
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2013 – 2018

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

The House of Assembly resumed on Tuesday, March 19, 2013, the Sitting of Monday, March 18, 2013 having been suspended.

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)
Her Honour Mrs. M-J. M. THOMPSON (Deputy Speaker)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE, Q.C.
Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN (Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development)
Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P.
Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE (Minister of Health)
Hon. S. D. BLACKETT (Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development)
Mr. J. D. PAUL (Chairman of Committees)
Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE (Minister of Drainage and the Environment)
Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE (Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs)
Hon. S. A. LASHLEY (Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth)
Hon. D. O'N. INNISS (Minister of Industry, International Business and Commerce and Small Business Development)
Hon. C. P. SINCKLER (Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)
Mr. T. A. PRESCOD
Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS
Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC
Mr. E. G. HINKSON

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND
Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW

ORDER NO. 1 – APPROPRIATION BILL, 2013

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning, honourable members. This sitting, this august chamber is resumed - yesterday evening when the suspension was taken. We were on Order Number One and with that we shall continue. Yes, the honourable member for St. George South.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a contribution to this debate on a few areas that concern the many citizens of Barbados and in particular the many citizens of St. George South. But let me first start by saying, as I add voice to this estimate, I again wish to thank the people of St. George South for affording me the opportunity to give voice to their fears, concerns and aspirations. I have a deep desire to bring recovery from the past five years of neglect. And in so doing, on these floors as I stand, I will air at all times the concerns of the people of St. George South with a view that my vision for St. George South will be realised - to the benefit of the people of St. George South and to the people of this country.

I will focus my remarks on the Ministry of Transport and Works and this is of great concern to the people of St. George South. The challenges facing the Transport and Works Ministry we would have seen within the last five years. Rural Barbados has been neglected significantly by that Ministry and there are certain indicators dealing with bridges, roadways, drainage issues. These are some of the indicators that are accepted internationally to show whether countries are showing progress. And I wish to say this morning on the floor of this honourable chamber that these indicators are not blinking. And we as a people, whether Democratic Labour Party or Barbados Labour Party, we must fight for the benefit of this country and we must not be partisan in our approach to deal with physical and infrastructural development in this country.

Let me spend a few minutes speaking about St. George South as it relates to roadworks. As I travel through St. George South, the highways and the byways - what I have noticed riding on the roads in St. George South is like riding on a wild horse on a roller coaster filled with potholes, filled with humps. And the slow pace at which some of the roads - the very few roads that have been started and not finished - some of the few roads that have been started: the road from Halton to Brighton, then there is the road at Glenmore Road where my constituency office occupies. And I would ask the member for Christ Church South, in the absence of the member for St. Philip North who has just transitioned into that Ministry - these are some of the roads, the slow pace that has impacted residents significantly. And we would like these roads finished because we know very well that payment to railside and others who are working on these roads have been slow incoming. And it is your duty as a government to ensure that the residents live in peace, live in tranquillity, enjoy those glory days that we once enjoyed under this great party - the 14 years of good infrastructure development and improvement.

So I am urging you, the members on the other side, to act swiftly to bring some resolve to the residents of Byteville on that road from Halton down to Brighton. And it is a request that I have been asked to relay to the members of this honourable House. And we know very well that St. George South has been neglected over the last five years. I know members on the other side live in St. George South, and they themselves know. That is why some of them had to purchase jeeps, because they themselves know travelling on the roads coming from St. Michael, through Buckley factory, heading to the farm at Glenacres. We know when we look at roads such as Border Hall Road, when we go to Campaign Castle - there is no road in Campaign Castle. These are roads that have been promised by the Democratic Labour Party in the last five years: roads at Draxall Woods, roads at Workman. But yet what we have seen is bare promises.

And I know why. Because when you look at this book of estimates, we will get there to see the estimates and what has been cut. When I heard the member for St. Michael North West, the Minister of Finance, asked about cuts - and I look at this estimate and I see why he has a challenge with what has been cut - because what has been placed here under the Ministry of Transport and Works, including the Transport Board, cannot carry any significant repairs over the next year. And there are some areas whereby they are foregone from 2013, 2014. So when you have budgeted money from 2012, from 2013 into 2014, and then you hit your foregone the year following, it is clear that this is some form of fictitious budgeting. And I want the members of the Democratic Labour Party to understand that these are very serious times and we cannot carry on fooling people in this country.

These are things, Mr. Speaker, that we as a people - and I keep saying we have to sit down and we have to forget the partisan politics, and we have to focus on the areas that are really in need of repairs. Mr. Speaker, let me now go into the estimates to review what I call gross under-budgeting and also lack of clarity in the PPP. But let me first start with the PPP. The Minister of Finance, in his long speech yesterday, stated that some \$80 million have been allocated for roadworks in the form of PPP. But I would like the Minister to tell this honourable House what are some of the works that will be carried out with this \$80 million he cited. Areas of St. Lucy, St. Philip, St. Andrew and St. George were not mentioned at all. And I am saying if you travel to St. George - just as bad as St. Andrew and St. Joseph are - you will see the state of the road. So I am asking the Minister of Finance to tell this honourable House what are some of the roadworks that will be carried out under the PPP for the \$80 million that he has allocated.

I have also noticed, Mr. Speaker, the Central Bank report press release of December 2030 and it says private capital inflows of \$600 million are anticipated for activities in tourism and the construction sector. But what it went on to say is that no significant gains in employment are expected. So you have prepared a plan and you are asking me to return to the good people of St. George South to tell them that the estimates have been laid. But in the near future, or should I say the foreseeable future, there are no jobs and unemployment will remain at 11.7 per cent. That is what I am supposed to tell my good people of St. George South. But nonetheless I will carry that story because I am good at dealing with these issues.

As you can see, in the last five years - or within the last two and a half years - what we have done within St. George South, we will continue as a people to reject throne speeches and fiction. Not throne speeches in the throne speech - that was literal. But in the industry we have a word for speeches that are not action-oriented. We call them troll speeches. And with that view, we have rejected the Democratic Labour Party candidate who gives only talk and no action over the last five years. So what I propose to do is to make sure that I challenge the honourable Minister for St. Philip North to get my share of economic development within St. George South. Not only economic development, but social development within St. George South. And that is my mandate as I stand in this honourable House.

We have also learned from the member for St. Michael North East, in her eloquent speech yesterday, that tourism is down, international business is down, and we have lost the unique tax benefit that we have enjoyed with Canada. And these are some of the things that we have to be wary of. Because if we are looking to talk about growth within the key sectors and you have your major sectors not performing, where is the growth in the foreseeable future?

What can I say to the people of this country that the Democratic Labour Party estimates and the Democratic Labour Party throne speech laid in the House has not given us any hope for jobs? Neither has it given us any hope for growth. So these are some of the things that I want the people of this country to understand.

We have a case here in this country where the international business sector, like I said, has declined considerably. We have high net worth individuals who would like to retire in this country, but things are so challenging in terms of the bureaucratic nature of getting things regulated for their families that they seek other alternatives. And we, as a country - these are the two areas that we have to focus on: both the international business sector and the tourist sector, if we are supposed to realise any growth in the foreseeable future.

Page 204 of the estimates - and I am going to spend the next 15 minutes dealing with the estimates. The Ministry of Transport and Works, highway maintenance and construction, is down from \$50 million to \$46 million. And you are then telling me that you have a number of works in your throne speech to execute. In respect of the highway, we in the Barbados Labour Party - well, I should not say put forward to the government, because under Prime Minister Tom Adams, he was a visionary and he saw the need to have a four-lane highway. And when the Democratic Labour Party came into power, the party saw fit to leave the two-lane highway just because they were playing partisan politics. But when you look at what has transpired on the highway, businesses have developed. We have seen foreign exchange being generated when we look at Warrens now - that was a Barbados Labour Party project, the Spring Garden Highway. I am not talking about the roundabout that was literally hodgepodge within the last five years. I am talking about the ABC Highway, the Warrens development whereby businesses would have gone up and such. So I am saying that moving from \$50 million down to \$46 million - and I do not curse, so you will not see me cursing in this House. I intend to carry out my business on behalf of the people of St. George South as an upright, honest man. And I will not be engaging in any form of abuse on your side or on my side. I am here to deal with the issues.

And it is a fact that we have had over 25 accidents in about 27 days at the Warrens roundabout - work that would have been undertaken by the responsible member, the honourable member for Christ Church South. And these are some of the things that we need to tell the people of this country. I do not know what level of engineering went into the thought of putting an entrance into HMB. But those are the things that we will address when we return to power, because we can clearly see that the works have not been finished.

Since you have budgeted monies allocated for the roundabout anyhow, let me go on to page 206, where you have allocated \$1 million for bridge repairs and the strengthening of the culvert through the site. And when we look at it, this \$1 million based on the notes has been allocated to St. Joseph and St. Andrew. Can this \$1 million do the job of repairing bridges in St. Andrew and in St. Joseph? That is why I am saying that we have grossly under-budgeted these estimates, and we need to come to the people of this country to let them know that this government has no money and what they are putting here. We will see the slow pace of roadworks that we have seen within the last five years, whereby that road again - and I keep speaking about this road - two roundabouts took four years. The road at Halton is still an issue and these are some of the things we need to tell the people of this country.

Worst yet, when we look at page 206 in the forward estimate, there is only \$76 000 projected or allocated in the year 2013–2014. So again, you are looking at dealing with the bridges in St. Andrew and in St. James. You have reduced the budget from \$1.3 million down to \$1 million. And then the following year there is no money - only \$76 000 allocated. And I am saying this cannot do the job in Joe's River and in Toco's Bridge. I do not know what level of engineering went into that. And I would like the member for St. Philip North to tell this honourable House - he is absent, but he has a role to tell this honourable House - what level of repairs will be done to George River Bridge and also St. Andrew Thompson Bridge.

Two bridges and coverage - Warrens traffic improvement: yet another cut from \$8 million down to \$6 million. I would like the government to tell me what exists on page 208. So what is it to be done at Warrens? It is said it is done. But what you have realised, and what the people of this country have realised, is that we have not eased traffic congestion in this country. All of the roundabouts that you have built - the reality is you will have to go back. Members on the other side, member for St. Philip North - and I can also speak to the member for Christ Church South - you will have to go back, like you did with the two-lane highway and now making it four lanes. You will have to go back to our plan to build overpasses in this country because you have not eased the traffic congestion, not at Warrens, neither at [Inaudible.]. So let us start with the partisan politics and let us do what is right for the people of this country.

Sustainable planning. I also noticed that within the last five years the use of concrete roads - we have not utilised that. And let me state up front that I have a vested interest in the Arrow Black cement plant, but it has nothing to do with what is right for this country. And I am saying when we are speaking about places like the Scotland District and the slippers - and the member for Christ

Church South, if I actually recall him saying that, he admits that the Democratic Labour Party has neglected the Scotland District. So I am not sure if that is why he is not now profiling the Ministry of Transport and Works. So I am asking this honourable chamber that the Democratic Labour Party find some money - and not \$1 million - to spend it in the Scotland District. Because when you talk about the Scotland District and we build concrete roads, the lifespan of that road is 40 years versus the lifespan of an asphalt road, which is seven years. So you have to go after an asphalt road five times before you can touch a concrete road. And I am saying these are some of the things that we need to focus on in this country - sustainable planning. And as I speak to the aspect of the Scotland District, do not only look at the Scotland District in terms of infrastructure development. Look at the Scotland District as a prime tourist attraction.

Look also in terms of food production at the time when there's food scarcity, at a time when our import bill of food in this country is at a high. I don't have that figure here, but I know our food import - the Minister for St. Philip West, he can attest to that. And he's also shaking and saying, so it is true. So we have to look at the Scotland district not only from the standpoint of infrastructure improvement, but we have to look at the Scotland district from the standpoint of planting food. And our party started the work. We started work looking at planting trees to get lumber, and it is a 25-year project. And I would ask this of you, Mr. Speaker, the members of the Democratic Labour Party, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, to focus in that area whereby we can grow food, we can plant trees to grow lumber, because we know in the Scotland district most of it is private land. So we have to engage in PPPs and the persons who own the land have already said that they are willing to engage this government - meaning the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party - in terms of planting trees and in terms of planting food. We know fruits can't grow there based on the nature of the soil. But it is something worth looking at within the next five years. Because if you are planning sustainable planning, we have to start now. We can't wait until five years up and then say under the Barbados Labour Party they didn't do anything.

And I keep hearing the members on the other side saying that, but that is history. You have won this government. The people have spoken and you have been duly elected to serve the people of this country as the next government for the next five years or however long. And you have to stop talking about what the other members have done within the last 14 years. That is not solving any problems. And I heard the Honourable Member for St. Lucy yesterday got up in this House and said he would like to return to the days whereby people do slaughter in his backyard.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, don't get misleading the House, sir. I never said that. I will look for the days when we return to that. I never said that. I said it - with the Barbados Labour Party - stop it. So cannot interpret my words. Whether I support it or not is not a point here. Please stand corrected. Please let us move on. Stand to be corrected.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: But there is something like that. Let us move on. But it scares me when I keep seeing slippers at Whitehall and farmers in St. Andrew and I'm not seeing anything done about it. And I know - we all know - that rural Barbados favours the Barbados Labour Party, but that has nothing to do with dealing with an issue that can impact people's lives. And if we keep leaving the areas in St. Andrew and in St. Joseph to fall prey to the slippers, we will have an exodus of people leaving and you will have urban Barbados being overpopulated and you will have churches dying out, you will have schools dying. So these are some of the things that you as a party and as the government you have to address to make sure that you don't have any parish - St. Andrew, St. Joseph - dying, because it is a serious matter. It is political suicide for us to sit here and just allocate money to do bridges. And then at the end of the day we have a mass exodus of people coming out of St. Andrew into St. Joseph and also coming into St. George and also going to the urban and the suburban areas.

Let me now turn my attention to the Transport Board. We have seen within the last five years no new buses have been purchased. And the Honourable Member for Christ Church - he can speak to that - because what I stood and heard, I saw only supplementaries coming. One in March, two in March last year and one in December. Supplementaries - \$145.4 million. And that was money to pay debt to outstanding creditors. Then in December. Then you had in March, a supplementary again, the first supplementary to pay salaries, to pay creditors. So these are some of the things - the running cost at the Transport Board. We need to curtail the running cost at the Transport Board. And let me just give you a little bit of history. In 1994, when this party went to power, there were 60 buses on the road. In 2008, when the Barbados Labour Party left office, there were 200 buses on the road. There are now 100 buses or less on the road. And we are of the view that maintenance cost is very high. Running cost is also very high. And the Honourable Member for Christ Church and for St. Philip North must address -

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber and I want to believe that it's not deliberate. The bus availability - the term which we use to describe those units which are serviceable on a daily basis - has continued to improve under the Democratic Labour Party. We've had many discussions in this Honourable Chamber. The report is

trying to suggest that there are 100 buses available for the use of the Transport Board. This is not true. The last count that I have, which was two days ago, was some 193 buses available for service.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Okay, thanks for the information.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, I remember. Please continue.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Let's carry on. We have less than 200 buses and the Honourable Member never said how many of those buses are parked up waiting for parts and for maintenance. Never said that. Because what we are faced with is a very serious situation whereby our running costs and our maintenance costs are high. Presently you are using four persons to repair buses - LNN Bodywork, UCAL, Transtech, and also Synths - probably the four being LNN, UCAL, Transtech and Synths. And therefore I am saying if you have challenges with UCAL with respect to the maintenance for the buses, I am calling on the Minister with responsibility - the Member for St. Philip North - to address it, because it is said that UCAL is not happy with the work going to Transtech, they are not happy with the work going to other people. And if you have that body that this great party would have formed - because we saw the need to move to in-house maintenance because of the challenge with the maintenance cost - so we formed that body whereby we can execute maintenance properly. And if you have a challenge with that body, I am asking you to address it, do not usurp it and go to other persons, because it's not right. It's not right. The Transport Board has to provide a service for the people of this country. We would like the Transport Board to remain so that the residents of this country get an efficient running bus service.

But what is also critical is that as a result of the inefficiencies with the buses, you have had to extend the routes. And based on that, you have people now getting to work late, spending two and three hours on the road. And I can hear 'take a taxi.' But that's not the role - you have to provide an efficient bus service. And I'm calling on the Government to purchase some buses. Let's lease them. Whatever - I hear you talk about hybrid buses, electric buses. There's one hybrid carrier.

I am not sure what tests have been done and what is the possibility, what level of training we have to undertake. I don't see any of that in here. But yet I am hearing we're looking at hybrid buses. And if I know a hybrid car costs over \$100 000, what's the price of a hybrid bus? We need to get our act together first, purchase some buses that can make sure that our people get to and from St. Lucy to the airport in a safe manner.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time has expired.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: But Mr. Speaker, what I want to say here in closing - only a thriving country with people working, projects evolving and so managed that it gives investor confidence, can lead to maintaining and expanding our infrastructure and fostering the kind of society that Barbadians have grown accustomed to. I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Member for St. Michael Central.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I am so pleased this morning to be participating in this Estimates debate, the first since this government was returned to office after the February 21 general elections. And I want to thank the good people of St. Michael Central for reposing the confidence in me to return me as their Member of Parliament to serve for yet another five-year term.

Now, before I get into my presentation and my contribution to this debate, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak for a few minutes on the contribution just made by the last honourable member who spoke and he assured the country, with bold assurance, that when the Barbados Labour Party is returned to office, that the first order of business would be to correct the wrong at the Warren's roundabout. Now, this is a roundabout, Mr. Speaker, that does not fall under my purview as Minister of Social Care, but certainly it is a roundabout that employs the same principle as all roundabouts across the length and breadth of Barbados. But I want to assure the honourable member for St. George South that when the Barbados Labour Party returns to office there will be no need for roundabouts because cars would be fitted with wings and they will be flying across the length and breadth of Barbados. So we can have absolutely no problem. We would have no problem with rotorboats, Mr. Speaker.

And again, Mr. Speaker, if a member of Parliament is to be judged based on his or her stewardship and achievements in any one constituency, the constituency of St. George South MP should really be sitting on this side because there is no other - I believe, or it is probably among the first five constituencies in this country - that really can point to a wonderful number of achievements in the last five years. We have the farm road, which I traversed daily, Mr. Speaker, which when I moved to that area was a rocky road that was not fit for traffic, and now that road is wonderfully paved and accessible to all parts of St. George. And there were other roads that were built along with the roundabout. We had a new pavilion built at Greens along with the resource centre. We had a new wonderful housing project at Greens. We had a new day nursery built at Elerton and we had a refurbished community centre also at Elerton. So if there is one seat that should be on this side, the honourable member for St.

