen in many cases

is the creation of institutions which actually use up the very resources that are meant to attract, sir, those persons in order to assist them. And I think that we have to be careful that certainly we do not want to go down that pathway. The resources that are provided, perhaps even by the multinational institutions or other institutions that might have monies available, in order to dispense them, we should not go about it by setting up another institution with its own bureaucracy, thereby reducing the effective funds which are actually needed by those stakeholders.

So I really want to compliment the Minister of Finance in terms of that initiative. And I certainly support the move. And I would like to see even further initiatives that seek to identify institutions that want to place funds for that type of development within the country. And that basically, sir, we adopt that approach in the future in terms of proceeding with the use of those funds so that we can have greater impact and greater effect on that particular section, sir, of businesses within the economy. And with that, I support the bill, sir. Thank you very much.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, sir, I think my colleagues have added very well to the discourse on this repeal, and therefore, I do not need to add anything further. So I beg to move that this bill be read a second time.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and the Bill was read a second time.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move that your Honour do now leave the chair, that the House resolves itself into committee for further consideration of this bill.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. J. D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I beg to move, sir, that clause one stand part and be amended to read the Social Investment Fund Repeal Act 2013.

Clause 1, as amended, was passed.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee with an amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Social Investment Fund Repeal Act, 2013.

ORDER NO. 8 – PRECIOUS METALS AND SECONDHAND METALS BILL, 2013

Mr. CLERK: Order number eight, sir. In the name of the Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs, move the second reading of the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Bill 2013.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying that this bill before us is but another example of this government doing the people's business as we were elected to do. There is a problem in this country with respect to - the other way of saying it - with respect to the stealing of metal, of old secondhand metal and the stealing of jewellery. I will deal with them separately.

You would have heard from time to time. In fact, I had promised this Honourable Chamber several months

ago that we would bring this piece of legislation before this Chamber because of the problems that we were encountering and the two Acts that presently govern the sale of old metal - that is, the Old Metal Dealers Act, Chapter 183, and the Sale of All Metals, Chapter 150. I believe that both pieces of legislation are 100 years plus and very outdated. They cannot assist us properly to address this very knotty problem that we are faced with. In fact, the existing piece of legislation has fines of \$48 and other old amounts that certainly cannot be seen as a deterrent in modern Barbados.

We have a situation in terms of metals where households, Mr. Speaker, are deprived of their television antennas. So you imagine - and I am sure it is happening in your constituency - that persons drive around or walk around your constituencies into someone's homes and remove the antenna from the top of your home and your solar water heaters. Imagine, of course - and I have the Minister who is also responsible for Transport and Works beside me - that the grills in the road that are placed there for the protection of the same individuals, that are placed there for the protection of cars and pedestrians, that these grills are taken up and disposed of illegally. That is why we thought that we needed to address this problem urgently, to modernise this legislation, to address and give the police, give the law, the motive to act as a deterrent.

And I will not, Mr. Speaker, go through all of the clauses of the bill. But suffice to say that first and foremost, one of the things that we recognised was that in order to serve as a deterrent, we first needed to ensure that there is better policing of those persons involved in the industry - those persons involved in the scrap metal industry and, of course, those persons involved in the secondhand jewellery industry.

I want to say, for the benefit of my colleagues and for the benefit of the public, that we met with the old metal dealers, that we met with those involved in the secondhand jewellery trade. And we recognise that there are many hardworking Barbadians involved in legitimate enterprise. However, the fact that there is a problem suggests that somewhere along the line individuals are still able to dispose of their ill-gotten gains. And that is what we want to address.

Just this morning, driving down to Parliament, I heard on the news of two youngsters accused of stealing metal worth \$6 000. Here is the problem, sir. As you very well know, you have a situation where either a home or a business is deprived of its metal. But then you also have the situation where these two youngsters - as you very well know, as a fellow Member of Parliament - that it causes considerable hardship to their families. In many instances, when someone is charged like this, there is hardship in terms of the person who has been deprived of their goods,

and then there is hardship in terms of the families having to deal with the fact that one of their loved ones has run afoul of the criminal justice system, and usually they come to you asking for assistance and guidance, and their tears, et cetera. And if nothing else, I want to say to our young people in particular that we need to put an end to these practices, that we need to put an end to the stealing of precious metals, the stealing of secondhand metals, and certainly we want to put an end to the stealing of jewellery.

I would have said earlier today that just on Sunday I received a report of a lady on her way to church being deprived of her bangles and jewellery in broad daylight on her street. Now, the modernisation of the legislation alone will not put an end - and we are not saying it will put an end - to these practices, but certainly we believe that we are now in a better position, that is, that the police, as a result of the passage of this bill, will be in a better position to arrest - when I say arrest, I mean to grapple with - this problem.

When we met with the scrap metal dealers, we said to them: here is where we were going in terms of the modernisation of the legislation. We want to encourage them, for example, not to pay by cash. We want to encourage them to pay by cheque, so that there is a record. We want to encourage them to take photo IDs of persons from whom they are purchasing the material. We want to encourage them to notify the Royal Barbados Police Force of the material that they have purchased and from whom they have purchased it. And we want to encourage them not to dispose of the material within a specified period of time. And they said to us, yes, that they understand what we were trying to do and that they would comply.

And the reason why I am making that point is that in drafting this bill and in consulting with those involved in the industry, we were able to reach consensus in terms of the way forward. So many of the provisions in this bill are actually now being practised by scrap metal dealers and by those involved in the sale of secondhand jewellery. So I want to signal my appreciation for the fact that even before this bill came to Parliament, many of them are indeed practising what the bill, once enacted, will require them to do in terms of their day-to-day activities.

So if you, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow or after the passage of this bill, want to dispose of scrap metal, the dealer will be required to take photo ID, to make a record of the transaction, will be required to notify the Royal Barbados Police Force within 24 hours of the transaction, will be required not to alter the state of the metal for a specified period of time - so that in the event that there is an ongoing inquiry, the evidence will still be there - will be required to notify the authorities of the existing place of business, and if there is a change of business, will be required to notify the authorities of any change of business.

We believe that we will be better able to police precious metals and secondhand metals as a result of this piece of legislation.