George South really - it should be with our former candidate - but that is neither here nor there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking against the background of being a Minister of Social Care and also as a person who is leading a ministry that is really pivotal and important to contributing to this government's clearly articulated policy manifesto - the policy of ensuring that Barbados is socially balanced. Now, many components of the implementation of this policy, Mr. Speaker, those policy positions are pursued by the officers and agencies directly under my purview as Minister of Social Care and who on a daily basis, by direct interventions, undergird the sometimes soft underbelly of social disadvantage in this country. And simultaneously we carve out for our clients opportunities of independence and self-reliance through our welfare-to-work programme and our recently refashioned Poverty Empowerment Programme, which we work on in collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment through the NEEP.

Now I am pleased that this particular programme has taken root and also some relevance, which has seen several of our clients now reaping the benefits of employment and seeing themselves as no longer being dependent on government for a welfare grant, but are now gainfully employed and supporting themselves, having been weaned off that dependence on the state and that materialistic support of the state.

Now the honourable member, the Minister of Finance, on Monday clearly articulated, Mr. Speaker, that what we as the government intend to do over the next five years - and that we have been doing this of course - with our main economic engines is to stimulate more economic activity and also to refashion and tweak our public institutions to be less dependent on the state. Now this is to be achieved, Mr. Speaker, by creating brand new areas of economic activity to buttress those that are already in existence. Now, at the same time, my job as Social Care Minister is to lay the policy groundwork in my agencies to prepare our clients who are dependent on a hand up from the state for the experience of a better life, and that the new paradigm will then therefore infuse new hope and optimism into their expectant bloodstreams, showing that their situation of poverty and deprivation are only refuelling pit stops on the race course of life just before they enter the straightaway of sustained prosperity and sustained empowerment.

Mr. Speaker, now I mentioned earlier our welfare-to-work programme and must say that the positives of this particular intervention are clearly manifesting themselves and are evident in our now ongoing two-year pilot project, the IC Bridge programme, that the honourable member for St. George North said he had no knowledge of. But this project in particular is targeting 30 households across the

length and breadth of Barbados - one from each constituency - which commenced in the second quarter of the budget year 2012 to 2013. Now, I say a two-year pilot, Mr. Speaker, because as minister I am anxious to move this intervention along at a quicker pace by truncating some of the remedial processes that are involved in the overall programme. Because though we have adapted a foreign model, I believe that there are certain nuances that we have to recognise and appreciate and therefore adjust our programme to suit the foibles and the quirks of the average indigent Barbadian household.

Now, we in the ministry looked across the Caribbean and also we looked at models in South and Central America for societies that mimicked our own country in terms of the effects of poverty on their people and some of the solution models they were pursuing to wrestle the scourge of poverty to the ground. Now, after observing several of these countries' interventions, we thought that the model that the Chileans adopted was one of the best suited for our situation and our cultural norms. Now, we did not just stay in Barbados and observe these remedies from afar. We dispatched some of our officers in the ministry to Chile to eyeball what they were actually doing there, to get firsthand knowledge of this programme. Now, the programme that they adopted in Chile was called the Chilean Puente programme. And we adopted that programme, of course, tweaking it to fit into our Barbadian model.

Now, IC really is an acronym - ISEE. And the I in IC is where we identify the households using the database of agencies such as the Welfare Department and the National Assistance Board. And we especially targeted households who were affected by intergenerational poverty. When I say intergenerational poverty, Mr. Speaker, all of us here who have been raised in a village-type atmosphere would be aware or would have knowledge of a family or a number of families within our neighbourhoods whose grandparents were poor, the children of the grandparent were also poor, and their children are equally as poor - what we call intergenerational poverty, poverty spanning several generations. And we looked at those particular families who just could not break free of the grasp and the grip of poverty over a number of generations. So we identified those families, or those households really, as the targeted areas where we should seek our interventions.

And I want to say that the families were also selected not based on any partisan political considerations. These families were selected by the public service themselves within the Welfare Department and also the National Assistance Board. So there was absolutely no partisan consideration. I myself only approved the names when they came to me for final approval. I did not have any input into the selection of the families that were participating in this particular programme.

Now, the S in the IC Bridge is the stabilisation process, and that commences, Mr. Speaker, with the trained facilitators. And we are using retired social workers who would have had wide experience having worked in this particular area before. And we brought some of them back in from retirement to act as trained facilitators, intervening with the complete stabilising methods of the particular programme. And when we say stabilising, Mr. Speaker, I mean that we are saying that we are going to look at the methods of food support over the next two years of the pilot project, or sooner. So we are going to supply the food - the basics of any household - and we are looking at food support for over the next two years. We are also going to supply school clothes and school supplies if the household has within it school-age children. We are going to repair or replace that dilapidated house. And if there are any arrears of land rent or house rent or any electricity debts that would have been incurred over the few years that they would have been living in that particular situation, we are going to pay those debts off, bring them to a situation of stability within the household.

Now the E in IC is the enablement process. Now this process, Mr. Speaker, entails the training and education assistance for those in the household who are desirous of furthering their education at any tertiary-level institution. And I do not only mean at the UWI; I mean also at the Polytechnic and also at the Barbados Community College. So if there are children within the household who are desirous of furthering their education to move on to the next stage, we are going to expose them to this tertiary-level training. Now this process also involves a social protection top-up facility. And this programme is to facilitate certain activities by family members that will assist in improving their livelihoods and, where possible, the placement of the adult members in jobs to match their skills, their vocation, their experience and also their training. So they are not going to be left there just to languish. But of course, the support systems will be put in place to support them. And if they are entrepreneurial by nature, we are also going to be assisting them in terms of microfinancing and also microcredit assistance with the start-up of small businesses. So that is the enabling feature of the IC Bridge.

Now, after they have been stabilised and enabled, we are going to move to the empowerment stage. This is the final chapter in the IC Bridge pilot project. The empowerment stage is the final stage of the two-year intervention, Mr. Speaker, where a number of assessments will be made to ensure that the pilot was successful. Now, we are sure that the interventions would see a now empowered, self-reliant household removed from the situation that would have facilitated or created or perpetuated that poverty environment that they lived in for almost all their lives - an environment that will have been experienced by these individuals for several generations

over time. And we are hoping, as we progress with this particular pilot, that by the end of the empowerment phase we will have Barbadians from these households stepping boldly into the world for the first time in their lives, self-assured and self-reliant.

Now, I believe the empowerment is both a process and also a goal in itself, Mr. Speaker. A process from the point of view that it will take time, it will take some dedication and of course effort on the part of all concerned - meaning the facilitators and also the members of the household. But once we put in the hard work and follow the prescriptions, the goal becomes extremely achievable. And this is a fundamental difference, Mr. Speaker, I believe, between the Barbados Labour Party on one hand and the government on the other, in that we believe that there must be another prescriptive method to achieve the kind of result we are expecting from this particular pilot.

We all know successive governments, Mr. Speaker, have been throwing money literally at the scourge of poverty and its eradication. Now we have the introduction of the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission. Those have been introduced by the last administration and we have other agencies. But I believe that if you better a man's living conditions, Mr. Speaker, by repairing his house and installing all the modern amenities without addressing his wherewithal to upkeep that particular new house or to pay for those new amenities, that very soon that individual, Mr. Speaker, will find him or herself not having the means to maintain the house or to pay for those amenities. This is fair - that if you repair a man's house and you do not give him the wherewithal or provide the wherewithal by which he can repair the house and pay for the new amenities, the newfound amenities, that very shortly that individual will find themselves plunged back into the poverty-stricken situation from which you tried to pluck them earlier. Now within a few years, Mr. Speaker, we will have a steadily deteriorated house and amenities either not functioning or those amenities sometimes disconnected.

So the quest with this new approach in the Ministry of Social Care is to go to the kernel of the matter and provide the IC Bridge remedy. And I feel sure, Mr. Speaker, that we will soon see some families coming out of this pilot with a newly found independence and feeling good about themselves for the first time in their lives.

With that pilot finding its place in our social care offerings in the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Apartment and Community Development, in the last financial year we further strengthened the social safety net, especially through the Welfare Department and also the National Assistance Board. We allocated some \$18 million, Mr. Speaker, to the Welfare Department and very shortly we will be coming for another \$2.5 million. And that is in

addition to the \$2.5 million that we supply through the energy grant, totalling some \$23 million for this financial year, all going to the Welfare Department.

And of course this puts the light to what the Barbados Labor Party has been saying regarding the allocation to the welfare department of some \$18 million always over the last four, five, six, seven years, the allocation to the welfare department has always been hovering between \$18 million and \$20 million. And because \$18 million appears in the estimates for this year's expenditure, that of course points only to what we are allocating at this part of the year. But always we come back merely in the financial year and of course allocate sometimes two, three, \$4 million to help top up the welfare department through its grants. So that does not affect what we are allocating here in the estimates. And we are also giving the National Assistance Board some \$11 million for them to execute the work that they do within that particular agency.

Now, despite what the opposition says, Mr. Speaker, the monitor, the grants to show up the safety net remain intact and remain extremely vibrant. And there is no reason, absolutely no reason, Mr. Speaker, why any Barbadian should go to sleep in this country hungry or with their bellies to their backs, as the Barbados Labour Party likes to say, or any reason why there should be any widespread suffering, as the Barbados Labor Party likes to say. The agencies, the social agencies in Barbados that are given the responsibility of looking out for the impoverished in this country are adequately funded. And any person in Barbados who is desirous of a welfare grant of any kind can boldly approach the welfare department and after the assessments by the welfare staff that grant is given. So there should be nobody in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, absolutely nobody who should go to sleep hungry in this country because this government has ensured that those needs are met and met adequately.

Now, as a government we have consistently given these departments in excess. Altogether, both the NAB and the welfare department some \$34 million every single year in the estimates this financial year we have granted to the welfare department, Mr. Speaker, for monetary assistance, which are grants to people who present - clients who present to the welfare department - some \$15.9 million in grants and food vouchers. We have given \$810 000 in grants for spectacles, \$100 000 for hearing aids, prosthesis and ventures, \$59 000 for burial of the poor, which this arrangement is made through a private funeral home. We have granted \$23 000 for the payment of house rents, \$2.7 million in house rents in arrears. We have paid on behalf of Barbadians - any Barbadian who presents to the welfare department and of course is in arrears with their landlord - the welfare department, on assessment of that particular case, has granted \$2.7 million in terms of house rent

arrears. We have also paid electricity bills, some \$1.5 million in electricity bills and in water bills, some \$341 000 over the last financial year and, of course, the electricity bills. This is separate and distinct from what we have done from the point of view of the energy grant.

And I will address the question of the energy grant because I know from my own personal experience that the energy grant has not been operating the way that we intended to operate. But I'm going to meet very shortly within the next hour, Mr. Speaker, here at Parliament with the chief rental officer, members of my officers of my ministry, so we can recalibrate and reassess how effective the energy grant is, so that we can put new systems in place, so that the grant will meet the needs adequately of those people who present to access the welfare grant.

Now in educational systems also, this is meant to be for school books, school uniforms, and also for some school fees. We have disbursed some \$5 818 000 to people who presented for that kind of assistance. And of course, that is the normal grant that is given at the beginning of the school term.

Now, while the department is performing true to form, Mr. Speaker, and true to its remit, I intend to forge ahead as minister with the continued restructuring of the Department of the Welfare Department and with a view to improve the delivery of its services that are guided by the report of the Productivity Council, because we brought in the Productivity Council to have a general overview of what we do in the welfare department. And this study was conducted by the Productivity Council. And of course, the report has been submitted and we are carefully studying it for implementation of several of the findings of the Productivity Council.

Now our first step, Mr. Speaker, in the general improvement of the welfare department is the renaming of that department. Now I took that particular proposal to the cabinet, and of course, cabinet has already ratified and has spoken to that issue. So we're going to be renaming the welfare department very shortly, within the next few weeks, to the Department of Social Services. And this has a multipronged effect in that the stigma of welfare and welfareism sometimes affect negatively the overall view of the department and people who present for the grants from that particular department. Therefore, we are recalibrating and doing new things, starting first with the renaming of the Department of Social Services.

This continued restructuring, Mr. Speaker, will principally include the provision of proper wholesome accommodation for our staff so that there is a level of comfort for them to do this extremely stressful job. And while I'm on this, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the job of welfare officers sometimes is criticised by the general

public because sometimes some members of the public when presenting to the welfare department the attitude sometimes of the welfare officers is frowned upon. Now I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we as members of Parliament in our weekly clinics we meet sometimes just one day per week to meet our constituents. And I know from my own personal experience and from the experience that I have gleaned from some of our members on this side - and I'm sure that the same thing exists on the other side and the new members of parliament will shortly be experiencing this same thing - that after meeting with your constituents for sometimes six, seven, eight hours at the end of that session you are mentally and physically drained, taxed. And this is a job that we only do one day a week. One day a week. And this is a job, Mr. Speaker, that these welfare officers, though they are trained and though they should be prepared, have to do every day of the week, five days a week for eight hours a day. And therefore sometimes when we get reports coming in from the members of the public about sometimes the surly behaviour of the welfare officers, sometimes it could be overlooked because this is a job that is mentally and physically taxing.

We will also seek to facilitate the development through the attendance of conferences and because I believe that we should not stay within the confines of this geographical space but we should sometimes launch out into other jurisdictions and see what other jurisdictions are offering and to expose our officers to best practices. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

So Mr. Speaker, the welfare Department, we are conducting several other processes there to improve the offerings of that department. We're also looking at the National Assistance Board. We are pushing ahead with the changing of that name too, the National Assistance Board to the Commission of Elder Affairs within the same frame as the welfare department. And we're also moving full steam ahead with the goal of improving the quality of life and delivery of services to our elderly in their homes. And in a matter of weeks we'll be retraining all of our staff at the National Assistance Board, the home care workers. They'll be exposed to some new training - some 1 000 new home care recipients they have to attend to across Barbados on a daily basis. We're going to train our staff so that they will be able to meet the challenges that face them in a new year.

We're also making our facilities better. We've now completely rehabilitated all of the people who were the families from the Archcott tragedy. They're now rehabilitated and completely relocated, freeing up space at the Vauxhall Senior Citizens Village where the facility can now be genuinely used for senior citizens who are in search of accommodation. We removed the last family from the Archcott tragedy on April 1 last year. We've also refurbished the Clyde Gollop Centre and it's now

reopened. Reopened last year and is again, of course, accepting the men who sleep overnight there. That facility - it's a wonderful new facility offering really good accommodation for those men who are homeless. The Clyde Gollop Centre is reopened, like I said. And that frees up also the George Dunnett Centre over in the Pine where we're going to be renovating very shortly to serve as a daycare facility for the aged and the elderly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are several other things that we are doing in that ministry and in those departments. We have the welfare department, the National Assistance Board, the Community Development Department, the Department of Constituency Empowerment, the National Disabilities Unit, the Department of Alleviation Reduction Program, and the Bureau of Social Policy and Research. And recently, Mr. Speaker, in the newly configured portfolio I was asked to assume the responsibility for the Division of Family which consists of the Childcare Board, the National HIV/AIDS Commission, and the Bureau of Gender Affairs.

So, Mr. Speaker, this government is of the view that while the bedrock of society and their foundation is manifested through our elderly population is well laid and once our children will be there to inherit this bequeathed land are adequately nurtured and cared for - from the empathy to life to adult life - Barbados as a country can proceed without shame in its building a well-planned society. So by and large, Mr. Speaker, a significant portion of the responsibility of ensuring a Barbados that is socially balanced falls squarely on my ministry's shoulders. To whom much is given, much is required. And therefore I pledge publicly, Mr. Speaker, not only to my constituents in St. Michael Central but to the entire Barbados that with God's guidance and with God's grace we will endeavour to be in the forefront to deliver to Barbadians the just society of which they so rightly deserve. Mr. Speaker, I'm obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, I recognise the honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Mr. Speaker, I thank the people of St. James North for giving me this opportunity to serve them in this august forum and to, by extension, serve the people of Barbados. I certainly pledge to do my best in their cause and to have a long association with the people of St. James North in this Chamber representing them at this level.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the presentation of estimates of a government's revenue and expenditure for any incoming year ought to be informed by a philosophy of where the government of the day wishes to locate a society and an economy in the immediate future. It ought to be a policy statement and a strategy of how Barbadians, both locally

and overseas, of how investors can determine their business and gauge their lives. They ought to have a vision of where a government wishes to take a society and an economy. And what we heard yesterday in the presentation by the Honourable Minister of Finance, Member for St. Michael North West, was the usual strategy of this government since it came into office in 2008 - a lack of vision, of wishes to locate Barbados under the Barbados Labour Party.

When we were last in office, we had a vision of where we wished to take Barbados. We had a vision of making Barbados the smallest developed country in the world by 2025. And we brought out a national strategic plan which was debated in this Parliament in our second term, which sought to say how we plan to move Barbados to be the smallest developed country in the world. We do not see any such philosophy, any such vision, any such strategy coming from this government of the day.

The Minister's presentation provided little if any hope to the unemployed in this society - the 13 per cent of unemployed in this society. I can say that in St. James North, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate is much higher than that. I estimate they are over 25 per cent and certainly among young people, both men and women, it is around 35 per cent. And there is little if any hope to those unemployed people in Douglas Road, in Cyan Hill, in Aston Hall in this presentation by the Minister of Finance. It provides little hope, Mr. Speaker, to the business people of this country, to foreign investors, to the housewives of this country. It speaks towards the creation of 1 000 new jobs at its best by a stimulus package of \$600 million.

Those 1 000 new jobs, Mr. Speaker, if they come to be realised - and we are taking it at its best - will make very little difference to the unemployment rate in Barbados. The statistics show employment of about 125 000 people in Barbados. So a simple calculation will show you that the creation of 1 000 new jobs is less than 1 per cent - hardly any dent, if any at all, to the unemployed people in my constituency who every day are desperate and despairing because of this government's policies.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition yesterday, Mr. Speaker, spoke about government's revenue projection continuing to slide downwards by \$235 000 000 while its expenditure is up. We heard from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, about a current account fiscal deficit of 6.6 per cent of GDP being twice what it was projected to be a year ago. There has been no strategy in either the Throne Speech which was delivered earlier this month, the Democratic Labour Party manifesto presented to the people a couple of months ago, or in the Minister of Finance's presentation, as to how government intends to lead our island out of this junk economic status which we have gained during the course of its governance

last year, as has been certified by two international rating agencies.

How are we going to get out of this status of junk bonds and a junk economy? How are we going to be able to borrow on the foreign international market these funds that are displayed in the estimates? If we are in this status, how are we going to create any just society when there is no just economy? It is impossible. And the presentation by the Honourable Minister yesterday, Mr. Speaker, must therefore be deemed a fairy tale and a fiction of the highest order.

The Minister's contention that income tax revenue is down as a result of income tax adjustments defies reality, because the income tax adjustments came into effect last year in August, after the fiscal year had started. We contend that clearly the downward slide of income tax revenue collection is a direct result of the rising unemployment rate in this country, because clearly the more people who are working, the more income tax and tax revenues that come into play.

So a major issue, Mr. Speaker, is the collection of taxes in this country. This Parliament raises taxes - a lot of taxes - and there is a serious dislocation between the taxes that this Parliament passes and those that it collects. The Honourable Prime Minister has now found it fit to appoint the person who is regarded as the most business-oriented Member of Parliament on that side as Minister of International Business and Minister of Commerce, having responsibility for corporate affairs. And we would hope that he is able to bring some kind of leadership to the collection of taxes in this country. He speaks towards the bureaucratic nature of government and the need to reform the public sector. And one can feel his frustration when he spoke in his last ministry on this issue. And clearly this is an issue that the government needs to address. But we have not heard anything as of now from any of the speakers on the government side as to how it plans to deal with this serious problem of collection of taxes in this country.

Of course, while we speak about collection of taxes, the government of the day also has the duty to pay people - whether business people or otherwise - the taxes which they are owed. The problem of which the Chamber of Commerce, I believe it was, spoke a couple of months ago - about \$50 million being owed to business people in this country in tax refunds - is one that the government has to address and which we have heard nothing about so far.

I know for sure, Mr. Speaker, that VAT refunds - certainly VAT refunds - I know for sure, Mr. Speaker, that people who have presented to the bank their invoices for payment of the reverse tax credit have not been able to access those funds, the \$1 300. So the question is whether really and truly we have a government that is broke. Some

of my constituents have not been able to get their tax refunds on reverse tax. If you want to talk to otherwise, please speak to the Chair. Thank you very much.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I really - but no, they cannot allow misinformation, even in a maiden speech, to go out, Mr. Speaker. I think he is not deliberately, but he is misleading the House. Mr. Speaker, sir, in giving the impression that persons who receive tax returns have been trying to draw them at the bank and not receiving them - Mr. Speaker, as you know, tax returns are now done electronically and therefore the lodgements are sent straight to the bank by way of cash. So you represent and get your cash. But for those old ones where you have cheques given for reverse tax credits, all those cheques are honoured by the bank - I believe the Barbados National Bank, the Republic Bank. And therefore it is not true to say that -

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member should stay the course. Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that some constituents of mine have told me that they have been able to get the funds from their reverse tax credits. That is a fact. What is also a fact too, Mr. Speaker, is that all sectors of economic activity in this country are down. This stimulus package presented yesterday of \$600 million will not bring growth in either the tourism sector of this country, the manufacturing sector of this country, or the international financing services sector of this country. It will not bring growth in the agricultural sector. In the international business sector. Insufficient funds have been given to seriously revitalise these areas of economic activity and foreign exchange earnings sectors. The much amalgamated area of economic activity, the NCC sector, is yet to get off the ground even though Mr. Speaker, the last Minister of the Environment under the Barbados Labour Party governance in 2007 brought a comprehensive energy policy before this Parliament and which was made, I believe, a document of the House, as was stated by the Honourable Minister yesterday.

Finance - the Barbados Labour Party, the late Prime Minister J.M.G. Tom Adams brought the international financial and business sector to Barbados some 30 years ago and it therefore pains us tremendously on this side to know that I believe it is estimated that \$2.7 billion have left this country and gone to other parts of the Caribbean because of the failure, the failure of this government to speedily and urgently implement policies and regulations that could have saved this great sector of this country. Many jobs have been lost, Mr. Speaker. That is a reality of the situation, whether the Honourable Member of Parliament for St. Philip South likes that sector or not, many jobs have been lost to other CARICOM and

Caribbean countries because of the failure of this government to speedily implement policies. That is what the business sector said.

We have a government, Mr. Speaker, which continually blames the international economy and the last Labour Party administration for its failings to generate a just society and a just economy. Mr. Speaker, we are now into the second term of this Democratic Labour Party governance, and I would really have thought that they would have at least left that behind for the first term because we are now into 63 months since the Democratic Labour Party was returned to office in January 2008. And I believe strongly, Mr. Speaker, that big men and big women should stand up and take their responsibilities, whether in family life, whether in governance, whether in sports, whatever - take responsibility. And we cannot keep on blaming a global international recession that ended a couple of years ago for the failings of their governance.

We have in sub-Saharan Africa, Mr. Speaker, 40 countries growing last year at a rate of 5 per cent. We have Caribbean countries on average growing at a rate of 2 per cent. Barbados' economy either standing still or, I believe, 0.5 per cent last year. And this is what we have to compare it to, Mr. Speaker. Our neighbouring islands, we have Latin American countries growing an average of three, 4 per cent last year and the year before. We cannot be continually comparing our country to Greece, where we have multi-billionaires not paying income taxes, people with mega yachts, as long as you live on Broad Street not paying income taxes - why Greece has got into problems. I heard the Honourable Minister of Finance yesterday cite Cyprus and riots in Cyprus. In Cyprus, same thing. Many investors, many wealthy people not paying tax, and an attempt now by the Cyprus government to levy some kind of income tax on them. How does that have a connection with our society?

Our society - we have even the United States, one of our main trading partners, growing 2.6 per cent last year. Last month, 236 000 jobs being created in the economy of the United States of America. We have Canada, again, one of our main trading partners, one of our main sources of tourists, never having gone into economic recession at all. But we continue to quote Italy and Greece and Cyprus and Ireland, countries that bear no relation to it, and the government of the day really needs to take into account the fact that, for example, our tourism sector has declined or is doing the worst in the Caribbean outside of Montserrat, as the Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Leader, said yesterday. And Montserrat, as we all know, the misfortune that has befallen Montserrat. And this is not something that we ought to be proud of.

We heard the Honourable Minister of Tourism yesterday, Member of Parliament for St. Michael South

Central, speak towards tourism. Where are the new tourist attractions in this country which will draw tourists to Barbados? We have had closures of Boscobel. We have had closures of Graeme Hall. Where is the policy and the philosophy of the government? The strategy to create new tourist attractions and keep our main aspect of foreign exchange earnings fresh and revitalised when we compare it to other Caribbean countries.

And then, Mr. Speaker, we have the government continuously blaming the last Labour Party government for its woes. The reality of the situation, Mr. Speaker, is that this Democratic Labour Party government took over a country with an unemployment rate of 6.7 per cent - 6.7 per cent - the lowest unemployment rate in the history of this country since the abolition of slavery 175 years ago. And that was a platform on which they ought to have built. But instead, we continue to hear about the Labour Party government. The last Labour Party administration wasting funds on a prison, Mr. Speaker - what was the last Labour Party government to do? Glendairy burnt down. A prison had to be rebuilt. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition did not burn down the prison any more than any member on that side burnt it. And there are many Philipians on this side. All recognise that the prison located in St. Philip was a wonderful facility.

Mr. Speaker, we have, on the contrary, Mr. Speaker, seen no concerted attempt by the government of the day to save jobs. We have had the closure of Almond Beach Hotel - 500 jobs just gone through the eddoes. Many of the people employed at Almond Beach up to a year ago coming from St. James North. So many of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, both the man and the woman in the house now no longer employed because of the closure of Almond when that could have been saved. Where are we seeing these jobs? We hear about reopening of Almond, but we see no real plans to reopen it. We know about the closure of NCO - again, hundreds of jobs in information technology, many again of those people employed in St. James North. We see this continuing trend in the governance of the Democratic Labour Party from the 1980s because in August 1986, we had the closure of Intel. Unlike what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said, Intel was closed when the Democratic Labour Party was in office in August 1986, after the DLP came back into office on May 28, 1986 - it was not closed under a Barbados Labour Party administration. We see the closure and relocation of many international business companies under this administration.

And Mr. Speaker, any government of the day has to address two main issues. One, the unemployment rate in this country, which as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said is unacceptably high, and the inability of the government to generate foreign exchange earnings and to have the main economic activity areas of this country stimulated. And we see no real - we on this

side see no real imagination or vision on how either of those serious social issues will be addressed in the foreseeable future under this government.

We heard the Honourable Minister of Social Care speak just now, Member of Parliament for St. Michael Central, as to the welfare to work programme. One person in each constituency. One person in each constituency getting a job, one family. I do not know how much difference that has made or can make in this country, Sir. The reality of the situation is that \$2 million has been cut from the poverty alleviation funds in these estimates as compared to last year. We heard about how supplementals have been brought in the last few years to top this up, but the reality again is that we started out with more money allocated in estimates for poverty alleviation and they were topped up too, the same way. So we started with \$2 million less. In a situation, Mr. Speaker, where 19.8 per cent of Barbadians - one in every five - has lived below the poverty line as shown by the study that came out in April last year. And I would venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that 19.8 per cent has grown even further now with the unemployment rate rising and the closure of Almond and with other major businesses in Barbados, every day people being laid off from jobs in this country. Where is the salvation in these estimates for the most vulnerable in this society?

Where is the salvation, Mr. Speaker, for the disabled in this society? Because a large part of that 20 per cent of people living below the poverty line are disabled - mentally or physically or otherwise - and really cannot help themselves. I look forward, Mr. Speaker, to bringing to Parliament a disabilities legislation where we can have a full debate on the plight of the disabled in this country.

There is, Mr. Speaker, no indication in these estimates for any plan for any development in St. James North. And this is really sad, Mr. Speaker - are the people of St. James North being punished because for the last 70 years bar one term they have loyally supported the Barbados Labour Party?

You have four minutes in which I cannot close, so I move on to the Ministry of Education, Mr. Speaker, of which I have shadow responsibility for. This ministry is being provided this year with \$9 million less than it was the year before - \$500 million, down from \$509 million. And that was down, Mr. Speaker, from \$530 million approved in the fiscal year 2011-2012. And how are we going to build these campuses at Barbados Community College and Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic if we continuously cut the estimates given to the Ministry of Education? There was one time when the Ministry of Education was allocated 20 per cent of the budget not too long ago. Now it is down to 15 per cent of the budget. It would have been better, Mr. Speaker, for this government to have implemented the

Labour Party's policy to establish the University College of Barbados, which would have combined the administrations of the tertiary institutions and consequently reduced the cost of running the same.

What is the policy of the Ministry of Education? Recent policy, Mr. Speaker, besides renaming schools - some of which are people who have had no association in the past with those schools - where is the allocation, Mr. Speaker, of funds to train children from primary school to be more entrepreneurial, to be more creative in their thinking and in their problem solving, to be more innovative? Where are the funds to finally allow children with disabilities to access free comprehensive education like the rest of society? We still have a situation where many parents of children with disabilities have to pay between \$400 and \$1 200 a semester at private schools for their children at primary school level. But yet we can boast - or we seek to boast - about free comprehensive secondary education since the 1950s and early sixties. The Minister of Education himself, Mr. Speaker, admitted before the National Advisory Council on Education that his government was not doing enough for children with special needs and that the budget for their provisions should be increased. Where is the funding, Mr. Speaker, that we can completely extend the textbook loan scheme to those primary school students who cannot afford textbooks? Where is the funding to reduce the rate of 40 per cent of secondary school children leaving school without any certification?

How can a government in this day and age, the year 2013 of our Lord, only be allocating \$70 million to Cave Hill campus when it takes \$150 million a year to run this institution? And the \$150 million, Mr. Speaker, that was allocated last year for Cave Hill campus was in fact a decrease - a decrease of 17.5 per cent below the previous year's figure. You know, Mr. Speaker, are we into a situation soon where Barbadian students at Cave Hill campus will have to start paying their full economic costs, and not only an amenity fee of \$700? I believe it is. Yes.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to a full debate on the promised amended Education Act which has been mooted arising out of the Alexandra fiasco. Mr. Speaker, in summary, these estimates will do nothing to advance this society, to advance this economy. It gives no hope to the people who are desperate today, who are without a job, who are suffering, who go to sleep at night - in spite of what the last speaker said, Honourable Minister of Social Care - hungry. It will do nothing to help pay the electricity bills, the water bills that I am sure all of us face and faced during the general election campaign from our constituents. It will do nothing, Mr. Speaker, to advance the cause of Barbados, to move it to the smallest developed country in the world, which this Labour Party had earmarked for our country by the year 2025. Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. Honourable Member for St. John.

Mrs. M-J. M. THOMPSON: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Permit me to join this discussion, but before I do that, sir, I would like to say a very hearty good morning to the people of St. John and to thank them for again, overwhelmingly electing me to represent them in this House so that we can continue the work that my able and beloved predecessor would have liked to have done.

Mr. Speaker, permit me to join this debate as I seek to support this Appropriation Bill and to endorse the stimulus package therein. This package is intended to stimulate growth in various sectors of the economy, namely housing, tourism, roadworks. The most important thing about this said stimulus package is that it will create jobs so that those young people who have been part of skills training will now have greater opportunities to find employment. I refer specifically to those who have trained or are about to train in areas such as masonry, carpentry, electricians, painters, steel benders, skid stair operators, backhoe operators.

The creation of jobs will lead to stimulation of the economy in a real way simply because it results in people having money in their pockets, what the economic gurus refer to as disposable income. And we have the ripple effect of that, more circulation of money because a person going to work has to buy lunch from the van, he has to take a bus to get to work, so that there will be more spending power, more economic activity, and even the government will benefit from revenue from VAT taxes and the NIS as well.

So I spoke of three sectors, housing, tourism and roadworks. With housing, we have the high-rising housing solutions at Exmouth and Grotto. This is much needed low-income housing and is part of our HELP programme, which has been highly successful and well received by the public of Barbados. Never before have so many people benefited from a housing programme in this country. The actual building of these units will provide jobs, as I said before, where we will have masons, carpenters and labourers, painters, plumbers, et cetera, being employed. And further spill-offs as there will have to be freighting, transportation, and money will circulate in the retail sector.

Then we have the tourism sector with the cruise pier. The construction of a new pier for cruise ships will provide upgraded, state-of-the-art facilities for our tourism product. If we hope to continue to be competitive in the world market, then we need a world-class facility. The construction of this cruise terminal will produce jobs that will drive the economy. So the taxi men will be busy. More cruise ships will be coming in with this state-of-the-art pier. More tourists translate into more activity, more spending.

Restaurants will benefit from this, and then those who supply the restaurants will also benefit. So that my lettuce man in St. Margaret's in St. John, he will have yet another market.

And then we have the Bay Street Marina project. There can be no doubt about the increased economic activity that can be generated by this project. The building of the marina itself will create jobs in the construction sector. And then there will be the ancillary services during the construction period. And once the marina is completed, further ancillary services, because yachties require banking services, convenience store or minimart and that sort of thing. And then there may be some housekeeping as well, which will be required to maintain the entire facility.

And then, Mr. Speaker, there is the roadworks. The \$80 million roadworks project will further drive the construction sector. The same ancillary services and the same spill-offs will apply, especially in terms of employment for construction workers, from civil engineers to labourers to bobcat drivers to truck drivers, et cetera. Better roads lead to greater productivity. It will also reduce foreign exchange being used to purchase brakes and suspension spare parts. Better roads translate into improved fuel efficiency, reduced tyre wear, and improved road safety because bad roads cause accidents.

But Mr. Speaker, there is one more important facet to this. This is actually the main key to the success of the stimulus strategy that we are discussing here. This is the social responsibility of the worker. This can no longer be just about having a job and earning money. It must also be about making a contribution to national productivity and development. Productivity is an issue that most of us shy away from at the national level, but it is imperative that we address this issue here and now. It is the responsibility of every working citizen to give a truly honest day's work. This means coming to work, coming to work on time and working when at work.

Our national motto is Pride and Industry. The pride is not a problem, but we need to work on the industry. What does industry mean? It means being productive. The dictionary defines industry as energetic, devoted activity at any work or task - diligence. Ask yourself, what is your contribution to the annual national output? Are you being diligent? Can it be improved? And then there must be discipline. Industry starts with discipline. The discipline to go to work, to get there on time and to apply oneself to the task. As a government, we invest in you to the tune of so many millions of dollars spent in the education sector, the health sector, transportation and other social services. Now is the time to give back, give us a return on our investment.

The unions have a pivotal role to play in this new drive towards productivity. We in Barbados have always

known that our human resource is our greatest asset. Throughout Barbados, the unions have fought tirelessly for proper working conditions and wages. By and large that has been achieved. We now implore the unions to partner with us, hold our hands and urge our workers to give of their best. Let us say no to tardiness and absenteeism and yes to improved productivity. This is what our nation needs at this critical economic juncture. Thank you. I am obliged.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for the City.

Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am indeed happy to be here this morning in this esteemed chamber in the third oldest parliament in the Commonwealth and located in a world heritage city to deliver a maiden speech during these Estimates Debates. And I will strive to do my best to get a happy marriage between the two.

I am indeed inspired by those illustrious Barbadians who served in this constituency before me, a constituency which was established in this House in 1843. And of course I am talking of the likes of the Right Excellent Samuel Jackman Prescod, the Right Excellent Charles Duncan O'Neal, Sir Mencea Cox, Erskine Ward, Ernest Deighton Mottley, and of recent vintage, Dame Billie Antoinette Miller. I have mentioned a few illustrious Barbadians.

Barbados, Mr. Speaker, would not be here had it not been for the blessings of Almighty God and the good constituents of the City of Bridgetown who reposed their confidence in me on election day, and also those many people who supported me quietly, even through the power of prayer. I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to my constituents and to all those who have supported me in reaching this point in my life.

During the last election campaign I made a pledge to the residents of the City of Bridgetown and it is a pledge that I am committed to keeping. That pledge is that as long as I was elected as the representative for the City of Bridgetown, I will serve the entire population of Bridgetown irrespective of political affiliation or associations, perceived or even felt. That is a pledge that I intend to keep. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that I would expect that the Government of Barbados, which was elected by the people, will do a similar thing in serving the people of this country. I think that is a reasonable expectation of each and every citizen and resident of this country who has elected the government of their choice to represent them over a five-year period. And I will say at this stage that I will hold fast to this idea even when the Barbados Labour Party is returned to office in five years' time.