However, the problem of jewellery is a bit more difficult because, as you very well know, sir, from the information that I have received, not everyone is taking their jewellery to legitimate businesses - as we normally call them, cash for gold - or legitimate businesses to receive cash. Our information is that some individuals are using the jewellery or taking the jewellery to businesses in exchange for other commodities, in exchange for clothing, for example. Our information is that some individuals are collecting the jewellery and taking it out of Barbados in their suitcases, et cetera. There will probably come a point in time when, like in some jurisdictions, we will indeed have to examine bags, including suitcases, at the airport before they leave this jurisdiction, because we are going to have to pay closer attention to any methods used to smuggle these items out of our country.

As I said, the issue of jewellery is more difficult because not everyone will take a piece of ill-gotten jewellery to a business to receive cash in exchange. In that regard, because we recognise that the issue of jewellery will be more difficult, obviously the methods used by the Royal Barbados Police Force in terms of trying to address this issue will indeed be different from the methods used in terms of precious metals and secondhand metals.

In some jurisdictions - Jamaica comes to mind - they in fact put a halt to the trade of secondhand metals. It caused significant problems in their telecommunications sector. It caused significant problems to the electricity providers. It caused significant problems to the telephone providers because persons were stealing the cable. And indeed, it is to my knowledge that Lime here in Barbados has suffered significantly over the last year or two because of individuals who stole the copper and caused them significant losses.

We therefore want - because, as I said, bringing legislation does not solve everything - what we want is to persuade our people that the practice of stealing copper, the practice of stealing secondhand metals, the practice of robbing our brothers and sisters of their jewellery, must end, and that they should find some legitimate way of making a living. That is what we want to say to our people. We do not believe that legislation is everything. And that is why when we go into our constituencies we sit down with our young people and try to persuade them that there is a better way, try to persuade them that even though they may see individuals who they know are involved in illegal practices seemingly living large - as we say locally - it does not mean that is the way that they should follow.

Sir, we are happy that we are able to bring this bill at this point in time. Indeed, so serious am I about my responsibility as Attorney General, and so serious am I about ensuring that we receive as wide information as possible for this bill, that today, sir, I asked the Member for St. James South if he would kindly go down to the opposition chambers and see if he could find anyone there to give them a copy of the bill so they could have any comments that they might have. We did see the car of the Member for St. Joseph, but he was not there - and I am not going to say that he was in the precincts of Parliament. We really wanted to see if they wanted to comment. We understand the games that they were playing, but whether or not they thought that this was important enough to make a contribution, I want to give them the opportunity to make a contribution, because, as I said, sir, we are here doing the people's business, and we recognise that there is a very serious problem, and we recognise that as a government we have to take whatever steps are necessary.

We are not going to eliminate crime completely. We are not going to eliminate these patterns completely, but we will do our best. We will arm our police, we will arm our legitimate dealers so that they can better deal with this problem and so that we can arrest this problem. When I look at our crime statistics for last year, the thing that strikes me most is that serious crime as a whole has been down. But the issue of robberies and burglaries - they have been up. And they have been up because we believe it is because of the sale of jewellery, which is usually stolen either from the person or from residences, and therefore we are paying particular attention to these crimes over the next couple of months.

Sir, the bill also requires legitimate dealers to be registered within three months of the passage of this bill. It will also require dealers, once registered, to notify - well, there is an annual registration process - and of course, if there is any change in locale or if there is any change to the makeup of the business in terms of ownership, that should also be notified, because we want to be able to clearly identify all persons who are engaged in these particular businesses.

We are not attempting - we do not intend - to prohibit legitimate persons from operating their businesses. And that is why I made the point earlier that before drafting, we indeed had wide consultation, because we are not about deterring individuals from carrying on legitimate businesses. We want them to work with us, because whether we like it or not, there is a problem. And it means that persons who are involved in the business must be part of the problem. Because if a chap is going to steal copper from Simmons Electrical in Emerald Park up by me, unless he knows where he is going to dispose of the copper - and he is not going to dispose of the copper by selling it to someone like yourself or me, sir, because we are not

involved in the industry - it means that there are individuals in the industry who are facilitating this illegal activity. And I want, therefore, to say to them that they are causing more harm than good in this country.

Let me give an illustration. When we were moving the office of the Attorney General to Webb's Estate, sir - would you believe that our two buildings had all the cables removed, and that put us back about four months? That put us back about four months because the contractor not only had to reorder, but had to source the materials outside of Barbados again. So it was not only a loss in terms of monetary value, but a loss in terms of our productivity because we were out of our building for that transitional period. And that is the kind of harm that is caused by these individuals. By the removal of copper in particular, as I said, sir, individual householders are attacked, businesses are attacked, public property is attacked, and we therefore need to arrest it, sir.

Finally, I want to say that we have also ensured that in exporting precious metals there is a mechanism - a policing mechanism - that there will be a requirement for the Comptroller of Customs to sign off on any materials going out of Barbados. We will work - when I say we, I mean the Royal Barbados Police Force will work hand in hand with the Customs Department to ensure that this Act is enforced strenuously, sir.

With those few words - because I am sure that there may be an opportunity for me to make additional comments when we look at the bill clause by clause - I was going to close, but I have just been reminded that one thing I needed to bring to the House's attention was the penalties that we are proposing under this bill.

Because, as I said, under the old legislation, you had penalties of \$48, et cetera. That is why we had to modernise this piece of legislation. What the bill requires, as I said, it requires registration. And we want to ensure that persons do register. And one of the first things that we have done is that under this bill, that all persons involved in precious metals and secondhand metals are required to be licensed. And failure to be licensed, one can receive a fine of \$50 000 or a term of imprisonment of ten years, or both. In the case of a company, a fine of \$50 000. Sir, \$50 000 may sound like a lot. Ten years imprisonment is certainly a lot. But we want to send a signal that we are serious about this matter. We want to send a signal that if you want to be involved in this industry legitimately, you must be registered. And the registration process is actually quite simple. So there is no reason why one should have an issue registering under this bill, sir.

So, as I said, there is a penalty of \$50 000 or a term of ten years imprisonment, or both for failure to register with respect to the issue of licensing. As I said, you are

required to advise the authorities if there is a change in your locale or if there is a change in the individuals carrying on the business. We have also proposed a civil penalty of \$50 000 or ten years imprisonment for a person who fails to advise of a change of location to the authority. Because obviously, sir, if we do not know where to find you, how can we police the bill if we do not know where to find your business, sir?

Sir, I should also mention that, as you very well know, we have the secondhand metal dealers, but we also have the secondary metals recyclers. In other words, there are also individuals who the secondhand metals dealers will sell their produce, will sell their products to, and they are also captured under this piece of legislation as drafted. So the message that we are sending is that we have proposed penalties to send a signal that we are serious and we want to make a serious dent on this illicit trade, sir. So again, with those few words, I beg to move that this bill be read a second time.

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

Mr. K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this matter before the House, sir. It is critical, sir, that as society evolves and things change, sir, life sometimes becomes difficult for persons. But fitting, sir, that this Bill is before this House today, and prior to earlier today we dealt with something on the environment, and I believe, sir, that this Bill must be read in conjunction with the whole question of the green economy. When I say that, sir, it speaks to the whole question of persons and their quest to rid Barbados of old metal and old structures, sir, having resort, sir, to making the quest and the endeavour into criminal activities. There have been an increase in criminal activities in relation to robberies, burglaries and other related crimes of theft of property, sir. And it means then, sir, that those persons who are caught within the purpose of this Act, sir - strange to say - listen, we have no problem if you contain your business or want to enter the business of recycling or otherwise. But it must be in a situation where all the activities within this business are of a very high standard and free of criminal activities.

And like the Attorney General said, there is a market. There is a market because this is akin to a form of larceny where persons find themselves not sowing the seeds but wanting to reap. Persons decide that it is not their job or duty to find gainful employment but to decide that they are going to involve themselves in criminal activities, sir, by way of operating under the guise of collecting old metal and copper and all other sorts of material, sir. And as a result of that we are seeing, sir, an escalation of criminal activities within this area, sir, where businesses, sir, and persons who are ordinary residents who are building their homes, sir, have to spend twice and sometimes three times

on the cost of the electrical work that they put in and the metal that they have on their premises, sir.

We are seeing an escalation in crime, sir, where residents are being burgled. They have gone so far, sir, as removing the copper from the solar water heater. So you leave home today with lovely sunshine and return home, sir, to turn on the tap believing, sir, that you have some good natural warm water from the natural resources, sir, only to discover otherwise. I can speak, sir, to this issue with passion because I have suffered the fate of these things that are happening in the society. People look at it as, oh, somebody is removing an old vehicle from this place to the next place - and why bother? Because they have gone so far, not only are they removing the old cars or the old metal, but they have gone so far as to removing material from building sites - steel and all sorts of things. And they do not answer because they already have a market.

I look at the penalty prescribed, and if penalty in legislation were a deterrent, there would be zero crime in the society. Zero. What we deserve is a serious education programme. And not only this debate - this Bill here today, once passed onto the statute books - there is another piece of legislation I leave to the police to address. And as far back as 2004, the report of the National Commission on Law and Order, at page 90, has it to say that we need to have additional police patrols to be maintained in the city and other built-up areas known for high levels of street crimes and other serious crimes such as robberies and attacks on dwelling houses and business places. It is not in 2013 that we recognised this - as far back as 2004. This was a commission that was set up because at that time one crime in 2004 was seen as one too many.

And it did not even stop there. They said that the police should maintain a close working relationship with proprietors of business places through their public crime prevention programme and provide pertinent information to the proprietors and employees. They were to ensure that every effort was made to intensify and expand opportunities for the public to provide the police with information in a timely manner, sir. So what it is calling for, sir, is all of us working together for the betterment of a better Barbados and a better society, sir. That is what this - as far back as 2004, sir. So it is not by accident, sir, that in 2008 when we came to power we decided that we are concerned about building a society. Because as far back as 2004, the National Commission on Law and Order, sir, recognised that the police cannot do it all by themselves. That the public must play their part, and they can only play their part if there is a relationship between the police and the public.

So I recognise, sir, that this Act is meant to capture things. But as the Attorney General said, every person who

commits a robbery will not go to an old metal dealer. It means then, sir, that there is still another problem. And what we should look at now, sir, is how we can address that problem by way of legislation. Because the legislation is there - you have the Theft Act to deal with that issue where persons dishonestly receive stolen property. That is there. What we need, sir, is every citizen of this country putting their hands to the plough and their hearts and minds and saying that Barbados belongs to us. It does not belong to the Democratic Labour Party. It does not belong to the Barbados Labour Party, who decide that they are not going to come to work to help protect the society. It belongs to all Barbadians and they must play a part.

So those persons who want to stay away from their responsibility, and then when the Prime Minister sees fit, sir, to call the election, then to come and parade - but the people have given them a mandate: come and represent me and serve this country for five years - and they decide that they are not coming. Their calculation and their method of mathematics does not fall within the constitutional framework of this country, sir. So that is why a very important piece of legislation like this, sir, concerns the life of every Barbadian. Because, sir, I am saying, sir, that if I am constructing a home, sir, and it means that when the electrician comes, sir, and puts in the electrical work, and the material is removed - I have to go, sir, to look for fresh material and I have to pay the electrician more money. It means that my family will suffer. It means that the electrician has to spend longer on a job so he cannot go on to the next job to enhance the development of his family, sir.

So we might want to trivialise it, sir, but this is not a trivial matter, sir - this legislation, sir. And I will say again, there is always a little warning on the horizon. When the whole question that we raised about crime and violence - the Democratic Labour Party and the Mayor, God bless him in his grave in St. John Parish churchyard - they said the worst things about him, sir, in relation to when he talked about crime and violence, sir. But now they are grappling with the problem. These little indicators were on the horizon but the Barbados Labour Party, in their quest for wealth, did not care about protecting society. So they continue to rant and rave like a raging bull. You see, when you put up a red flag and you see a bull, you see how a bull behaves. So the red flag is up and they are ranting and raving. Only want to destroy this poor little Barbados, sir.

You know why, sir? And I will continue to say that akin behaviour, sir, to the animal that we call the pig - when you feed him, sir, and his belly is full, and then after a while it becomes empty. After a while their belly is empty. No cause - they are five years in starvation, sir. So you can imagine the state of the pig pen, sir - every piece of cement has been dug up and the trough no longer exists. No longer exists, sir. And I think, sir, it is critical that we

continue to say this here because people might see that this is a joke, but it is no joke. But now an elder does not want to fool people. They came, sir, with this big crowd, according to them, at the mouth of the treasury. I said, let me bring a big mass - let me try to get a big mass - to see if they get enough feed to feed the pigs to get the door of the treasury raised. But they failed in the quest. They failed, Mr. Speaker. They brought the picture right outside, right outside, and want to curse every person on their side. Every person on their side who is not a fool is the next thing, sir.