Having examined the Estimates, Mr. Speaker, and having listened to the speeches yesterday and today, I am

satisfied that the Government has some challenges in allocating financial resources, given the state of things that exist at this time. But for me there are two priorities that I look for in the Estimates. One being the generation of revenue - allocating funds to those areas where revenue can be generated, revenue that will cause the Government to be able to allocate even more resources during the next fiscal year. And the second part of that, Mr. Speaker, is providing that social net, that safety net for the less vulnerable and the poor in our society. And it is in that vein that I would like to make my contribution to these Estimates.

The Democratic Labour Party manifesto acknowledged that the small business sector is the primary vehicle for growth in most economies. It also said that the new Government would create a reinvigorated small and medium-sized business sector. And this is good. And I say it is good because the small business sector accounts for about one third of the labour force of this country. There is nothing to be scoffed at. I think it is a good idea because the City of Bridgetown comprises several micro enterprises and small businesses and this is something good for the people of the City of Bridgetown and by extension the people of Barbados.

The difficulty that I have, however, is that when I look at the Estimates I do not see the allocation of funds to the small business sector to match the goal settled by Government. That is what I see. And for me, something has to be done in order to allocate more resources to a sector that is critical to the development of this country. We see, for example, that the subsidies which are allocated to the small business sector, which account for about 65 per cent of its income, have been slashed by two thirds from \$1.3 million in 2008 down to \$450 000. And I will call on the Honourable Minister of Finance to look at this and to try to address this situation at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sir, this will be the problem because all of the studies that have been carried out regarding the small business sector indicate that financing is the number one problem affecting this sector - financing either for export purposes or for the building of the capacity of these businesses. And at a time when the viability of enterprises remains one of the greatest challenges at the national level, I think that all efforts should be made to restore those subsidies to the levels, or as close to the level, that existed back in 2008. I say that too at a time when the loan schemes that were created, like the credit and guarantee scheme by the Central Bank, are not working. I believe that we should do all in our power to ensure that this sector gets the money that it deserves. This small business sector will assist in the alleviation of poverty in this country as it did back in 1994 when we had problems with unemployment and problems with the eight per cent cut. It is a good thing and it is something that must not be allowed to go under the table.

I further believe, Mr. Speaker, that looking again at the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, which speaks to attacking pockets of poverty in a systematic way, focusing on inter-districts rather than individual units, this is something that resonates well with me. And I will say why - it is because we have something called the Inter-American Development Bank Neighbourhood Upgrade Programme, which should have started several years ago under the last administration. Monies were voted for and the loan of US \$30 million was approved, yet it sits idly while these projects and the people who should have benefited from these projects are still waiting to find out exactly what is happening with the project. And the Garden Land - \$2 million, yes, in roadworks, I heard that yesterday. But these projects - Garden Land, Jack's Castle in the City of Bridgetown, Greenfields and Allen View in St. Thomas - Mr. Speaker, I am saying to the Honourable Minister of Housing that you are now on the runway with these projects. You do not have to look for the money. You have already boarded the plane. I urge you, sir, to use your offices to ensure that these projects are executed in this term, because they are projects that will bring relief to the needy people of these communities.

I ask the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Honourable Minister of Housing, to shed himself of the yoke of partisan politics that chokes us from time to time. Unshackle yourself from the chain of political experiences that enslave us from time to time and do what is right and what is just for the people of Barbados who need this assistance.

When I look at the Estimates I see things happening in terms of road repairs or promises, pledges within the Estimates. But I do not see very much happening within the City of Bridgetown. And I want to say to the Honourable Minister of Finance and to those on that side that Barbados, Bridgetown and its Garrison have been designated as a World Heritage Site. And that designation must mean something. And I believe that we need to move with alacrity to allocate resources firstly to the Ministry of Tourism so that we can accelerate the pace of heritage tourism in this country if we want to be firm craftsmen of our faith and strict guardians of our heritage. I believe that if we want to maximise - and we ought to maximise - the benefits that should be derived from this designation, we must bring the residential part of Bridgetown in terms of its infrastructure to a level that is in concert with a world heritage city. And I think that every effort should be made. I recognise that during the last five years there were no roadworks in the City of Bridgetown. And I believe that if we want to really maximise the designation, some work should be done in Bridgetown in order for us to do just that. I am glad to see that the Government has continued the work.

Mr. SPEAKER: Members, let me draw your attention. I am tired of hearing those cell phones go off. Please silence them or leave them outside like I do mine, please. Thank you. I am sorry for the interruption. Please continue.

Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I spoke earlier about the need to look after the less vulnerable in our society and this is a work that is part of the Millennium goals and the work that was started by the last Barbados Labour Party administration. And I am happy to see some continuation in that regard. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that if we are to tackle the problem of intergenerational poverty in this country, if we are to tackle the problem of the culture of poverty, which in itself is even more serious than poverty, I believe that there must be a holistic approach to dealing with this matter. And I want to say that based on the report that was laid in this House some time ago by the Honourable Minister responsible for social care which indicated that poverty had increased significantly and clearly a lot of this poverty exists within the city of Bridgetown and along the urban corridors of this country. And I am saying to the Government that if we want to really make a meaningful impact on poverty, it has to start within the urban corridor and within the city of Bridgetown where poverty at the moment is perhaps greatest. That is one of the things that I want to put to this Honourable House.

I, Mr. Speaker, intend to make a meaningful contribution to the life of this Parliament. I intend to be an active participant and, even more important, I intend to make a difference to the life of this Parliament. I know that from time to time there will be lots of things where we will not be able to agree and I have seen in the short time that I have been here that things can get very dodgy and I expect that there will be some fireworks on both sides of the House from time to time. But I want to say that I strongly believe that in spite of all that separates us, including this in front of us, I want to believe that we have one thing in common in this Parliament and that is that both sides of this House have a duty and a responsibility to look after the people of this country. And it is something that has been done by both administrations over time which has led to Barbados being designated as the world's leading developing country. And in spite of all that separates us, I think in those areas where we have commonality and where we have consensus that perhaps the new way forward is for us to cooperate and collaborate in the interests of Barbados and the people who elect us on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity. I thank the constituents of the city of Bridgetown and -

Mr. SPEAKER: I am much obliged. Yes. Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this debate on the Estimates. I first want to begin by thanking the good residents, the constituents of St. Michael West Central for returning me to Parliament to represent them. I know it was against great odds and I most especially want to say that it demonstrates, sir, that I believe that generally if we as politicians deliver to the people what is most important, I believe that the people will understand what we are doing.

But, sir, having listened to the presentations from the other side, especially when I listened first to the presentation of the Member for St. Michael North East yesterday, I noticed a kind of self-righteous indignation in terms of what the Members saw as the issues afflicting Barbados. But you know, sir, when I listened to it I said to myself, sir, here it is that we constantly hear the refrain coming from that side that we need to do something different, that we need to execute change. And, sir, when we do an inspection of ourselves we know, sir, that change, sir, begins with each and every one of us. And in that respect I said to myself, when I listened to some of the arguments coming from the opposition, it says to me, sir, that instead of reinforcing the process of change, what sometimes we unwittingly do, sir, is that we seem to be saying to people, keep thinking the way that you are thinking. And we know, sir, that in the context of what we are facing today, in the context of the challenges that this country faces, both economic, sir, and social, that to hear some of the things coming from the opposition, that really says to people that you do not have the capacity to execute change.

Now, sir, when I listened to the presentation of the Member for St. Michael North West, in which he said to the opposition, if you have a different idea, bring it, bring the solutions. I have listened carefully to -

each presentation. And instead of doing that, instead of identifying the first to help Barbados, sir, move forward in very difficult, in a very difficult economic storm, British facing, we seem to be saying to Barbadians, sir, you do not have the capacity, even at the level of your own community, even at the level of your own family structure, to execute change. And that, sir, is really the fundamental thing that we have to ask ourselves as leaders, as politicians, as representatives of people. Because if we are to at least come out of this as a nation, as a people, sir, each of us, sir, has a responsibility to say to the people that we represent, sir, that you have the capacity with us to do something different. And we will hold your hands and use the resources of this country, sir, to do something different. That is what we need to say, sir.

Sir, it therefore says to me that it seems as if there are people in this country who see it in their own interest to keep things the way they are and to pull the wool over the

eyes of working class people. Because let us understand, sir, I know President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, sir, very recently, sir, and you know, one of the things that James Petras wrote about him, he said, this is one of the things he said, he said, Chavez's philosophy and practice, more than any discourse narrated by the social forum hopping expert, demonstrated that the art of formulating complex ideas in simple language can move millions of people to make history, and not only to study it. Because, sir, what is happening today is that we have a lot of people who basically can talk about this and study this and tell you about this and study that. But when it comes to coming up with solutions, they are lost.

This Democratic Labour Party administration has said that in this current period, it stands fervently on the side of those least able to help themselves and has committed this country's resources in order to help those people. And sir, we talk about poverty, sir, we should stop trying to institutionalise poverty in this country because very often, sir, poverty is a state of mind, sir. What we should be doing and what we should be embracing, sir, are strategies and approaches, sir, that help people to see their way out of poverty. And this Democratic Labour Party administration, sir, is committed to that process.

And when you look, sir, at some of the initiatives that are contained in these estimates, sir, it clearly states that this government, sir, is prepared to hold the hands of working class people and not only working class people, sir, but middle class people too, in terms of trying to ensure first of all that we protect this country's standard of living. Despite the fact, sir, that the Barbados Labour Party administration when they were in power, sir, they will not tell you, but they signed agreements, sir, that basically undermined the very progress that this country made and committed this country, sir, to the circumstances which we face today, sir.

So let me just first begin by looking, sir, at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fishing and Water Resource Management budget, sir. They are saying, sir, that we don't want to support this productive sector, sir. The budgeted estimate indicates, sir, that we are committing for 2013–2014 \$89 million - it might not be enough. But the point is really that this government has clearly stated that with a key productive sector, sir, it is still there to commit the resources that are required in order to move it forward.

And you know, sir, one of the issues I think we have to face today clearly is that government, sir, has a role in development. But at the same time too, sir, the private sector too, sir, has a role in development. The government must not allow this debate to continue to the level where the responsibilities of the private sector in all of its constituent parts are ignored. And we continue in this current debate - and the opposition, sir, seems to be trapped

in it, sir - to not awaken the private sector that they have a responsibility. When I listen to the member, sir, for St. James North, it seemed as if he was speaking for the private sector. Because when I heard the whole debate, it seems clearly right out of the mouth of a businessman, self-centred in some cases, because I think that our private sector in this country, sir, needs to understand that if this country is to progress, it has to be a partnership between the private sector, sir, and between government.

Even in that regard, for those who think that the government is not doing anything, sir, already this government has been committed to the reinforcement of the social partnership process. It continues to say to the private sector, sir, that we are willing to meet with you to discuss ways in which we can take this country forward. Sir, it continues to say that. And, sir, I want in that regard to say that unless we develop linkages in this economy that say to the private sector that in order for one section of the economy to move forward, other persons must move forward too. And I want to say that this is something which the government has a battle with. It has a battle because traditionally in this country, what we have seen is an adversarial relationship existing between different sections of the private sector, to the point where one section moves forward at the expense of another. And it is precisely that which is what happened under the Barbados Labour Party administration, to the point where the weaknesses in our economy have now been exposed today because the Barbados Labour Party, sir, failed to deal with it. They failed to deal with it.

And I will say what I'm talking about, sir, in respect to the question of linkages in our economy and the fact that we have been unable to exploit the natural advantages of Barbados, to exploit the natural uniqueness of Barbados in terms of trying to ensure that we develop more sustainable types of employment for Barbadians. I heard the member talk about the fact about how under the Barbados Labour Party administration employment increased, but what they did not tell you, it was unsustainable employment. By and large, many of the projects that they financed at the time were financed from borrowing, not from any money that they generated, not from any money that came from increased taxation. And it is precisely because of the fact that during that period, basically all these projects have now fallen flat because they were not sustainable in the longer term. What we are doing is developing projects which are more sustainable in the longer term.

This is where the issue of entrepreneurship comes in. As a matter of fact, sir, under this government, we have done more than the Barbados Labour Party in terms of promoting the principle of entrepreneurship, sir. What we see instead is an attempt to try to convince Barbadians that they are powerless, that the moves that we are making in terms of entrepreneurship, sir, cannot succeed. That, for

instance, under our renewable energy initiative, sir, there are new companies that have been formed in Barbados since 2008 seeking to take advantage, sir, of the renewable energy initiative that this government is pushing. Look around, because it seems as if the opposition is living in one Barbados and we are living in the next. That is the problem, because I can think of at least two companies who have registered in the last two years to take advantage, sir, of renewable energy opportunities in this country, sir - at least two. And not only that, sir, there are Barbadians who are walking about boasting about the fact, sir, that they are paying \$25 for their electricity bill. That is what they are doing. And this happened under the Democratic Labour Party administration, sir.

Sir, I want to talk about the question of tourism because, you know, I hear that the Barbados Labour Party is accusing this Democratic Labour Party administration, sir, of not doing enough on tourism. So let us state the facts. The type of tourist that we are getting today is one who, in the same way as Barbadians, is facing economic challenges. They are facing the same economic challenges too. So the reality is that when ten years ago or eight years ago, a visitor thought nothing of paying \$60 to drive from the Chamberlain Bridge down to the port, it does not work that way anymore. So we have a different type of tourist today. So what we have done - we recognise this. And what we are trying to do is to come up with strategies that cater to the fact that tourists worldwide, first of all, are looking for value for money. That is number one. Number two, they are also, sir, looking for a different type of experience.

I want to compliment, sir, the Minister of Tourism on the community tourism initiative. What we are trying to do is to develop and implement that community tourism initiative. Why this is important is because today's tourism - we just cannot be selling sand, sea and sun, because that happened in the past when you could sell sand, sea and sun. But we have to understand that in order to compete today, the ordinary visitor is looking for something different. Under the Barbados Labour Party administration, what did they do? They did not seek to do that. They continued and tried to exploit the sand, sea and sun initiative. They attracted tourists to Barbados because of sand, sea and sun. But what we have to recognise is that today's world is different. And the initiative that we are pursuing to develop community tourism, trying also to encourage restaurants and hotels to look to see how we can put more local Barbadian foods on the table - not only that, and you want to know how you could create employment? You create employment because, as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas says, she has farmers whose produce restaurants are promoting. The produce that they are growing in St. Thomas will be bought by the same restaurants and hotels. What you are doing is earning income for those people. That is what you are doing. That is what you should be

pushing, not telling Barbadians how powerless they are and how they are suffering.

What we have to do, sir, is to help Barbadians, sir, to wake up and see the opportunities that are available to them. That is what we shall be doing and what we are doing, sir. And as the Democratic Labour Party is identifying new opportunities that Barbados can grasp and take advantage of, that is what we are doing. So when you hear about the community tourism initiative, do not push up your nose, because I understand what was happening, sir.

What happened under the Barbados Labour Party administration is that the only people that mattered to them were, first of all, those who were of a certain background, and those who spoke, sir, a different accent, sir. That is what mattered to them. So many plans for Barbados were based on advice from outside, because that is where, for instance - remember when we talked about certain land being put to its highest economic value? It was to cater to Europeans and North Americans coming to play golf. That is what they were doing. So when we take a different approach, it is not difficult then to understand why they really cannot see what we are doing. Because what we are doing - we are taking back Barbados. We are taking back the Barbados that has been shut out. That is what we are doing.

Sir, the Youth in Agriculture programme that we started in this country, sir - and I will tell you this - the constituents of St. Michael West Central do not fear. In fact they were already part of the programme and I will say to them that I will also ensure that they will continue to be part of the Youth in Agriculture programme, because I am going to work with landowners in this country to see if we can identify plots of land that we can at least find for young people to be able to farm, to teach them the rudiments of farming and the business of farming. This is what we are going to do under that Youth in Agriculture programme. Do not go there saying how people are suffering. Tell them what are the opportunities available. Work with us. Work with us. That is what you should be doing.

Mr. Chairman, we can take our young people from the constituency who benefited from the Youth in Agriculture programme and we can expand it. But we have to encourage our business people to work with us. Work with us, sir. That is what we need to do. Because you know what is happening - the activities that ordinary people engage in every day that we do not recognise, if we teach them how to do it properly, they can build a business from it.

I have to think about how, for instance, sir, we started the minibus business in this country. You remember, sir? Someone came back from England and

decided to go on the road and provide transport. People on the street decided, well, I must see if I can give a little ride to some people and charge some money. And out of that little initiative that people started, it grew into a business that has grown today. What happened is everybody got involved with it - the small man. I am saying that what we need to do is to look in our communities - and that is what you should be doing. Go into your communities to find out, go into your communities to look to see what people are doing and then help them to develop it, to make it a business. That is what you should be doing. So what we should be doing then is identifying who are our creative men and women in our communities. Who are our farmers in our communities. And what we should be doing is bringing people together to help Barbados trade with each other.

Because, you know, the problem that we have in this country is that we don't seem to think that what we are doing is good enough. That the only way to make it good is only bring from sight. That's the only way. I want to appeal especially to our business people, especially our tourist people. Look, the ministry, this minister of finance has continued to invest in tourism to the point where they ask for more, he gives them more. But I always say, to whom much is given, much is asked. And tourism people cannot tell me now that many have projects that they should not divide it in such a way that our local farmers, that our local manufacturers shall be able, our musicians shall be able to engage in productive activity to provide them with the goods and services that they need. Too many of the products that we are here today is not designed to benefit local producers. It is designed to benefit people from outside. I always say sometimes when we spend money abroad is to help a worker abroad employed. When we spend money home is to help to keep the attention employed. And we have people, businessmen working together every day. I want this, I want that. But they ain't prepared to spend it from our business. And when you get any money, they're looking overseas to spend it.

Mr. Speaker, sir. We need to stop that kind of practices within our business community and then we will see change and then we will see the kind of impact that the policies that this government is having. We will see it having an impact, sir, in the depressed communities that we talk about, all these local depressed communities. Because, sir, I always say this, that people have a way of dealing with the times. People have a way of dealing with the times and we have to find ways, innovative ways of helping them to deal with those times, sir. We have to do that, sir.