I want to read this here to them, sir - a piece of scripture about the warrior. So let me understand, sir, that this society that the Democratic Labour Party have presided over for the last five years, to raise the standard of living and the moral parameters of the society, will remain the bedrock of this society, sir. And they talk about the warrior God, sir. What kind of God am I trusting? And this was God's response: The Lord himself will fight for you. You will not have to lift a finger in your defence. And that came, sir, from Exodus 14, verse 14, sir. The Lord is a warrior. Yes, the Lord - in his name. Exodus 15, verse three. Each one of you will put to flight one thousand of the enemies. They brought one thousand five hundred and call them, sir - nine thousand for the Lord. Your God fights for you just as he has promised. Joshua 23, verse ten. And you are trusting a God who is a mighty warrior, always ready to fight for you. When enemies come against you, they come against the Lord as well. Ultimately, victory is assured. When you let the Lord fight your battle, he also turns your enemies against each other so that they destroy themselves while you walk away unscathed. This is God's promise to this country, sir.

The Lord stands beside me like a warrior. Before him they will stumble. They cannot defeat me. They will be shamed and totally humiliated. Their dishonour will never be forgotten, sir. So let me read that part again, sir. The Lord stands beside me like a great warrior. Before him they will stumble. They cannot defeat me. They will be shamed and truly humiliated. Their dishonour will never be forgotten. At Jeremiah 20, verse eleven, sir. If you look at those words, sir, it means that people do not recognise that the Democratic Labour Party have fought for the righteousness of this country, sir. But, sir, this is what Jeremiah had to say, sir - this dishonour will never be forgotten in this country. They can say what they want to say about this humble servant - the son of a hawker. But they will not be able to stop this humble servant. Somebody has to speak about honesty. According to Jeremiah, it will not be forgotten. It is written in Jeremiah 20, verse eleven, sir. And it speaks, sir, to the dishonest ways. He who comes to equity must come with clean hands. He who comes to govern this country must also come with clean hands. He who wants to govern this country must, if they want to come to govern this country

again, come with clean hands. Their hands are soiled. So equity will prevail in this country.

So that is why, sir, let me look at matters that touch and concern law and order in this country. This is why, sir, they have said - I wonder, sir, I recognise, sir, that I believe they had hints, sir, that we were going to discuss something called law and order in this country today. Last week we heard nothing about their boycott. But I believe somebody must have told them, sir, that we are bringing this Old Metal Dealers Bill, sir. You see, so because this Old Metal Dealers Bill, sir - the piece of metal that you put at the bottom of the trough when the pig is rattling at the door. So it all relates to some old metal, sir - that you get the old piece of metal, you put it at the bottom to stop them, sir, from getting through those doors, sir. They would not be here because this piece of legislation touches and concerns all metal dealers and in relation to premises where old metals are being stored, sir.

They cannot accuse this Government, sir, of bringing legislation to this House when they are absent, sir, to discriminate and cause all sorts of problems in society, sir - until December 31, 2027, sir. Therefore the people of course will hang up. But they will never get the opportunity to accuse this Democratic Labour Party Government of bringing things through the back door. We came to the people and asked for a mandate. The people have given us the mandate and we are doing exactly what the people have asked us to do, sir. They had a mandate for 14 years, sir. And we can see, sir, that the social fabric of the society has deteriorated, sir. Under their watch the rich got richer and the poor got poorer. But, sir, they should, sir, remember some good songs by Brother Bob, sir. Those words, sir, that Brother Bob preached, sir. And they recognise, sir, that the people in this country recognise that some of them will eat and drink with you and then behind your back they will sue you, sir. What that voice is saying is that these people eat and drink with the people of this country but destroy the social fabric of this society, sir.

We are saying that Barbados is a society, and if you have a society, yes, sir, we have the economic activities and we have all the social fabric - by preaching those words. And they recognise that, sir. And we held fast to hold all public servant jobs together. But I believe, sir, that in their quest for privatising everything, sir, sooner or later they will advertise the treasury for their friends too. But they can root and root from now until the cows come home. No - the cows have come. So I think what you do is have the pigs independent. You go outside for the cows and bring them home. That will not happen. That will not happen, sir. The people of Barbados will not be fooled, sir.

I also want to commend, sir, the good work of the people from the Solicitor General's Chambers in the drafting and bringing of this piece of legislation.

But what I want, sir, to see is that this legislation not only pass here today and go and be another citation on these law books - I want to see the Government Information Service, the Nation newspaper, the Advocate, Barbados Today, CBC play a critical role in educating Barbadians in relation to species at the state, and not only in their quest to support another people's belief in all their polls. Let me have an educational programme in relation to this piece of legislation that is critical. It is critical, sir, that persons in this country understand why this legislation came, the purpose of this legislation, and the ultimate reason that this legislation and the purposes we want to serve by bringing this legislation, sir. So you want all those organisations to have a voice, and the Attorney General to bring it, sir. I will be calling on the Attorney General, sir.

Prime ministers - this parliament comes to an end on the fifth and 11th February. So there is talk about - let the other side not call no shots for this government, sir. They will never be able to call shots for themselves, sir. They can't even call shots for themselves, because they say, sir, that boycott - but yes, some persons still come up, turn up, sir. Some people still turn up. And I went - oh, that Minister decided to boycott, to turn up, sir. But the circumstances were completely different and decided and judged on different sets of circumstances and facts. So, sir, their problem. Their problem, sir.

And, sir, through every opportunity they get, sir, they try to defend as to why a member of theirs turned up. Then they said, for the people's business, but turn up to the lunchroom, member. You have five minutes. Parliament. And today the Deputy Speaker - the opposition vehicle in parliament. I have no reason to bring my vehicle. The Deputy Leader, sir - I have no reason to bring my vehicle in here to park it, or to go in the opposition office to wait for my lunch to come down. I am no reason. I shall not be seen there, shall not be seen there.

So let us ask Barbadians - their boy fi boycott Broad Street. Tell me in God's conscience what reason I have driving up Broad Street. But if I boycott Broad Street, if I boycott the Parliament, what reason do I have to be in Parliament? There has to be a reason. And I only come here on Tuesday to do the people's business that the good people of St. Michael East have sent me here to do. And I know whenever the Prime Minister decides that it is time for me to go back to the polls, that they will say, listen, you are the best man to look after our affairs again, despite all the noise and all they talk. My record in Parliament, outside of Parliament, as a minister, conscientiously will speak for itself. I am not the one to shout and bring the press all the time.

But I am saying, sir, I fully support this legislation. And I reiterate - do not let this piece of legislation be a mere statistic on the law books of this country, but make

sure that all the organs that have the authority and the privilege to carry the message to the masses do that, sir. And with these brief remarks, I close. I support this bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. Thank you very much. Yes. Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my support to this bill, which seeks to put in place a number of controlling measures to bring some kind of focus and direction to the trade of precious metals and secondhand metals. The first thing I would like to say in this debate, Mr. Speaker, is that this legislation has come before this House at a time when we have placed on record our determination that once issues of grave importance to the public come to the attention of this government, that we will move rapidly to ensure that we put in place the necessary legislative solutions to ensure that the problems can be addressed. And I must acknowledge the very timely intervention of the Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs and his team in first of all looking at this particular issue and taking it through the various steps of approvals, both at the level of the Cabinet and then finally the House, and bringing to this chamber an improved process and system by which we could bring some order to this very troubling issue.

I think Barbadians would recognise that the issue of the illegal trade in metals, both precious metals and certainly those that are secondhand, has created havoc in Barbados, particularly for those companies whose business it is to either produce products or provide services that depend on the use of metals. In particular, Mr. Speaker, copper - and we have seen a trend in Barbados of recent vintage where persons would help themselves to copper in particular, and I speak in particular to the copper which is used on the various utility companies, the poles and so on in Barbados. And the result has been, in many cases, deprivation by customers and clients of services. And those services, of course, which many Barbadians rely on, have impacted negatively on their businesses and has also impacted negatively on their ability to conduct their day-to-day activities. So I believe that this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, that has been put forward to this House as a lasting and durable solution to this issue must be embraced by all Barbadians.

This issue, Mr. Speaker, is of particular importance because I believe this bill, which seeks to repeal two very old bits of legislation - the Old Metals Dealers Act, which would have come into operation as far back as 1919, and the Sale of Old Metals Act, which came into operation in 1848 - and since, of course, this legislation has been in place, there has by and large been little review of the efficacy or certainly any major changes to the system which would have been inscribed in law.

I want to say that this particular bill before the House meets certainly my admiration because it certainly goes a long way, not only in relation to creating a regime which is very easy to access. It does not in any way provide mechanisms that will, in my view, impede the process of business by those persons whose lawful operations of business have been engaging for many years. It is not the intention to interfere with those business entities and individuals whose lawful business it is to operate and engage in matters in relation to precious metals and certainly secondhand metals. In fact, it is my view that by bringing some order to what has obviously emerged as a system in need of structure, a system in need of modernisation, that this bill will, in fact, improve and increase the occurrence of commerce in this particular sector. It actually pulls the sector directly into the 21st century and seeks by legislation to modernise the way in which persons who are engaged legitimately in this business conduct themselves.

I am impressed, Mr. Speaker, by a number of features of the bill which, in my view, not only calls for application before the magistrate - it is certainly not a matter for the High Court. We know that there are several administrative matters that reside with the magistrates because it is certainly accessible. It is easier to go before a magistrate to have matters of this kind adjudicated. And the system by which the magistrate operates, as we know, lends itself to a much more user-friendly and expeditious means of servicing this. And therefore I believe that by ensuring that these matters can remain within the domain of the magistrates, it is certainly a step in the right direction.

I also want to say that the procedure of application and certainly the flexibility which is inherent in the bill - where, for example, although there are timescales to be adhered to, there is flexibility whereby applicants can make application to the Commissioner of Police in certain circumstances and therefore the time limits can be waived and looked at to ensure, of course, that no injustice is meted out to those applicants.

I also am impressed too that the bill calls for a number of procedures which are now going to be protected by confidentiality under this bill. And I know that once we are dealing with business transactions and given the requirement of the bill to disclose not only the name and business place and certain personal information by applicants, and also where the police is acting on certain information and takes certain steps pursuant to the bill, the actual act of dealing with that requires the placing of confidential information in the hands of members of the Royal Barbados Police Force. And the bill, very wisely, Mr. Speaker, creates a very solid footing upon which confidential information is safeguarded. In fact, the bill requires that information be treated confidentially, and

even at the level of members of the Royal Barbados Police Force who have a very critical role to play in the enforcement of this particular bill, any breaches of confidentiality will be met by certain sanction under this bill and certain disciplinary proceedings can ensue if in fact it is found after due process that the confidentiality requirements of this bill are not adhered to.

I also would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that the bill puts in place a number of safeguards. We have had, for example, in Barbados, the rapid sale and exchange of metals at various levels. In fact, I believe the transactions occur so swiftly - the exchange of cash for metals takes place in an uncontrolled manner without any ability to trace the transaction, to record the transaction. And certainly the very important aspect of being able to ascertain the source of these metals has really been, to my mind, at the very heart of the problem, where anybody, whoever they may be, can go anywhere, take some copper from wherever they have taken it from, and can enter a transaction and have that metal pass for money in a rather swift way. I believe that once this bill is appropriately administered and policed, that the regime now for the legitimate sale and exchange of precious metals and secondhand metals makes it extremely difficult for persons to release illegal metals in a transaction.

And I want to commend the process by which persons engaged in the legitimate trade of these metals must now exchange cheques. In other words, you cannot, under this bill, exchange cash for metals which are received in the process of a legitimate trade. And I think that is a step in the right direction, because, of course, you know, there can be no trace of cash. And having a system by which you have to produce a cheque does suggest that that particular problem has been seized and understood by the drafters of the legislation, and therefore will make it extremely difficult for that.

I am also impressed, Mr. Speaker, by the penalties - as stated by the Attorney General. I mean, certainly under the old legislation, the current legislation, that is, the penalties were extremely slender. I believe \$48, or a fine of, alternatively, a sentence of up to three months imprisonment, really could not be seen in 2013 as a deterrent or an effective deterrent to the commission of an offence under those laws. And therefore, I believe that the increase of the fines to, I believe, the amount of \$50 000 should certainly be a deterrent.