I want to talk about another development in this country. I think we need to focus on, sir. I have seen a private entrepreneur in this country, sir, that what they call the sweet potato, I have seen them always sweet potato. People laugh at it. They say it can't go anywhere. But I see

now, for instance, though, the concept of the sweet potato fries. And I want to say to the Minister of Agriculture, sir, every resource that you can find to commit in terms of helping to develop that particular industry, sir, and to help the person in the private sector who can move that process forward, let us find the resources to do it. Let us find the resources to do it because I am looking forward to the place of chef, Kentucky fried chicken, chicken bar. And all of them start having sweet potato fries in their recipes because I know right now some of them bring it in, but it probably is a branding from abroad.

And again, I want to emphasize our restorators because I have always said I have a difficulty with these international franchises coming in this country because a lot of them, their business model is not designed to buy local supplies. And I want to say to them, they cannot expect to come into this country. Barbados. Expect Barbados to spend Barbados. And tell them we can't buy nothing from you. I want to say to the Burger Kings, to the families, look to fight local because that is how we will keep employment going. I want to hear the opposition speak to that. But I know some of them will have difficulty. I know some of them will have difficulty because in a sense, some of them benefit from these franchises. But I want to tell you how to cut off these things because it's going to be a Barbados first under these circumstances. They can't hold water your mouth, although how many water your mouth. Let them know that when they come here, you have to buy Barbados first. That is how we make unemployment.

Because I always say this, I always say this. It is all better than it that you earn the most money but at the same time, if the people out there have jobs, who will buy the things that you bring it in? Who will buy them? Who will buy my sheep bread, my coffee? Am I black rich? I know you want to give those things, but what I'm saying, what I am saying, what I'm saying we need a new approach in this country that seeks to create greater harmony in terms of the approaches to development between government, sir, and between the private sector. The private sector cannot expect to place the responsibility and the psyche of the individual solely upon government because it is the actions of the private sector, sir, that sometimes undermine the very initiatives that government, at the same time, sir, is trying to advance. That is what they're doing. So I want to stop this nonsense about me and them and talk about whether or not people suffer because around the world the only people are suffering, sir.

When you look at and look at it, sir, real suffering, we see it around the world. Barbados has done relatively well. Barbados has done relatively well compared to other countries. And when you compare many, compare us to Latin America. Latin America that workers get paid less than \$1 there complain that these people get paid less

than \$1 there. Places really floor. Unless we compare us with breaking open, sir, I want to say this. I believe that these estimates, sir, the best of what Barbados can afford at this time. And you know what to, sir, what these estimates do? They have help with the ability of Barbadians at these times, sir, to become innovative, to at least ensure that we can come up with solutions to the problems that we face. That is what he has done and it's not perfect, but we need to hold hands together in terms of moving forward, not do what the opposition is doing, sir, trying to give fetch to Barbadian, sir, that we are powerless to change the circumstances that we live in. But it also means, sir, that all of us have responsibilities, sir, not just government. And with that, sir, I want to say, sir, I give my whole hearted approval, sir, to the testimony, sir. Thank you very much.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: I beg to move that the House be suspended until 2.00 p.m. this afternoon for lunch, sir. Just briefly speaking on the suspension. The photographer is waiting downstairs and we are asking members to assemble in the arranged area for the official photograph of Parliament 2013. Before we proceed to the lunch table.

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: Yes. Good afternoon, honourable members. This sitting of this august chamber is resumed. When the suspension was taken we were on Order Number One and with that we shall continue. Yes, the honourable member for St. Michael South East.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to the Appropriations Bill for 2013 presently under consideration in this chamber. Let me first of all say that I am grateful to the people of St. Michael South East for having the confidence to elect me as the duly elected member for the constituency. And I am proud to say that I intend to serve them to the best of my ability in this chamber. I can also proudly boast that I bought no votes during this election campaign. I am not sure others on the other side may be able to do the same. But that notwithstanding, I believe that it is important for all of us to realise the importance of the business at hand, particularly after the general election, and that we can be cordial in this chamber to the extent that the people of Barbados are listening and certainly watching for us to be able to make significant changes in their lives.

I am also grateful to the leader of the Barbados Labour Party's opposition for the opportunity to shadow such an important sector as tourism and by extension international transport, a sector which has been described by many as the lifeblood of the Barbadian economy and which regrettably yesterday the honourable member for St. Michael South Central and the minister responsible for tourism could only find but a few five minutes in his presentation to really address the number of the sensitive issues in this particular sector. But perhaps my expectations not only of the honourable member but perhaps of the government of Barbados are sometimes exceptionally high. But I do so because I believe that those who are vested by the people of Barbados with the responsibility of stimulating growth in this economy and ensuring that not only our economic sectors are performing, but that equally that our social sectors are performing, that they would do so to the fullest of their ability.

I believe that the tourism sector must be understood in these estimates against a background that is very critical to the listening public of Barbados. The sector contributes about 15 per cent of the gross domestic product. It also generates approximately 46 per cent of all of our foreign exchange earnings and there are perhaps over 10 per cent of the workforce directly employed in the tourism industry. It is also a sector which has the ability to transcend several other sectors of the Barbadian economy, including the health sector, the education sector, the cultural industries and also the sporting sector of this country. And as such I believe it deserves quite a substantive discussion in these estimates. And I hope that when the heads will come up later on in the course of the next few days that tourism will certainly be at the forefront of the discussions in this debate.

In considering the sector, I think it is important for those listening to appreciate the current economic situation of Barbados and why for several years we have been told that we must, as a people, see tourism as our business and we must play our part because as we face difficult economic times - and I will not stand here and tell you that we are still in a global recession because I believe members on the other side know quite the opposite, that the height of the global recession was at the point of 2009 - but that while we consider the factors which are currently being experienced not only by Barbados but across the world by different countries, that we need to understand that the decline in our tourism industry has the potential to affect all of our other sectors. We need to appreciate that not only has there been a decrease in the long stay arrivals in this country by 6.2 per cent, but also we have seen an increase of only 4.3 per cent in the average stay of arrivals. We have also witnessed a fall in our VAT receipts by 2 per cent. We have seen interest payments higher by 4 per cent. And perhaps when you take a good look at the estimates, it is clear that the only increase that we can see from these

figures is an increase to government, the subsidies to government entities by at least 2 per cent.

I heard yesterday the honourable Minister of Finance make the point that unemployment was now at 12 per cent in the economy. And when I look at the figures of the Central Bank report for December 2012, it is clear that he is projecting an even greater increase than that projected by the Central Bank of Barbados at 11.7 per cent. But that certainly is telling of the times in which we are in a situation where it is clear that the statistics coming out of the Central Bank of Barbados, in many cases the facts on the streets and the realities of what each of us are facing in our respective constituencies present a far higher figure than what is in the Central Bank of Barbados's report.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I say all this against this background because I think we need to understand and to put in perspective the tourism industry of Barbados. We need to understand that we are experiencing declines in all of our key international markets in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. And visitors are also spending less. It was quite unfortunate to hear the Minister of Tourism indicate yesterday that in almost throwing your hands in the air situation, what else can we do for this country since we get the visitors here but we are unable to get them to spend any money. And I say to this honourable chamber that it is simply not good enough to hear from the very top of the industry at a ministerial level, a position where it seems as though we lack the vision, or that he lacks the vision and the foresight to be able to not only encourage people to come to Barbados, but to figure out how to be able to extract whatever little funds they have to stimulate growth in this economy.

We are also operating against a background where the output and the foreign exchange from tourism has contracted, and we can stand here in this chamber and speak all kinds of fancy language. But I believe the people who are listening to this debate will understand that the money that they were once accustomed to as beach vendors from the tourists who were able to support their businesses is no longer there. The taxi operators across Barbados will understand that they are now witnessing several tourists taking the minivans and finding less expensive means of transportation in Barbados. I was in St. Thomas recently, Mr. Speaker, and I witnessed a few tourists on a minibus, no doubt making their way from Bridgetown to perhaps Harrison's Cave or Welchman Hall Gully. And it is interesting too, because I live in the heart of St. Lawrence Gap and I have seen over the course of the past few years a significant decline in the number of visitors frequenting one of our most popular night strips and one of our most popular entertainment centres. And therefore I would have thought that a discussion on the estimates, given that tourism is one of the key sectors necessary to stimulate growth in this country, that this would have been the topic

of discussion for longer than was attributed to the debate yesterday.

I hear much said by the current administration about the decline in the arrivals from the United Kingdom and that how the Barbados Labour Party would have spent significant sums and expended significant energies on bringing tourists from the United Kingdom, and how we seem to have lumped all our eggs in one basket. And as a result of that, the Democratic Labour Party administration has had to look to other source markets for revenue and for tourist arrivals. But I say to this country that 40 per cent of our tourist arrivals are generated from the United Kingdom and that whilst we can throw our hands in the air again and say that the air passenger duty which was imposed in 2009 when it was revised on the countries in the Caribbean and which made it more expensive to travel to the Caribbean as opposed to the United States, is not sufficient for us to simply blame external factors. But we all can recognise that the United Kingdom is not going to bend its ways and reverse its policies in any hurry and therefore any administration faced with the rise in the air passenger duty surely would have taken the necessary steps to ensure that Barbados remained an attractive destination to tourists coming from the United Kingdom and from Europe. It is not sufficient for us to throw our hands in the air and plead as though all these factors are contributing to slow economic growth and to slow tourism arrivals in this country. But instead we have to recognise that we also have a responsibility to do things in the island to generate the necessary growth in our tourist arrivals.

I remember when I was a student at the university in England, Barbados was seen as a premier destination. It was the most expensive destination of choice in this part of the Caribbean. And it was interesting to see the brochures and the way it was presented in a number of the media, because Barbados was seen as the luxury destination of choice. It was seen as the place where, if you had that little extra bit of money, that you would certainly be a bit more luxurious in trying to find your safe place for a vacation. And it is against that background that the Democratic Labour Party would have taken office in this country, Mr. Speaker, with an appreciation that Barbados has always been marketed as a luxury destination and as such, even in the face of an air passenger duty, it would mean that the first thing that you will have to consider is the cost to the consumer in making their way to Barbados. And therefore, it would follow from that, Mr. Speaker, that all necessary efforts would have to be deployed to ensure that Barbados is seen as an attractive destination, that the hotels in this country were given the appropriate resources to be able to be competitive, that the hotels in this country and the restaurants were able to be given the necessary incentives to be able to assist them, to not only attract the tourists to this destination, but also to ensure that we remain competitive as against our Caribbean neighbours.

And it is worrying, Mr. Speaker, that even in light of the facts which would have been at hand for the Democratic Labour Party at the time that they took office, that we have witnessed the current administration pursue a course of policies which contradict what is necessary to be able to capitalise on growth in the tourism sector. We have seen Jamaica emerge as the leading Caribbean destination since we would have had the record and the awards for being the leading Caribbean destination back in 2003, 2004 and 2005. And we have seen St. Lucia rise as the Caribbean's leading honeymoon destination, all in the face of a recession, all in the face, as the Democratic Labour Party would have us believe, of hard times facing all of our Caribbean neighbours. But what was even more startling is to read that the Cocoa Reef Resort in Tobago was picked up as the Caribbean's leading hotel. There was no mention of any of our premier luxury brand hotels in any of the literature. And what was further startling was that the [Inaudible.] Bay Spa and Resort in St. Vincent, a smaller island than Barbados and one which several Barbadians believe that we are outperforming the sector in a number of the smaller islands across the Caribbean, was able to top the Caribbean's leading new hotel and it out-nudged other hotels in the region of which, in these top five, none of them were from Barbados.

These are the figures which are available. No doubt they are available to me, they are available to the people of Barbados, and surely they are available to the government of Barbados as well. But even as we listen to the debate in this chamber, the impression is often given that other destinations are facing the same issues. Other destinations are therefore not growing and we in Barbados somehow are facing peculiar circumstances that enable us not to be able to rise above the challenges that others are facing. It is also interesting as well to read of the World Travel and Tourism Council's website some very sad reading on Barbados as a tourism destination because they have projected that Barbados can expect growth in tourism of 2.5 or 2.7 per cent per year, compared with a growth rate of 5.5 per cent for countries such as the Bahamas. And it goes further. They say that when assessing the context of growth in arrival numbers, Montserrat was the only country which Barbados was ahead of in the list of countries in the Caribbean which report to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation. And it should be noted as well that these other countries have also faced the same air passenger duty as well, which was imposed by the British government.

So, just to dispel the myth and the misleading information which seems to come constantly from the other side, that we are in the same position as our neighbours and we seem to be performing better than our neighbours in the Caribbean. Because I can tell you, as I have been shadowing this particular sector, it is quite disturbing to know that the Barbados to which I grew up believing was the best that it could be has now seemed to have fallen

below acceptable levels. And our current administration seems only to be able to tell us and throw their hands in the air and tell us nothing better can be done. I say to this administration, Mr. Speaker, that better is expected from the people of Barbados - it does not matter whether you are a Barbados Labour Party or Democratic Labour Party supporter - but better can be done in this country. Because, just like me, I am sure that the facts, when presented, are startling for many of you to know that Barbados has fallen below the grace of what we have come to expect of this beautiful island that we all call home.

But the figures are even more startling, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the cruise industry, because we have seen during the summer period April to December of 2012, cruise calls have fallen by 29.5 per cent. The Minister of Tourism, Mr. Speaker, has indicated that this has been attributed to the cruise ships shifting to other destinations and a renewed focus on the Mediterranean region by some of the major cruise companies. And I too will agree that there has been a shift in the focus of the Caribbean as a particular destination for a number of the cruise ship operators. But what I will not accept, Mr. Speaker -

Speaker, is that when you look at the performance of other territories in the region, when it relates to their cruise industry statistics, who have all faced the same external factors, who are not affected in any way with a cruise, an air passenger tax, in this situation, you will find that Barbados recorded a decline of 2.1 per cent between the period January to August of 2012. But you will also find that Jamaica grew by 33.9 per cent. You will also see statistics where Bahamas has grown by 8.8 per cent in their cruise passenger arrivals and St. Lucia by 7.5 per cent and St. Martin 10.9 per cent and Curacao 19.9 per cent and most remarkable of all, Martinique by 262.5 per cent. And when we go a little further, Mr. Speaker, we then realize that at the end of 2012, the central bank reported a decline of 15 per cent in cruise passenger arrivals over the January to December period. So you have a situation between January and August where Barbados recorded a decline of 2.1 per cent, but at the end of the 2012 period, we have recorded a decline of 15 per cent in our cruise passenger arrivals over that period.

Those are the facts, Mr. Speaker. Those are the facts of the Caribbean Tourism Organization statistics. Those are the facts of all of the leading authorities in the tourism industry. It would have been instructive if we had heard from the relevant member responsible for tourism a serious discussion as to how his administration feels about these figures, how the people of Barbados must feel about these figures, and in turn what the current administration intends to do to be able to reverse some of the slow growth that we have been seeing in this sector.

I heard much in the presentation of the honourable member for St. Michael North West about the capital works programmes and the effect of these programmes on the tourism and the construction sector. And I must say that of the nine capital works projects, which would have been public and private sector partnerships identified by the member for St. Michael North West and the 1 000 jobs that he has projected in terms of employment in the Barbadian economy as a result of these projects, it is worthy of note that the majority of them, on his own admission, will not commence until the third quarter of this year. And it is therefore not surprising that the central bank report for December 2012 projected that there would be no increase in employment in this country. Because the sad reality is that none of the three projects which directly impact on tourism and international transport in this country that have been alluded to by the member for St. Michael South Central, none of them will be ready before the end of the year, and the realisation of any benefits will not certainly redound to the benefit of Barbadians until perhaps 2014 or 2015.

If we are able to see any significant starting of the projects in the course of this year, and I'll mention those three for the benefit of those who seem to believe that by spouting the language of capital projects in this chamber, that they're suddenly going to come to fruition in the course of the next few days or the next few months, because mention was made of the cruise pier phase one. But indications are that this will not be fully financed until July and therefore operations will therefore maybe not be started until sometime thereafter. The pier head marina work is not expected to begin until the third quarter of this year, and similarly, the new cargo shed, which both of us agree on both sides, is necessary for the development of this country, but that too will not commence until the final quarter of 2013.

So in the event that these projects get off of the ground, which we have heard several projects mentioned by members on the other side over the course of the past five years, some of which have come to fruition, some of them have broken ground, and in some cases they've just like most other things that the members on the other side will say they have not materialised. But that notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that our 12 per cent of unemployment is likely to increase if the members on the other side are not able to clearly articulate how we will get this economy moving. Because if this sector is indeed the sector to which we all agree must be mobilised fully and must be supported fully with all of the resources that are available to us, then certainly by spouting these three projects as being projects that will stimulate growth, it is clear to yourselves, I am sure, and to the people of Barbados, that there will be no immediate benefits from these particular projects.

That leads me, Mr. Speaker, to a discussion on the current business environment, because I think it is important for the people of this country to understand that when the Democratic Labour Party speaks of the tourism sector, it is often with a harshness towards the private sector of this country, as if the private sector has not been carrying the burden and the losses of jobs in this country for over the past five years because we have seen over 16 000 jobs lost in the private sector. And we have heard the constant utterances from the Democratic Labour Party about how they will not dispose of any one member in the civil service. And we as the Barbados Labour Party are not opposed. We're not saying to you, cut, get rid of people in the public service, but we're saying to you that you must examine carefully the wages and salaries of this country and the rising expenditure in this country. We're saying to you as a Barbados Labour Party that you must recognise that the private sector is hurting. The private sector is struggling to make ends meet. And it is the same private sector upon whom you constantly rely to be able to bring civility to this country.

I say to them that they have done a remarkable job in trying times having to deal with this current administration, because the Barbados Labour Party recognised after 9/11 that there were certain things that needed to be done to assist the tourism sector. And we established various funds to be able to allow them to access funds to be able to keep their entities continuing to operate. And I don't know why the policy of the Democratic Labour Party is either to change the name of funds which were established by the Barbados Labour Party or in some cases simply to transfer funds to other entities that they can claim as their own. But regardless of whatever you do, the underlying principle must always be, as it relates to tourism, that assistance is needed in the sector, to the hotels, the restaurants and the ancillary businesses that rely heavily on the tourism sector to be able to survive in this country.