But I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that having very promptly brought to this House a bill designed to cure or to control this very vexing and troubling problem, I believe that is the first stage of the process. And the process must also be one of eternal vigilance, particularly by those persons who are lawfully engaged in this trade. Those persons who will be required to register under this bill

themselves will have to be vigilant in the course of their business, protect their business from persons who are engaged in illegal action. And I say that because, of course, by not doing so, persons who are caught, having obviously fallen prey to the conniving of persons who are involved in illegal activity, that alone can imperil the business of persons who are in the legitimate trade of metals. And I want to signal that there is going to be need for vigilance on their part. There is also going to be need for vigilance on the part of the police and those persons who are involved in administering this bill. Once that is done, Mr. Speaker, I am very confident that this bill can be a lasting solution to a problem that has continued for quite some while.

I am happy to be part of a government that has been able, within a short space of time, to not only analyse a problem that has been complained of for so many years, but once again, within a relatively short space of time, being able to bring a legislative solution to this House as a means of creating confidence in the sector, not only at the level of private citizens who can be assured that at least in the event that their precious jewellery, their precious metals are stolen, that the system has been so tightened as to make it more difficult for persons who are operating illegally to do so. It should also, Mr. Speaker, add some confidence to a business, a trade that has been with us for so many years. The trade in metals, both precious and secondhand metals, has been with us for so many years - it is one of the oldest businesses certainly in the world. However, it has not been fortunate enough to escape, particularly, some of the most sophisticated kinds of criminals that exist not only in Barbados but across the globe. And therefore, jurisdictions like Barbados have found it necessary to move with swiftness to bring such protective legislation to ensure that all persons who need the protection of the law can have that protection.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I want to again restate my support for this bill. I believe that it is a solution brought within a rather expeditious time, and I believe that it certainly will provide some comfort to many of the persons, including businesses, that have been complaining for some time now about a growing trend which, if left unchecked, can only bring about an atmosphere of lack of confidence in the system and certainly a loss of profits, a loss of assets - the value of the assets which have been used by those persons involved in the illegal trade to enrich themselves in a manner that is contrary to the law. With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. The Honourable Attorney General.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is left for me to do is to thank the honourable members on this side, those who have spoken

this afternoon, and all honourable members who from time to time will have spoken about the importance of bringing this bill to Parliament. I also want to use this opportunity to thank the drafters who - for once, as Attorney General, I am usually very patient and understanding - for once, because in particular the Police felt that we needed to treat this matter with a sense of urgency, as did I. For once, I must confess that I was behind my colleagues saying, please, can we get this done? And they were kind enough to ensure that - when I say colleagues, I meant the drafters, I meant the Chief Parliamentary Counsel's office - they were kind enough to ensure that we were able to have this bill before us this afternoon. So with those few words, then, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this bill be read a second time.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and the Bill was read a second time.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that you do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a committee for further consideration of this bill.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. J. D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Part I, Clauses 1 - 3, inclusive, were called and passed.

Part II, Clauses 4 - 13, inclusive, were called.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, under part two, I thought I would just bring certain clauses to the attention of this chamber. In particular, I would have mentioned that there is a compulsory registration and there is a penalty for failure to register - a penalty of \$50 000 or imprisonment of ten years for an individual, or \$50 000 where the person is a company. That is dealt with in clause four. Clause five deals with the application process and tells you the information that will be required in the application, whether you be an individual or a company. Clause six sets out certain circumstances under which a licence may be refused, and in particular, a licence may be refused if there is a breach of a provision of this Act, or if a person has been convicted of a breach of a provision of this Act, an offence of handling stolen jewellery or secondhand metals, or an offence involving fraud under an enactment. Clause seven tells you the types of licences that are available - that is, a precious metals dealer's licence and a secondhand metal dealer's licence. Having obtained your licence from the magistrate in the jurisdiction where you are operating, you are required under clause eight to

register with the Police Force at the central police station. And that registration is important because, as I said, what we want to do is to ensure that the Police are informed of transactions. And obviously, for the Police to be informed of transactions, they must know who the dealers are. So therefore, within seven days of obtaining your licence under clause eight, you are required to provide the Police Force at the central police station with that information. Again, it should be noted - to send the signal of how serious we are about this legislation - if you fail to register with the Police Force, or if you knowingly provide false information to a member of the Police Force, then you could be guilty of an offence. Clause seven provides a penalty, again, of \$50 000 or imprisonment of ten years, or both, where you knowingly provide false information to the Police. Clause nine requires the Police to maintain a register of precious metals and secondhand metals dealers, and that will be in written or electronic form. Under clause ten, you are required - that is, having obtained a licence - to have that licence displayed at the address where you are carrying on your business. It is also required, where there is a change of premises of the business, and this is under clause eleven, that you notify the Police of any change. And again, there is a penalty if you fail to notify the Police of any change of business.

So, as I said, sir, the licensing process is quite simple. The Police are then required to maintain a register, and of course, this is a confidential register. Dealers having obtained a licence will be required to display that licence, whether it be a precious metals dealer's or a secondhand metals dealer's licence. They will be required to have that licence displayed on their premises, situated at the address given on the licence, so that when you go into those premises, you will be able to see that this is a licensed dealer under this piece of legislation. So with those few words again on these particular clauses, I beg to move that part two, that is clauses four to 13, stand part.

Part II, Clauses 4 - 13, inclusive, were passed.

Part III, Clauses 14 - 24, inclusive, were called.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Clauses 14 to 24. Again, Mr. Chairman, I would like to just spend a couple of minutes going through these clauses, because they are important. Having now obtained a licence, we want to place a regime in place where records of transactions are maintained, because, as I said in my earlier presentation, we want to be able to trace the source of any illegal metals or jewellery, and therefore it is important for us to encourage our dealers to have a record of transactions. It is to be noted under clause 14. And I want to read clause 15. Clause 15(1) says: where a precious metals dealer or a secondhand metals dealer engages in the purchase of a precious metal or a secondhand metal, as the case may be, from a person, he shall pay that person for the purchase by

a cheque. Clause 15(2): a precious metals dealer or a secondhand metals dealer who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable on indictment to a fine of \$50 000 or imprisonment for ten years, or to both, where the person is an individual; or \$50 000 where the person is a company. I want to read that because that is one of the material changes and I believe one of the significant changes in the way business will be conducted. As I would have said in this honourable Parliament and in other places, we want to take the cash out of cash for gold, and therefore this clause requires persons to be paid by cheque. The cheque obviously enables us - the authorities - in any event that is required, to be able to trace that cheque to an individual or a company. So therefore, just to repeat, clause 15 we believe is significant and should serve as an additional deterrent to those individuals who are now involved in this illegal trade.