And we have seen a reduction in the number of new products which have come to the market which have resulted in us being as attractive a destination as we once were. We've also seen foreign investments in real estate projects down by 16 per cent in this country. And this is evidenced by the number of for sale signs that you will see as you drive along this west coast of this country. And you recognise that there are no new brand name hotels as promised by the Democratic Labour Party in its 2008 manifesto, that they promised that they would build one every year. The fact is that we understand as a Labour Party that it is important to attract big brand name hotels to Barbados. We understand as a Barbados Labour Party that we must attract this investment to our country because our very survival depends on tourism to be a key economic growth sector in this country.

But when you see a number of hotels closed across the length and breadth of Barbados, Sam Lord's, Silver Sands, Sandy Beach, which is formerly Sandy Bay, SCF at the Gap, Almond Beach and Peach and Quiet, surely, as I feel, I am sure members on the other side must feel a sense of uneasiness to know that the Barbados to which we have become accustomed is not the Barbados of today. And as it relates to the Almond Beach property, much has been said yesterday and there was much diversion on the issue of the Almond Beach. But I believe the Democratic Labour Party in its manifesto indicated to the people of this country that they understood that the closure of Almond would impact on not only a thousand households in this country, but also have further impact. Because in some cases you had persons one or two from a family that were actually employed at Almond and that the severe losses of jobs in this country as a result of Almond's closure would have a devastating impact on the livelihood of these people, they also understood, and they told the people of Barbados in the throne speech as well, that they would do and facilitate whatever was necessary to ensure that the 500 rooms that were lost were restored.

But we could not find it in the course of this debate, or we have not found it in the course of this debate, an explanation as to how the government of Barbados intends to assist with the reopening of the Almond Beach project. We have heard nothing and I believe that the government of this country owes it to the people of Barbados to open their mouths and tell the people of Barbados what is happening, because we need to know whether that project will be open in time for the winter season. We need to know if we will be in a position to offer or to be able to compete with our Caribbean neighbours, with our 500 all inclusive rooms on this island. We need to know as a people how to plan our lives, whether things will be more difficult than they are now in the next few months of this year. And we also need to realise that the hotels and the restaurants account for a significant portion of the non-performing loans in this country - 43 per cent. So when we hear the hoteliers crying out for assistance in this country, it is not because big business wants to be able to break the back of the Barbados government, but instead the Barbados government needs to appreciate and understand that we are all in this together. And attempts need to be made to ensure that the hoteliers are able to receive returns on their investment.

We've also seen the decline and the closure of attractions such as the Plantations, Routes and Rhythms, the ATV and the Malibu Centre. And what is most disturbing is that we have a situation where a number of the attractions are not open for more than two or three days each week. Again, a significant example of the decline across the industry. We've seen a rise in the villa market, at least 2 500 rooms available. But the fact is that they're not currently regulated. And again, nothing said by the current

minister as to how it is that we are going to deal with the issue of regulating our attractions or regulating our villas. But of course that would lead to what has been described by this side as an implementation deficit on the part of the Democratic Labour Party. Because there's a series of legislation that is necessary to give effect to this sector, both in terms of environmental protection, both in terms of legislation as it relates to the hotel sector, and also to even look at the issue of the bound rates to ensure that items which are not available and are incapable of being produced in Barbados, that the hoteliers are able to access those items because you know what? They're available in other territories. And we are now finding ourselves in a position where we are no longer competitive with our competitors in the region.

But in fact, Mr. Speaker, as I draw to a closure, is that we have not heard either how the Barbados Tourism Authority, with its \$101 000 000 budgeted for this year, proposes to pay its creditors on the international market. The over \$36 million that is owed, which is down from, I believe, around \$42 million. And the fact that we are only able to keep our head above water because of our good relations over the years with our friends in the air travel industry. We need to know, Mr. Speaker, whether the \$101 000 000 that has been budgeted is going to be able to get the job done. That is the key question that the people of Barbados are asking. That is the key question that each of you need to ask yourselves, Mr. Speaker, because at the end of the day it is clear that the Barbados Tourism Authority has not had a marketing campaign for the past few years. That if it wasn't for the good grace of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, we would have found ourselves in a situation where the fall and spring to Barbados campaigns and the take me to Barbados campaigns in 2011, which were both done by the BHTA,

would not have gotten off of the ground. And if it wasn't for them organising these events and having the BTA come on board to simply let the people in the tour operating industry become aware that these programmes were available. Then we would have found ourselves in a situation where the Barbados Tourism Authority would have gone along telling us about a tourism master plan, telling us about a development plan for this country, but doing absolutely nothing to be able to market Barbados as a premier destination to which we've all become accustomed. There was a time when we had a best of Barbados campaign which cost us \$6 million and we saw that brought to closure under the Democratic Labour Party. The facts are that the Democratic Labour Party has not done any marketing in these markets for 2012. And also the BTA has been struggling. The BHTA has been struggling to be able to do any marketing in the external markets. So we find ourselves in a position where the key agency vested with the authority to promote Barbados and to

market Barbados is struggling to be able to have a clear and concise campaign for this country.

There are several opportunities, Mr. Speaker, for this country. And in closing I wish to say to the Democratic Labour Party it is important that we take advantage of our world inscription, that we incentivise our businesses across this country, both in the hotel industry, in the restaurant industry, the small operators, the small tour operators, to be able to incentivise them to see Barbados as their own, to be a part of the tourism industry, that we want to be able to generate growth for us in this economy. I thank you.

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

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this debate, of course, to give full support to the Appropriations Bill as presented by the Honourable Minister of Finance. But I should like to pause before I get going to acknowledge the fact that I am here standing today in this hallowed chamber because of the confidence vested in me by the constituents of Christ Church East in returning me to this place to serve their interests for another term. And it is moments like these, Mr. Speaker, sir, where you recognise that since in a small island developing state only a few persons are able to have this privilege and this honour, that we should never lose sight of why we are here and we should never lose sight of the fact that there are people out there who may never have the opportunity to sit in this place, but they have given us that privilege to do so. And therefore I tender my gratitude to my constituents for putting me here.

Now this is an exercise that we go through every year and it is an exercise that is important to the management of the country. It is an exercise that reflects upon government's policy as to how we propose to take the country forward. It so happened, Mr. Speaker, that in the last term, as is this term, Barbados is locked into a global situation where economies across the globe are struggling for their very survival. And nothing that we are hearing here is unusual since Barbados is not quarantined from the impacts of global economic circumstances, whether it be in tourism, whether it be in food, whether it be in fuel or financial services. We all have to deal with these circumstances. And it so happens that Barbados is doing well. Not as well as we wanted to do, obviously, but we are keeping our heads above water and we are moving forward in confidence, realising that the people of Barbados have seen fit to return us here. And therefore it is our duty to ensure that we do the very best job that can be done under the circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, we make no apology whatsoever for the hardships that countries in the region are facing, including Barbados. What we do is intend to continue to

voice a vision of hope that will allow all Barbadians to know that their government is on their side and that we will do whatever is necessary to ensure that we preserve the kinds of qualities of life that Barbadians have become used to and that at the end of it all we pass on to the next generation and future generations of Barbados better than the one we inherited.

Now, we have heard the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Minister of Finance, take his time to walk us through those issues that are impacting on us. And I understand politics to some extent, I believe, and I realised that an opposition party has the responsibility to antagonise the government when it is necessary, to work with the government when they see it fit. But either of those decisions cannot be driven by our wish. It has to be done at the whims and perhaps fancies of the opposition party. I must say this, though, Mr. Speaker, I really have been heartened by some of the presentations I heard this morning from the new class of the Barbados Labour Party. And there is a tone that seems very welcoming. And I believe that new members in their own right to be here have acquitted themselves reasonably well so far. There seems to be an enthusiasm about where we need to go in this country. Not only in here but out there as well.

And I want to spend some time talking about the Ministry of the Environment and Drainage. A ministry that the Honourable Prime Minister has given me the opportunity to lead again and which I have given him my assurance that I shall endeavour to do my best in leading this ministry. Now, the former Prime Minister under this administration, the late Honourable David Thompson, had made a declaration in the early stages of his government, that Barbados will strive to become the greenest economy in Latin America and the Caribbean. And that in order to be able to achieve that objective, it became necessary to establish a full-fledged Ministry of the Environment, onto which was attached the Division of Drainage and at the time, the water resources management area that now falls under my friend and colleague, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. But he saw then that in order to be able to move Barbados along a sustainable development path, that it would be necessary to enable the country to rest upon an environmentally sound pillar. A pillar which has now been so eloquently articulated by our current Prime Minister and leader of this political party and this government. A pillar that is critical to being able to build out a balanced development for a sustainable development country and to ensure that each area of development is met with the kind of responsiveness not only in terms of its economic viability, Mr. Speaker, not only in terms of its social balance, but also in terms of its environmental soundness and of course, driven by good governance.

And as we study the world economies and the world societies, we realise that the voice of Barbados has been a

constant voice in the global discussion on environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability, of course, that is driven by the need to recover our biodiversity losses, the need to ensure that the ravages of poverty across the society are managed downwards, hopefully to extinction. Although the Bible makes it quite clear that the poor will always be with us. But to create the circumstances where the quality of life of all citizens in this country is of such, where every man and woman and boy and girl in this society can boast of having the opportunity to advance his or her life along a continuum of success, where he or she can experience self-actualisation relative to his or her dreams. Now that is at the heart of the Democratic Labour Party's philosophy. Because, of course, our founding father, the Right Excellent, the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow, made it quite clear that he was interested in building a social structure in this small island state where everyone, in spite of your station in life, in spite of where your beginning point is in this society, would have an opportunity to rise above the turbulences of time and the ravages of ages, to be able to achieve a certain level of human success. So that there is no question about how we derive our meaning in life, our self-definition in life. It does not matter how our circumstances would have shaped our beginnings.

This government, falling on from that philosophy, has taken the position that in order to build Barbados out as a sustainable development society, that we have to attend to issues relative to our economic viability, the nature of our social balance in the society, driven by social justice, of course, environmentally sound practices. Given what we know about our society and our environment and good governance, as the backbone, as the holder of our human vertebrae to keep us centred and moving forward, I am proud to be a part of that kind of thinking. I am not here to tell the Barbados Labour Party what they have or have not done. I am sure that they would match that conversation by telling us what they think we have or have not done. And that would be a reasonable discourse. I am more interested in probing what is ahead, trained to identify what can be done, looking at the circumstances of the times and telling myself, as I know my colleagues are, when we come out of this, what kind of Barbados do we wish to see? And I believe that the country is on that journey with us.

I believe that we have to follow the story of Nehemiah as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made mention of yesterday, where I believe that in their church service that was part of the text of the sermon of the preacher, or it was a quotation given. So Nehemiah, as was aptly pointed out by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, was a prophet called to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem when Jerusalem was in ruin because of war, civil war and the like. But what is interesting about that story is that the story does not end at the call of Nehemiah to work the audience, to get the team together, to build the walls

and to go forward. What was instructive in that story, as is captured in the Book of Nehemiah, chapter two from verse 11 to verse 20, was that there were critics in the audience, popularly known as Sanballat and Tobiah, who at every layering of every layer of that wall had something distracting to say. They did not join in. They did not hold hands with Nehemiah. But Nehemiah built and the team built and the walls of Jerusalem were reconstructed.

In a way, Mr. Speaker, in a way I believe that we all are in the reconstruction business because at the end of the day, this is our society. It is not the Barbados Labour Party's or the DLP's. It is the people of Barbados' society that we all must become part of the architecture of its restructuring. And therefore I am encouraged by those who would be apt to voice forth an opinion that is embrative, not necessarily embrative of the Democratic Labour Party, but embrative of the spirit of building together to ensure that tomorrow's Barbados is stronger, more vibrant, more sustainable than the one we inherited from our forefathers. And that is not a criticism of anyone.

So that the Ministry of the Environment takes pride in taking a centrepiece in this reconstruction process. And that is why we establish as a bidding for the ministry to establish or to advance a sustainable development programme underpinned by leading-edge environmental policies, practices and programmes that protect all aspects of our environment, our water resources, quality of life and the holistic well-being of our citizens. And that is what we are driven by as a mission. We hope to promote and facilitate the sustainable use of our resources, both marine-based resources and land-based resources, and encourage the involvement of all citizens in the integration of our environmental considerations into all aspects of national development. That is what we want to do as part of the Ministry of the Environment.

Now government has to be at the heart of the engine of employment generation. Yes, the private sector is important in that regard. And we have to take the moment to congratulate the private sector for holding the hands of government through these turbulent times and working closely with us through our social partnership to ensure that the society does not fall apart, but that all the stakeholders in this society are part and parcel of its going forward and the mobilisation of its success. And that is what we have to continue to work on. So we are driven by this commitment to sustainable development.

Now, we borrow heavily from the advice given through the Millennium Development Goals, particularly Goal Seven, that talks about environmental wellness, that talks about the reduction of poverty, that talks about access to sanitation, to water, and to those kinds of important human services and needs that meet the visceral needs of human beings. This government cannot, Mr. Speaker, sir,

be held responsible for the ravages of economic downturns across the globe. We acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that part and parcel of our viability as a country rests heavily on what happens in the international markets as it relates to tourism. As the Honourable Minister of Tourism has indicated, and as the honourable member of the opposition, the spokesperson on tourism, has indicated in her presentation, we understand that oil prices are another important and serious driver in how we do business in Barbados. We do not produce the level of fossil fuel-based energy that we could boast of. That could cause us, as a matter of fact, to reduce the amount of output and cost on fossil fuel products every year, which is up to \$800 million. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture is now working hard to ensure that there is a revolutionary reform in the agricultural sector that allows us to be able to build out agricultural products and services that will help us to reduce our import food costs up to \$500 million a year. And can you imagine that if we can reduce those costs, what an injection it would be in the economy of Barbados and how it would give us so much more disposable income or disposable resources that we could put in other places like the social services and our environmental services and so on to keep us moving forward.

For our part in the Ministry of the Environment, we have pitched our attention and our focus on renewable energy through our green energy programme, which is an exciting programme in the environment that looks at how we can utilise natural resources to build out our energy resources. Mr. Speaker, I must tell you that I am very proud of my officers in the Ministry of the Environment who work extremely hard on a daily basis to ensure that the things that we must bring to the fore to change the attitudes of Barbadians towards the environment and to change the attitudes of businesses towards the environment so that we can build out an environmental platform that contributes to the emergence of the new energy sector.

We have wind, we have sun, we have waste, Mr. Speaker. And we have had landfill for many years. And trapped under each decommissioned landfill cell is a collection of gases that can be actually transformed into energy. And therefore we are building out four major projects under the Ministry of the Environment. That involves a waste-to-energy plant. That waste-to-energy plant, Mr. Speaker, is of significant importance because once it is built out to its maximum capacity, it will be able to power over 27 000 homes per year in renewable energy. We are also building out our landfill gas-to-energy programme which has the capacity to generate enough electricity to power 8 000 homes a year. The Albin Farm that we have proposed is also in the business of being able to generate electricity to cover 7 000 homes. And the solar farm has the capacity of generating electricity to cover over 940 households per year in total. Mr. Speaker, sir, once these projects have been built out, they will be able to

generate for us 31 per cent power capacity and will be able to drive the electricity needs of 43 000 homes per annum. That is the programme. Now one might ask, why this direction?

Because your policies have to be responsive to your needs. And if you're saying that your needs are in the area of energy and energy generation, then there must be responsive policies to help you generate energy enough where you can have a significant reduction in your energy demands on a yearly basis. Now, the water authority, I'm sure my colleague, the honourable minister of agriculture, will talk about the amount that it costs per month in electricity cost to pump water across this country. And I believe that the direction that the honourable minister is taking is the right direction because at the end of the day, we want to put systems in place that will address those areas, those vital areas where the country has to pay exorbitant costs to satisfy its energy consumption.

But more than that, Mr. Speaker, I should like to tell you that not only would these projects be able to generate that, but one of the concerns in small energy states is the emission of greenhouse gases. As a matter of fact, the world's focus is about how to get countries, both developed and developing countries, to reduce their consumption of fossil fuels so that they can minimise the emission of greenhouse gases. And I will say this. This green energy complex at Bob Lewis also has a carbon dioxide reduction equivalent to it where, for example, under the waste energy plant, enough energy will be produced to actually reduce the amount of vehicles in terms of emissions up to 12 400 per year. In other words, we will be able to reduce the release of emissions into the atmosphere by producing alternative energy to the extent where we'll be able to see a reduction in CO₂ gases into the atmosphere.

This is revolutionary for smaller developing states. And Barbados is in the lead across the region in that regard. And we are pressing ahead. We've gone all over the world. We've gone to Kenya, we've gone to Latin America, we've gone to Europe. We've engaged in discussions. We entered into an agreement with the United Nations Environment Programme where we were able to broker an agreement for them to co-fund a project called the Green Economic Scoping Study for Barbados. And I have a copy of it here and I'll make it a document of this House, Mr. Speaker, where Barbados is only one of eight countries around the world that have been able to produce that kind of document. And what it is, it is an inventory of where Barbados stands as it relates to its green energy practices and where we need to go, not only in terms of the environment, in terms of tourism, in terms of housing development, in terms of agriculture. So a comprehensive scope and study was done.

The Government of Barbados entered into an agreement with the University of the West Indies and the United Nations Environment Programme co-funded a project to produce this document. And this document is a benchmark document that really allows Barbadians to see where Barbados is on those particular issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, sir, I realise that my time has fast gone. I would have wished that other persons would have given me an opportunity to borrow from their time. But in any event, we will go on. But let me quickly mention this, that this programme, this green energy programme also has the capacity, when there's an equivalence between energy produced and barrels of oil, that the waste energy plant will produce enough energy equivalent to 54 000 barrels of oil per year, that we will save the non-profit energy 15 500, the wind farm 14 000, the solar farm at 1 900, that gives us an equivalent of 85 400 barrels of oil that we will save the country from having to import every year. This is the kind of strategic planning that this government is doing. And I am proud to be part of this government. I am proud to be part of the Ministry of the Environment. I am proud of the work of my officers. We will continue to work.