Clause 17 requires a precious metals dealer or a secondhand metals dealer to only issue a cheque to an individual where they have received proper identification, so that if James Paul is involved in a transaction, they must satisfy themselves that it is James Paul who is in front of them via a piece of identification, whether it be a passport or national ID. So there is a link between the cheque and the individual, and of course, a record of that individual must be maintained. As I said, what we are trying to do is to ensure that there is a proper paper trail. Again, this section requires - when I say us, I really mean the dealer - also to keep a record of the item received, and in particular clause 19(3). I want to bring to your attention the requirement for the licensee to maintain a description of the precious metal or the secondhand metal, including, where applicable, unique identification marks, including numbers or letters, engravings, patterns, brand name, model number, serial number of the manufacturer, colour, weight, metal type, content, a description of gemstones, the number of gemstones where applicable, and the sum of money stated on the cheque that a person receives or pays in relation to the transaction. In other words, we want to have as tight a paper trail as possible of every transaction.

Just one other point that I want to make under this part, which is that licensees would also be required to maintain records of transactions for two years. We believe that this is important and we have also provided a penalty where a licensee fails to maintain records for two years - under clause 20 of the bill - of \$10 000 or imprisonment for two years, where the person is an individual dealer, or \$10 000 where the licensee is a company. We would have discussed the importance of maintaining records with existing dealers, so they are very aware of what we had intended. And as I said in my presentation earlier,

there is also a requirement - and I therefore refer you to clause 22 - that there is a requirement for licensees to submit a copy of a record of a transaction with a person to

a member of the Police Force at the central police station within 24 hours of the completion of the transaction. Again, that may sound onerous to some persons, but it is already in practice where indeed existing dealers have been faxing information to the Royal Barbados Police Force. They know the officer at the Force who is in charge of this particular issue. So it is not a case where there is not existing cooperation, and we believe that this is important. Obviously it is important, sir, because if there is a case where the Royal Barbados Police Force receives notification of a theft of gemstones or copper or jewellery, it may be able to look at their records to see whether or not those copper or gemstones were part of a transaction with a licensee. So that is important to us. And as I said, sir, we are already receiving cooperation from existing business dealers. And I would have said earlier in my presentation that there is also a requirement regarding the exportation of precious metals and secondhand metals - there is a requirement for the approval of the Controller of Customs to inspect the precious metal or secondhand metal. And again, there will be cooperation between the Royal Barbados Police Force and the Controller of Customs to ensure that there is proper policing of transactions under this bill. So with those few words, again, I beg to move that part three, that is clauses 14 to 24, stand part.

Part III, Clauses 14 - 24, inclusive, were passed.

Part IV, Clauses 25 - 28, inclusive, were called and passed.

Part V, Clauses 29 - 32, inclusive, were called and passed.

The First, Second and Third Schedules became the First, Second and Third Schedules to the Bill.

On the motion of Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Act, 2013.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, sir, with that we have come to the end of Government Business for today and I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, January 29, 2013.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, January 29, 2013 at 10.00 a.m. was put and

resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

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BOYCE, Hon. J. D. E. (Christ Church South)
BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. D. (St. Philip South)
KELLMAN, Hon. D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. S. A. (Christ Church West Central)
PAUL, Mr. J. D. (St. Michael West Central)
SINCKLER, Hon. C. P. (St. Michael North West)
TODD, Hon. P. 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 correcting and preparing this report. Members are named as in the 2008–2013 Parliament.

Q1. Front matter. The source does not record the PRESENT list, the officiant at Prayers, the confirmation of the Minutes or the opening of Papers; the record begins with Hon. J. D. E. Boyce laying the second and third of a series of Duties, Taxes and Other Payments Exemption Orders. The Members listed are those identified from the record; the time of meeting, 10.00 a.m., is as stated in the source. Please supply from the Votes and Proceedings.

Q2. Throughout. The source supplies the sitting in four Parts that are not in order of time. Part 2 covers the morning business to the opening of the Committee of Supply; Part 4 the Committee of Supply to the luncheon suspension at 2.00 p.m.; Part 1 the resumed Committee of Supply to the suspension at 3.05 p.m.; and Part 3 the resumption to the adjournment. They are printed in that order, which Mr. SPEAKER's statements at each resumption support. Please confirm.

Q3. Throughout. The bracketed time-checks in the source are out of sequence (for example '[12.30 a.m.]' and '[3.00 a.m.]' during the afternoon business) and have been omitted.

Q4. Suspension of Standing Orders. The source reads 'Standing Orders 61(6), 18, 20, 42, 54(3) and 44' (captions: '616, 18, 2042, 543 and 44'). Printed as Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44, the list usually suspended. Please confirm.

Q5. Order No. 7, Committee of Supply. Mr. CHAIRMAN is not named in the source; the Chairman of Committees, Mr. J. D. Paul, is presumed. The first call in Committee, 'Honourable Member for St. Philip South', is headed Mr. SPEAKER in the source and is printed under Mr. CHAIRMAN. The Head 30 amount is not stated.

Q6. Order No. 7, Hon. A. D. Brathwaite and Mr. K. St.C. Best. Part 2 ends during the Attorney-General's speech on Head 30 and Part 4 begins during it. Mr. Best's speech has no call from the Chair, and he says 'I rise again' and refers to 'my first contribution to this debate'; the Attorney-General answers 'my colleague from St. Philip North'. Earlier contributions to the debate on Head 30 appear to be missing. Please check against the recording.

Q7. Order No. 7 and Order No. 8, Mr. K. St.C. Best. Headed 'HON. TREVOR A. PRESCOD' and 'HON.