But let me mention in closing the ministry drainage division and the NEaT programme where yesterday some very unkind things were said. But let me say this. The NEaT programme was created as a collaborative effort between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Public Works. When the programme was conceptualised, it was conceptualised as a programme that will facilitate the welfare department's programme, the programme on welfare to work. And when the programme was launched, we took over 100 welfare recipients off the welfare roll, receiving a non-productive payment every month, and translated that into deployment into the workforce. And to this day, we've only lost one of those welfare recipients, and that is the death of one of the young ladies who passed on. But the retention rate of those persons who some people argued would not be interested in working - some people argued that they would want to be on welfare for the rest of their life because it was a generational, cyclical kind of activity - and I witnessed with my own eyes how we've moved those persons from depending on the state, Mr. Speaker, sir, to now living productive lives where they paid national insurance contributions, where they send their children to school, where they have shelter over their heads. And I frowned on any suggestion by anyone, Mr. Speaker, sir, that the government was misled

or that the government was in error in launching a programme such as the NEaT programme. And let me say this, that they have been doing exceptional work. I heard somebody talk about - I know during the election they had spies going around with cameras taking pictures of the workers in the field. And I am telling you this now, that the

field has never looked so good in all of its time. And the work will continue and we will continue to deploy them across this country, because now that we're having these problems with brush fires, I know that the workers have made a significant contribution in the reduction of a lot of the brush and grass that would have normally contributed to unsolicited brush fires.

Look, that's what I'm talking about. Nehemiah and Tobiah, we are trained to rebuild the walls and for God's sake allow the government to continue to march forward and join hands with us as we continue to seek to ensure that no Barbadian is left behind, that all of us are allowed to march forward in unison and supporting those causes that support ordinary people in this society. I believe the NEaT programme is a shining example of social engineering in an attempt to build a socially balanced society as we go forward. So, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for the time I've had, and I'm much obliged to you.

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

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, it was indeed a pleasure to listen to the honourable member for St. Michael North East in response to the - I almost said diatribe, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think I can use that here.

The honourable member for St. Michael North West was at pains in addressing the chamber to relate anything in the estimates to what he was going to say. And certainly this disconnect between what he said and what was in the estimates continued throughout. The honourable member for St. Michael North West referred to his presentation as a fiction. I would prefer to say that it was a hoax. One might very well excuse the honourable member for St. Michael North West, who is the Minister of Finance, because of the fact that his presentation came so soon after the general election. But the general election was not - the date for the general election had nothing to do with the opposition. And it was really obvious that the Democratic Labour Party was not prepared, not even for that election, because judging from what transparencies that date, they were scrambling even to get posters up. And then when they got their posters up, they pulled down posters and then after the election they put up our posters so that people will feel that we allowed our posters to remain.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the mood of honourable members on that side and you make a comparison with the mood of honourable members immediately after they won the election in January 2008, you cannot believe that it is the same party. Members over there were sleeping while the member for St. Michael North West was presenting his budget, and the mood was something completely different. We haven't even had the victory parade, the big set at Kensington Oval. All of those things seem to have been

forgotten because somewhere along the line they have not even realised that they have won.

And it is interesting that on the night of the election the honourable Prime Minister referred to vote buying and he also referred to the fact that legislation will come almost immediately to deal with vote buying. And we welcome that because we on this side believe that members who resort to that practice should be - not even sent to prison, Mr. Speaker - we believe that members who resort to that practice, Mr. Speaker, should not have the right, should not have the right to sit in these chambers and should be banned for life from becoming members of Parliament. And I believe that the honourable Prime Minister was referring to the eager eleven. I believe he was referring to the head of the eager eleven on that night because the head of the eager eleven, maybe he was trying to engineer the defeat of the member for St. Michael South.

But Mr. Speaker, that being the case, I guess that this exercise is an exercise. Even though the actual presentation is, as I said, something of a hoax, it is still a ritual and it is unfortunate that we have to sit through it and listen to honourable members on that side. When you make a comparison between the presentation of the member for St. Michael South East and the member for St. Michael South Central, you cannot believe that it is the same debate - two completely different debates. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that members on that side certainly were not prepared for this event.

The other member for St. Michael North West, in his budgetary presentation, there is only one meaningful thing I would say that he actually brought to this chamber. He seemed to gloat when referring to what he referred to as his stimulus package. This seemed to be the only thing in the budgetary - I mean, the estimates - that he was aware of, because it appeared to me as though these estimates were prepared and he was just presenting them and he had to stick in this \$600 million as his stimulus project. And that is unfortunate because he seems to think, from what he has said, that the answer to the stimulation of the Barbados economy - the only answer - is a capital works programme. Anything about a capital works programme, a capital works programme is only meaningful if it has been well thought out and everything is planned and it is brought as a fait accompli. But the honourable member came with this. And in this way, I would borrow the words of the honourable member for St. Michael North East - with this fiction of a capital works programme. And in his own words, this is the answer to the unemployment situation in Barbados.

That is unfortunate because you have to create confidence in the economy. The private sector plays a pivotal role in the creation of jobs, in the stimulation of the economy. And you have to make sure that confidence is

with the private sector. But the honourable member doesn't seem to understand that - and this is in conflict with what the former Prime Minister Thompson said. The statements of the former Prime Minister Thompson in his first estimates - because if I remember correctly, he said he spoke about full employment through the private sector. The question of capital works programmes, even though they filter down to the private sector, they don't play the pivotal role. And nothing in these estimates, Mr. Speaker, nothing in these estimates give any hope to the private sector in terms of the way forward. And I think that the honourable member for St. Michael North East could not have put it any better in her presentation with respect to the hoax that we had to sit and listen to.

And I speak about confidence within the private sector. Now if I may go back a little bit and deal with the Employment Rights Bill that came to this House - the former Minister of Labour, who was unceremoniously dismissed by the member for St. George South, came in here in such a hurry. She had indicated that Cabinet wanted to get this bill passed in a hurry. This thing has to be passed now. Like the integrity legislation, it has to be passed now. And notwithstanding that hurry, the bill has been passed long time ago and nothing has happened in terms of proclamation of that bill. Nothing has happened. Now that tells me that it is fairly obvious that the Democratic Labour Party was not ready for that legislation. And the thing about it is that we cautioned them. We had no difficulty with the legislation because it is legislation that had its genesis on this side. But we felt that there are certain things that one had to talk through, and if they were satisfied that the bill was ready, well, I think that they should have gone ahead and made sure that it is part of the law of this country. But they are having second thoughts. They are having second thoughts.

I am not saying that the Democratic Labour Party government is being dictated to by a force outside of these chambers, but one has to be suspicious because when you look at their Throne Speech - and by the way, this Throne Speech is the first time I have been in this House now for almost 23 years, and I have never known a case where you have had a Throne Speech tabled in Parliament and laid in Parliament and not debated. I might be wrong. But even if you have one or two speeches - and don't blame me for the fact that the election was called - you have to blame the member for St. Michael South. But Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech with respect to the industrial relations policy of the Democratic Labour Party, it speaks to the provision for the voluntary recognition of trade unions. We don't have any problem with that. No problem whatsoever with that. No problem. But they are talking about a threshold of 30 per cent of the workforce of an establishment determined by survey.

Mr. Speaker, it is fairly obvious that - and as I said, they probably might have been - they are being dictated to by another agency within the social partnership, because there must be consensus on these matters. We on this side certainly support the voluntary recognition of trade unions and we believe that we should all ensure that we compile a comprehensive and consolidated framework of laws and labour standards to govern industrial relations practices and to improve and protect workers' rights where necessary. And what you need to do in this regard is to ensure that you strengthen the capacity of the Labour Department to deal with labour issues. But Mr. Speaker, when you are putting in a manifesto and you are including in your Throne Speech that you are talking about a threshold of 30 per cent of the workforce of the establishment - this is dangerous by itself and it needs to be explained by the Government.

The danger of copying these provisions taken from countries with millions of persons is that they have no relevance to a small country like Barbados. Imagine I have a staff of 100 workers. Now, are they telling me that the representative body for my establishment - one person, three people - have 30, 31 per cent, so I have three representative bodies? Or is it the first person who has actually been recognised? I don't know exactly what this means and I believe that this has been taken from some trade union booklet and they have not gone through it. And I believe that they need to let us know exactly what they mean because I do not know what they mean. As I said, if you have a million employees, it is fairly obvious that you might have different organisations in that organisation representing the various entities. But to be - using a normal expression - burdened with three representative bodies with 90 or 100 employees is setting a very dangerous precedent. And I believe that they need to give us some explanation with respect to this.

Establishing a permanent structure for the social partnership and boasting about it doesn't necessarily mean that they are interested in ensuring the rights of workers, because the employer is also part of the social partnership. Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Minister of Finance gloated with respect to this capital works programme and improving the employment situation. He uses figures with respect to the unemployment situation in other countries in the Caribbean. And the thing about it is that when he is dealing with the unemployment situation in those countries, he quotes great figures. But when he is dealing with the economic growth in those countries, that information is nonexistent. So we have to be very careful, especially when he is speaking about the pre-2003 position. The pre-2003 position - the period between 2003 and now when the capital works programme was at a zenith, Mr. Speaker.

And if he wants to go back to the period before 2003, I think most of us know - and members of Parliament on that side, they know. They could feel it as I speak - the

amount of constituents who are out of work, even though they have just been elected, however they were elected, cannot find work. Previous to 2003, there are some constituencies that had zero unemployment. The other member for St. Lucy - he could tell you. He got up here in these chambers and he indicated a constituency that had zero unemployment. But he would have to tell you about that. But the point that I am trying to make is that if you are going back to that period, if you are looking at the situation now, you are saying that what we are witnessing now is a situation where the capital works programmes are coming to an end. And therefore it is fairly obvious that unemployment would be fairly high. But that is okay. But don't go back to 2003, because in the late 1990s, people leaving school had no difficulty finding work. There were not many people on the block, and those were the good days because of the policies of the Barbados Labour Party.

But when I look at the capital works programme, Mr. Speaker, there are two areas of the capital works programme that I am somewhat concerned about, and I would like the honourable Minister to explain to me. I noticed that he has now veered into the area of housing. I am glad to see that the honourable member for St. Lucy, who used to speak at length on housing, is now the Minister of Housing. I don't know if he had any consultation with the Minister of Housing when he decided that the capital works programme - the housing programme - would go into Deacons and Becker's Road. I really don't. This doesn't sound like any treatise from the honourable member for St. Lucy, because the honourable member for St. Lucy, I recall when he was Minister of Housing, he was - can I use the word - barking all over the place about having meaningful housing development in St. Lucy. And we are now seeing nowhere in the estimates - nowhere in the estimates - because the Minister of Finance did not refer to the estimates at all. This is now some new programme outside of the estimates. He didn't even read the estimates. But we are going to Deacons and we are going to Becker's Road. And I don't know if he recognises that the Democratic Labour Party has no foothold in the north of Barbados. The member for St. Lucy got off by the skin of his teeth and that will be corrected at the next election, which is due very shortly.

But Mr. Speaker, even when you are dealing with this aspect of the housing programme, it is clear that the Democratic Labour Party has now repudiated the programme that they had of the past. And notwithstanding the fact that they gloated a lot about the former Minister of Housing and they recognised that he was a failure - the biggest failure in housing that we have ever had in this country since the introduction of ministerial government - they have to tell us, Mr. Speaker, what is the position with respect to the townhouses at Lancaster? They have to tell us what is the position with respect to those properties, because they are telling me you have housing development

which cannot be accessed by anybody. You are not building them for low-income people, you are not building them for middle-income people. You have to expand the doors in order to bring a fridge in. Nobody is occupying those houses, nobody is occupying those townhouses in Lancaster and other places.

Company has been a disaster and I understand that the houses have started to leak. There are a number of problems surrounding those houses at Cobrley. And you are telling me now that you are going to build high rise houses at Deacons. And, you know, then we came to parliament with respect, or rather then we introduced any new housing project. Everybody knew what the terms, you know, the cost of the houses, you knew the contractors, these high rise houses. By the way, I wonder whether or not a man in St. Lucy by the name of Kelman or a man in Sabrias by the name of Jada will build any houses, because you have to ensure that the small man, that the man in the man. The demand in St. Lucy that the St. Lucy spoke about, we have to make sure that small fellow partakes in projects like this. So it is very obvious that the honourable member for St. Lucy, who is the Minister of Housing, knows nothing at all about this project. And it is obvious that too, as I said, that they have abandoned their housing policy. I haven't heard anything about the interest free loans for public servants. Have they abandoned that? You can't abandon that - this is one of the planks of the Democratic Labour Party in the last election. But you don't see anything. They have so much abandoned their policy in housing that what they are doing now is they were talking about the sale of lots at \$5 a square foot and the honourable member for Christ Church South, who is from St. Peter, he is one who gloated at this. The \$5 per square foot houses in the last dispensation. But now you have a new dispensation. You haven't said anything about the house lots at \$5 per foot, but now all of a sudden they have risen it to \$15 per square foot. So these are matters I would like clarified between the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Housing. Yes, all our members on the point of order.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, honourable Speaker, on the point of order. It is very sorry that I have to interrupt the honourable member, but the honourable member knows that he is on his maiden speech. But the honourable member knows that there is a difference between \$5 square foot lots because there are \$5 square foot lots and now a new set of lots that will be sold at \$15 for the middle class and not for the masses. But then again, sir, we are not speaking about giving contractors large real estate or talking about reducing transfer taxes. That is why the honourable member -

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: - the other aspect of the capital works programme that the Minister of Finance spoke about related to the capital works programme with respect to the roads, the \$80 million project. And I noticed that he

mentioned St. Andrew. I really would like to know from the government the status of the Scotland District Authority. The Scotland District Authority was established in 2007 to deal with problems of land slippage and to generate some economic activity in the Scotland district area. And the people in the Scotland District area, St. Andrew, St. Joseph, St. James, St. Thomas, they are being punished because of the fact that they elected Barbados Labour Party representatives. And we would like to know what is the status of the district authority? Because we have seen that during the last five years, absolutely nothing in terms of road maintenance. And when you say absolutely, I am not talking about the occasional brush. Nothing has been done in the Scotland district area, Mr. Speaker. Nothing. And what we are saying is that when they attempt to do any meaningful road works in any particular area, St. Simon's is a classic example. They have actually ignored the residents, the people in St. Simon's. They have been living in a dusty area during the past five years, and this administration has done nothing to alleviate their problem.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are some other concerns that I have, and I believe that the Minister of Finance should tell us. I recall in the last estimates when we were dealing with the National Insurance Scheme, the Minister, if I recall correctly, indicated that certain guidelines would be set out with respect to the investing in certain private entities like the Four Seasons project. I haven't heard anything about those guidelines, and I haven't seen anything in the estimates with respect to them. And I would certainly like to hear from the Minister of Finance, because at some point in time, it is Four Seasons now, and it may be some other entity at some other time. The question of CLICO seemed to have been forgotten in these estimates. I think the government has been quite unfair to the policyholders, seeing that both Minister Thompson, Prime Minister Thompson, Prime Minister Stuart, the Minister of Finance, and the Governor of the Central Bank had indicated that the policyholders in CLICO would get back all of the monies and nothing has happened.

BIPA, which is the local bonding representative, the investors, they will have to follow the example of their Trinidad counterparts if nothing is done with respect to ensuring that some court action protects their right. And I believe that coming to these chambers, coming to this House without giving us any information on government's intention about CLICO is really unfortunate. Early in this administration, you all remember, Christ Church South seemed to be hooked on Barak Construction, and Barak was - I think that we are eternally grateful to Barak Construction with respect to the construction of that building near Warrens because of the fact that the delay in the construction of that building had a lot to do with the original designs. But I think that they should come to these chambers, especially seeing that they spoke so much about it, and let us know the status - if Barak got possession, let

us know exactly what the position is. They said that Barak will be paid before the election, and they should let us know if Barak has possession, if he is in a position to dispose of the building. I think the public has a right to know exactly what is the situation.

Mr. Speaker, it is fairly obvious that there has been no connection between these estimates and the presentation of the honourable member for St. Michael North West. And we would certainly like the honourable member as Minister of Finance to tell us exactly what we would like to hear or what we wouldn't like to hear. We would like to be informed with respect to the status of these matters that I have just outlined. He did indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the details of the agreement with settling the UWI debt will be dealt with shortly. I hope that this is not a situation like the Barak fiasco where it took the government so long in order to come to any meaningful settlement. And we need to know the details of that settlement as well. Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, ma'am. For Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join discussion on this Appropriation Bill. I want to start like so many other members have started, and indicated my appreciation to the constituents of Christ Church, all who have given me the honour to represent them in this Chamber for a second term on an endeavour to conduct the work on their behalf with all the energy in my body.

Sir, we have listened to a number of presentations on this Appropriation Bill so far. Very important among those presentations is the one by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, the Minister of Finance, in which he sought to outline the entire programme of this administration over the next couple of years, leading up into a process of implementation in the short term and then allowing the country to reap the benefits of these projects over the longer term. It was with a clear recognition of the realities of the world economy against which background the Honourable Member made his presentation.

Sir, the members on the opposition side, a number of them who would be making maiden presentations today which would normally be non-controversial. Some of them, of course, sir, have stepped out of that tradition, in particular the Honourable Member for St. George South. But I am sure that over time we will have an opportunity to answer some of the points raised in his presentation. The truth is that we need to be seized with the facts before we start to come into, of all places, this Honourable Chamber and start to try to describe the construction of the Boarded Hall roundabout or the Corridor Ridge roundabout or the Warren's traffic safety improvement project as a set of bad engineering - that is really, I think, to go beyond the

competences of his own capabilities. But we will have an opportunity to discuss these issues as time goes on.

I am sure that the motorists in Barbados, although we have not by any means reached an optimal position in respect to the management of traffic and the management of congestion, the reality is that for a country this size and for a country with the kind of vehicle density that we boast, we actually are doing very well.

Similarly, when you read the international statistics on tourism, you wonder sometimes what the opposition is trying to do. Who are they trying to cause panic amongst? Because the fact is that Barbados is recognised internationally as a leading tourism destination still. All incidents apart - these incidents which have been referred to in other presentations too - will occur because the society we live in has its challenges like any other society, like New York, like Chicago, like Johannesburg, like London. And these are things that we have laws and we have structures in which to manage these situations.

However, in terms of tourism as it is unfolding today, I think that Barbados continues, according to the statistics, to reap its fair share in a sector which is changing almost in front of our very eyes. And even as we have the mega investments, or the relative mega investments on the west coast, those of us who frequent areas on the south coast, like Oistins, sir, will recognise this change. Where there are now hundreds of tourists who frequent our shores and no longer utilise the luxury hotels, they do not utilise the luxury transport systems. They prefer to backpack. They walk, they eat at the Bay Garden in Oistins, they walk St. Lawrence Gap, they surf, sir. And these are the realities of the kind of tourists that we are getting.

The Honourable Minister of Tourism has made the point, but at the same time, we have to understand that we need to transition our product so as to take advantage of these changes. And until that transition occurs, there are certain realities which will befall the revenues that we can derive from the industry as a whole.