TREVOR A. PRESCOD, J.P., M.P. (St. Michael East)' in the source. Mr. Prescod was not a Member of the 2008–2013 House. The Member for St. Michael East was Mr. K. St.C. Best, the Deputy Speaker, speaking from the floor; under Order No. 8 Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for St. Michael East. Printed under Mr. K. St.C. BEST. Please confirm.

Q8. Order No. 7, before the luncheon suspension. Mr. SPEAKER states that the Chairman 'has reported progress and asked leave to sit again'. The motion to report progress is not recorded.

Q9. Resumption, Committee of Supply. Mr. SPEAKER says the House will return to the Committee of Supply; the House going into Committee is not otherwise recorded.

Q10. Committee of Supply, Hon. P. M. T. Todd. Headed 'HON. MICHAEL A. LASHLEY, S.C., M.P.' in the source (captions: 'Hon. Patrick M.T. Todd'). Mr. CHAIRMAN called the Member for the City of Bridgetown and the speaker says 'as Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown', so the speech is printed under Hon. P. M. T. TODD. Please confirm.

Q11. Order No. 6. The Clerk's reading gave 'Land Tax Valuation Bill 2013' (captions: 'tax valuation Bill 2030'). In Committee the Minister first moved that the Bill be cited as the 'Land Tax Amendment Act 2013', then corrected himself ('Land Valuation. Land Valuation Amendment 2030'); he moved its passing as the Land Valuation Amendment Act 2013. The title is printed as the Land Valuation Amendment Bill, 2013, and the clause 1 amendment in its corrected form. Please confirm the title.

Q12. Order No. 4. Order No. 4 was taken after Orders Nos. 5 and 6, as in the source; the Clerk's '2030' is corrected to 2013. After the Minister's speech the source has Mr. SPEAKER proposing the question ('the question is that this bill be read a second time') and the captions add 'Sorry, Lucy'; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman then spoke. Printed as a call to the Member for St. Lucy.

Q13. Order No. 8, Hon. S. A. Lashley. Headed 'HON. MICHAEL A. LASHLEY, S.C., M.P.' in the source (captions: 'Hon. Stephen A. Lashley'). Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for Christ Church West Central, who in 2008–2013 was Hon. S. A. Lashley, so the speech is printed under that name. Please confirm.

Q14. Committee stages, Orders Nos. 5, 6, 4 and 8. Mr. CHAIRMAN is not named in the source; Mr. J. D. Paul is presumed. The Committee stages are condensed to

the Official Report formulae. Clause 1 of each of the first three Bills was amended to correct its citation. On Order No. 8 the Attorney-General's explanations of Parts II and III are kept; no amendments were made.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 22, 2013, with Mr. SPEAKER presiding. The record begins during Papers, with the Leader of the House, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, laying two Duties, Taxes and Other Payments Exemption Orders, 2012. Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 were suspended for the remainder of the sitting, and under Order No. 7 the House went into Committee of Supply on a Resolution to grant \$524 385 from the Consolidated Fund under Supplementary Estimates No. 15, 2012 - 2013.

On Head 30, Attorney General, Hon. A. D. Brathwaite said that the supplementary related to salaries in his Office. He spoke of rebuilding the moral fabric of society and neighbourliness, citing Sandy Hill in his constituency. He went on to the need for higher productivity, including online searches at the Corporate Affairs department, and to delays in the courts. He also spoke of the Police Complaints Authority and his wish to see coroner's inquiries ended. Mr. K. St.C. Best renewed his call for state attorneys to be available to persons held at police stations. He cited page 64 of the Auditor General's report for 2011 on a police station contract, arguing that \$2.6 million could have improved the justice system, and urged the proclamation of the Evidence Act provisions on video-recording confessions. Before the luncheon suspension the Chairman reported progress, and the House was suspended until 2.00 p.m.

When the House resumed in Committee of Supply, Hon. P. M. T. Todd spoke of community policing in the City of Bridgetown, the DARE programme, Teen Challenge and the value of forensic science. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce spoke of the entertainment areas of Dover, St. Lawrence Gap and Oistins in his constituency, of noise and parking, and of the work of the Oistins Fish Festival committee and the Dreammakers Millennium Foundation. Winding up, Hon. A. D. Brathwaite stressed forensic

services and a burglary study linking offences to drug and alcohol use. Head 30, Head 19, Treasury (\$221 000), and Head 73, Ministry of the Environment and Drainage (\$39 000), were passed. The Resolution was reported, read a first and second time and agreed to, and the House was suspended until 3.25 p.m.

After the suspension Hon. A. D. Brathwaite gave notice of the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Bill, 2013, which was read a first time. Under Order No. 5 Hon. C. P. Sinckler moved the second reading of the Land Tax Amendment Bill, 2013, which raises the land tax rebate for pensioners from 50 per cent to 60 per cent with effect from April 1, 2011, and waives penalties and interest on arrears. Under Order No. 6 he moved the Land Valuation Amendment Bill, 2013, which lets hoteliers claim the early-payment discount up to March 31, with an interim land tax certificate for liquor licences. Under Order No. 4 he moved the Social Investment Fund Repeal Bill, 2013, saying the fund's balance of \$2.468 million had been put to productive use. Hon. D. St.E. Kellman said that Fund Access had increased its lending from \$3 million to over \$5 million. Hon. P. M. T. Todd described the National Micro Enterprise Grant of up to \$3 000 and an additional \$400 000 for over 132 recipients. Mr. J. D. Paul spoke of small businesses in St. Michael West Central. All three Bills were amended in Committee to correct their citations and were passed.

Under Order No. 8 Hon. A. D. Brathwaite moved the second reading of the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Bill, 2013, replacing laws with fines of \$48. It requires dealers to be licensed by a magistrate and registered with the Police, on pain of a fine of \$50 000 or ten years' imprisonment. Dealers must pay by cheque, take photo identification, report transactions to the Police within 24 hours and keep records for two years. Mr. K. St.C. Best supported the Bill, arguing that penalties alone did not deter and calling for public education, with reference to the 2004 report of the National Commission on Law and Order. Hon. S. A. Lashley welcomed the repeal of the Old Metals Dealers Act of 1919 and the Sale of Old Metals Act of 1848. The Attorney-General explained Parts II and III in Committee, and the Bill passed without amendment as the Precious Metals and Secondhand Metals Act, 2013. On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce the House adjourned until Tuesday, January 29, 2013 at 10.00 a.m.