So I am satisfied that with the kind of developmental plan outlined by the Minister of Finance, the creation of a separate cruise facility - we can debate about this as long as we like. But as long as Barbados continues to force cruise tourists to share a port that is designed essentially for cargo, we are going to have a logistical problem, and we constantly have to be balancing between the benefits of allowing the cruise ships to berth as against the costs that are incurred in having to force cargo ships to wait outside. This problem is going to be tackled, as the Minister of Finance said, a problem which we could arguably say should have been tackled many, many years ago. It is not something which is being talked about for the first time. And therefore, the Democratic Labour Party administration

today has taken the position as articulated, the position where we will seek to separate cruise tourism from our cargo ships and allow that industry, that business, to evolve in a way that it should.

I was astounded about the debate yesterday on molasses and the fact that we have reached the stage where most of our molasses is now imported. But that was long ago. That was being talked about since the 1980s. And Mr. Speaker, today the Democratic Labour Party is being pilloried for constructing new molasses tanks in which to store molasses, an essential ingredient for our growing rum industry. So what are we talking about on the other side? Are we opposing for opposing's sake or are we making constructive contributions as to how we can take this country forward?

As some members over here on the government side have already pointed out, it is really for the opposition - apparently it is going to be a marriage of convenience. When it suits them, they will seek to join, but it is not a genuine partnership which they are thinking about in respect to taking this country forward.

So, sir, we will stay firm on those premises which we have articulated throughout this recent general election campaign - premises which will see us as a government maintain a governmental model which seeks to promote socially balanced policies, which seeks to promote economically viable development, which seeks to promote environmentally sound practices and which seeks to promote good, honest government.

The last Honourable Member who spoke ventured to speak about the Barrack building. Not for one moment, sir, recognising that in his tenure as Minister of Housing in Barbados in 1998 - and that is where the story starts. And we need to take the members of the Barbados Labour Party opposition back to where the problem started. Against the recommendation of all the technocrats in the related ministries, and indeed to the extent that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew came to this Chamber and amended the National Housing Corporation Bill so as to allow the National Housing Corporation to divert its attention from its recognised mandate of constructing housing for the masses of Barbadians and to build office blocks. The rest is history. And the Barbados Government today is saddled with a \$60 to \$70 million bill purely because the Honourable Member for St. Andrew had to have his way. All of those on that side are responsible. All of those who were here when the whole story unfolded are responsible. So they can say whatever they like, sir. But the people of Barbados have to be reminded of the kinds of acts that were perpetrated during that long, lean period of 1994 to 2008 under the Barbados Labour Party administration.

That is why they have to come in here continually, Tuesday after Tuesday. And the Honourable Member said Peter has got to stand up and accept that he takes the blame. He wants to take the blame for everything when it is convenient. And then, of course, he disappears thereafter.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North has made a point that there has to be a national discussion as to the way forward for Barbados. There are going to be some changes in the way we do business that have to be made. Our present environment demands it. It is no different in the ministry which the Honourable Prime Minister has asked me to manage for the time being. And as I go through the exercise of briefing with the staff of the ministry, and as I read the reports which are part of the record of the Ministry of Health, it is clear to me, as it is clear to so many others, that we have got to do business differently.

I consult very often with the Honourable Member for St. James South. I consult with the Honourable Member because the record in health management will show that this Democratic Labour Party government and the Honourable Member for St. James South have been responsible for the stabilisation of health care in this country and for the new direction which we must go in - a direction which recognises that health and health care is the entitlement of everyone, every Barbadian, and indeed because of international convention, it is also the entitlement of our visitors. What arrangements are made thereafter are for us to work out, but these are basic entitlements which we as a country have to serve.

The reality is, sir, that the first thing that we have to recognise in designing health care over the next couple of years is that the entire demographic of Barbados has changed between 1990 and, say, 2010, where we have a much more ageing population, we have a higher life expectancy and we have more people of mature age to deal with. So as a result, our healthcare institutions have got to be redesigned and our services have got to be retuned so as to meet this very important reality. Barbadians are living longer. The incidence, however, of non-communicable disease has become a real feature of the health challenges in Barbados. It is therefore important as we roll out our treatment paradigm that we understand exactly where the cost is being applied and that we are in a position, even if we are not charging for that activity, for that treatment, to understand what the real cost is to the state in respect of the provision of this very important care item.

Sir, our healthcare service is basically divided into three broad areas. Our primary health care at the level of the polyclinics which are all over Barbados - in St. Michael, Christ Church, a new polyclinic in St. John to be opened very soon, in St. George, in St. Peter. And all of these polyclinics provide a primary health care service

which Barbadians have come to expect and which they deserve to be able to take advantage of.

We have got to understand that as we extend the range of treatments that are made available, the kind of interventions that are done at these health clinics, we must be in a position, as I said, sir, to count the cost and to be able to place numbers so that when we quote broad figures - that health care requires \$342 000 000 a year and the hospital requires between \$145 000 000 and \$229 000 000 or \$185 000 000 - we can do better than that, sir. We have to reach the stage where even as we do not charge the patient for the intervention, there is a record we can go to in order to understand fully the cost of these interventions.

It is important and it is almost, as I said, like the Transport Board in some ways. The Transport Board does not charge policemen for travelling on its buses. We introduced a system where school children now travel free on our buses. But we make sure that the ticketing system allows us to invoice the Ministry of Social Care and the Ministry of Education for the travel that these two groups of persons in Barbados undertake. And this figure is known to the Transport Board and it is established in these estimates that are before us, indeed in respect to the transfers from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Care that are expected at the Transport Board.

Similarly, sir, I believe the hospital should be able to identify what level of its services are utilised by the different polyclinics around the island, so that those items can be separated and dealt with in an accurate and correct manner. This will begin, sir, I think, to put the whole question of health care costs in proper perspective for all Barbadians to discuss, so that, as I said, we do not have this blaming game and this throwing around of figures so as to suit the fancy of the respective authors.

Sir, the last Minister of Health made it clear that we have taken a decision - and it is part of our manifesto promise to Barbados - that we have taken a decision to build a new hospital for Barbados. But even as we transition to this new hospital, the exercise which I have referred to so far, of separation and of knowing exactly where costs fall, is going to be important, lest we transfer to our new institution the same burdens which now saddle the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in its present arrangement.

Certainly Honourable Members on that side are wont to criticise all of the efforts of this Democratic Labour Party government as we seek to bring about these changes. But what they will not want to admit is that even in times when there was money floating around Barbados, when there was excess liquidity in the government coffers, no effort was made to transition our health service in any kind of way. We came into government in 2008 and found a hospital which was essentially in shambles. We found a

hospital which was inadequately powered so that there was equipment in corners, not because we did not know how to connect it, but we had no power to connect it to. This government - first under the Honourable Member for St. Philip West and then continued under the Honourable Member for St. James South - made sure that these basic needs were met. And we recognised immediately that the excuse offered by the Barbados Labour Party government has always been that we have to build a new hospital. But in the meantime they were not doing anything to make sure that healthcare provision at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was adequately served. And that is what we had to deal with. So that today, as I said at the beginning, we have a stabilised environment in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital which still can be improved and we understand that and we are working on that every day.

The improvement of services at the hospital occupies the minds of the hospital staff, the management and board of the hospital and the Ministry of Health and this minister. And we are going to make sure that the areas that we have not been able to correct so far, like the ambulance service. But I spent some time this weekend looking at that situation. I cannot believe. I cannot believe that the Barbados Labour Party, between all those years of plenty could find no money, no time, no energy, no interest whatsoever to provide an adequately designed, outfitted ambulance service for this country. We will correct that situation in the very next three months or so - that correction has begun. Facilities are being provided for the staff.

The matter of facilities for staff and accommodation for public service generally is one which I do not believe the honourable members on the opposition want to start discussing in here. Because they fail at every point. They fail with the Government Electrical Engineering Department - we have got them moved. They failed with the Attorney General's Chambers - we have got them properly housed now. They have failed with almost every government department and we have had to correct this situation, and the situation at the ambulance service, both in terms of the accommodation and the equipment, will be corrected in the immediate future. When I say immediate, sir, I am talking about within three months. Obviously this must be a priority if we are to begin to be able to meet the needs of the public of Barbados.

So, sir, these are the kind of areas where the money that is being allocated this year - that \$342 000 000 in primary care, in hospital services, in the care of the elderly, in our geriatric hospitals - this is where those corrections will be made. We recognise fully, sir, that while we are looking to construct a new hospital in Barbados, it is absolutely necessary that the health care provided today, the health care available and accessible by Barbadians today, must be adequate. And this is the philosophy under

which we will operate as a Ministry of Health and as a Government of Barbados.

And as we continue to build these new services, as we continue to promote these new services, as we continue to support those organisations who continue to promote healthy lifestyles in Barbados, we know that by so acting, by so focusing our energies on the entire programme of preventative health care, we will obviously reduce the final cost of overall health care in this country. Sir, I look forward to the challenge of maintaining our health service, of improving our ability to respond to the myriad of needs as they crop up and offering comfort to

so many patients in Barbados, to offering better medical care, to offering stronger interventions in more timely fashions wherever it is necessary. And with this clear vision, I believe that the people of Barbados will be able to rest comfortable in the knowledge that the affair of health will be carefully and adequately managed with the resources provided.

Remembering, of course - and I need to make this final point - because our members would like to pretend, well, this is the end of the process. The estimates provided here, we know that from time to time priorities may change. Cost, therefore, in one particular allocation, may vary and we are in a position to come back to this chamber in the event of emergencies to deal with any other financial requirements that may crop up from time to time. So nobody out here, nobody on this side, is in any way not clear as to the direction in which we have to go, as to the focus which must be maintained as we attempt to take this country, continue to fight a very tough international economic environment and continue to stabilise this economy and provide a fair chance for all Barbadians, no matter what noble endeavour they are in. Mr. Speaker, sir, I am obliged to you.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: I want certainly to refer to some comments made by some honourable members and of course first to indicate through you, sir, to the honourable Minister of Health, the honourable member for Christ Church South, that I think he has been assigned the best ministry, the best portfolio that suits his engineering skills. And I trust that he will be able to carry out his duties with distinction and make everybody else in Barbados happy. I know he has got very many engineering skills and I trust that he will be able to deploy them in a manner that it will be to the benefit of all Barbadians.

I was appalled, Mr. Speaker, two Mondays ago when I heard two voices that are not Barbadian voices speaking to the public of Barbados, to tell them that the police will

be brought in if they do not remove their relatives who are resident at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital from that institution. I felt let down because I would have preferred a minister or a permanent secretary or somebody else to be able to speak to the public because there were proper systems in place in the past, arrangements made with other institutions for care of the elderly, to look after senior citizens, to use whatever funds there were for their pension and put it in with whatever subsidy or subvention the government would have given to ensure that they would be moved from that institution and into a place where they would be better suited. I am saddened to know that theatres have to be shut down and all kinds of things are happening in Barbados. But yet the honourable member for Christ Church South said all things were great.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member for Christ Church South is the Minister of Public Works. And I know that there were millions of dollars voted towards that effort then. There are reductions now, but there are many millions of dollars. And I will speak here again boldly because I have been sent here by the people of St. Thomas again because they have reposed their trust in me and they see me as the better person at this time to carry out the request for them and for their own development. And they have asked me to say in no uncertain terms, Mr. Speaker, sir, that they are very saddened at the circumstances that have prevailed under the Democratic Labour Party over the last five years when it comes to attention being paid to them with the maintenance of roads.

You will appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that St. Thomas has - well, you have a direct connection, sir. So you would know the rain falls in St. Thomas every day. And they are not just regular rains. There are rains where, because there are no more gutters - landowners have already gotten rid of the gutters where the water will flow alongside the street to put in the harvesters - and as a result, the roads in St. Thomas have been neglected. There were good roads in 2007, 2008. Now those roads are in a sad state of repair. And it is unfortunate that the honourable member for Christ Church South, I am told, gave instructions sometime in September, October, November to stop a simple piece of road, Mr. Speaker, that runs from Leicester Vaughan School to the CCC roundabout from that road being properly prepared and bitumen patched - not only for the safety of St. Thomas people, sir, but the people of Barbados who traverse St. Thomas every day, searching for places of interest, for recreation, to visit friends, to get to their work and so on. So I am saddened that the minister would have told members at the Depot, at [Inaudible.], to curtail the works that were going on in St. Thomas to make the road safer for all road users.

So I trust that the honourable minister will have a very successful time in the Ministry of Health and that nothing of the kind will ever occur again and that the new

honourable Minister of Public Works will pay some attention to the request. And the honourable member for St. Philip South, Christ Church South, knows that I will write in the interest of all Barbadians - if I go to Christ Church South and some person says, I have been trying, Ms. Forde, could you help me with a letter? I would write it because I care about all human beings. That is the reason why I am here, Mr. Speaker.

Now, the honourable member for St. Michael West Central would have said that poverty is a state of mind. Once to that effect. I say it is a state of mind now because Barbadians, under a Democratic Labour Party, after five years of failed policies and programmes, have now got a higher percentage of Barbadians in the poverty-stricken area than it was in the past. The honourable member for St. Michael Central would have presented in this chamber, sir, a document about the status report of Barbados in 2010 and how the figures in poverty are climbing at an alarming rate. The honourable member would have outlined a number of areas that he would have paid attention to. But I want, Mr. Speaker, sir, for the honourable member for St. Michael West Central to be able to help us on this side since we seem to be lost, according to some of the things I am hearing today. And I know that he has expertise in the position he carries in agriculture. I would wish for the honourable member then, sir, to tell me of some of the plans that we can get coming through from these estimates that have been laid here yesterday, sir, in relation to the projects in agriculture that will help to reduce the import bill in this country.

I was listening, sir. The honourable member would have given us that kind of detail - that he would have outlined to us the kinds of plans there are for pre-[Inaudible.] to be curtailed, for plans where the monkey population will be reduced - because the honourable member spoke about St. Thomas. And I know there is arable land, but this government has given some big-time contractors the opportunity to build many, many houses, scores of houses in St. Thomas on lands that we know are good arable land that really deserve to be back in agriculture. There is no plan with this government for land for the landless as was started under the party. And I would like the honourable member for St. Michael West Central to tell us about cheaper water for farmers in St. Thomas and in the rest of rural Barbados because that is what has a lot of people in a state with the 60 per cent increase in water bills that this Democratic Labour Party has foisted on us in 2008 and 2009. I would wish for the honourable member at some point in time, sir, to give us a little response to that query.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the honourable Minister of Environment would have spoken, sir, to aspects of energy. I have absolutely no problem. But it is cold soup near warmed over because the Barbados Labour Party has set all

of those systems in place with a view to move to Greenland, to be able to affect what would be happening at Mangrove landfill and at the Greenland landfill. But I am not going to deal with that because somebody else in this honourable chamber will deal with it. I just want, for the honourable minister - having made a visit with the late former Prime Minister, the honourable member for St. John - to hear from the honourable minister, sir, what plans are there for the people of St. Thomas? I do not want to hear about the city [Inaudible.] - that is now out of the picture. That will have its own challenges later. I want to find out the plans the honourable minister has in relation to the relocation of the bottle depot from Reece Road, Cane Garden, to be sent or taken to [Inaudible.]. It is a terrible environmental problem that is impacting on all the residents there, where almost 14 acres of land have been taken up from what would have been a four-acre parcel of land with one house, exclusively for agriculture. And while I respect the efforts of these bottle operations to, first, generate employment and, secondly, find a way for us to be able to dispose of waste in a sensible way, I have a problem with the location where it is - millions of tyres, millions of bottles, all kinds of noxious gases are blowing through and the residents in Reece Road cannot open their windows because of the dust, because of the noise, because of the traffic.

So many things are going wrong. I am asking, sir, through you, sir, to hear from the honourable minister - perhaps through the honourable Minister of Finance when he responds - what is the plan for the relocation of that bottle depot so that the environmental challenge will be minimised or will just go away, lest the young children who are suffering - several children are suffering, the workers at the [Inaudible.] and all the businesses along there - because it is upwind from all of them. And then the aesthetic beauty that was there before - none of those residents, none of them, has that anymore. I would wish, sir, to hear from the honourable minister.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member for St. Michael North West would have talked about the hairdos and the nails. I do not think he was specifically referring to me, but I am happy to be a part of a team of Barbadians who seeks to ensure that those persons in the small business sector who are now reeling under the pressure of this Democratic Labour Party - I can go to those people, those cosmetologists, those seamstresses, the tailors, the joiners and others, to be able to generate employment and funding for them because the majority of them are at the end of their tether. And I am proud to be a part of it. I do not want to be a part of the DLP administration when some of the members, I have been told, sir, for the swearing-in ceremony they had in 2008, went up to Miami for about a \$3 000 suit. There are capable business people here - artists, artisans, builders, whatever name you want to call them - who can outfit any of us, who can build the biggest

and nicest houses, who can make a tremendous difference. And therefore I want to be a part of a society that will give back to the people from around me, among me, who desire the employment at this time.

And that is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party sought to print all of its posters and all of its manifestos right here in Barbados, so that printers and young people with the technology and into filming and so on would be able to get some employment even though it was temporary. The Democratic Labour Party, sir, does not have that boast. Theirs came in a container that was unloaded in St. Thomas. Where is the foreign exchange going? It is not staying in Barbados to help us pay our bills. It is going into Miami and perhaps into China, where a lot of that work for the election was done. So I am not even going to deal with that anymore, Mr. Speaker, except to say that we in Barbados are saddened today to see how the state of affairs have turned out. When Barbadians sought to vote for change in 2008, hoping that they would have maintained their jobs, that they would be given all the benefits that they were told they would have - then, to my surprise and to their disdain, absolutely nothing but hardship after hardship.

I speak from a background of knowledge, Mr. Speaker, because I am on the road. I go on the blocks too. I go to the fetes too. I go to the churches too. I am all over the place like any other honourable member over there who chooses to do that because that is the only way that they can have longevity here. And therefore I know for sure - I am not going to [Inaudible.] the member for St. Philip North and I am very careful what I will take in that night for consuming. So the honourable member needs not bother. The honourable member needs not bother with where I will go. That will be lamentations for the honourable member for St. Michael North West.

I trust that the honourable member for St. Philip North will also do an honourable job in the Ministry of Public Works and Transport because there is much work to be done. He has been [Inaudible.] and I am not going to talk about the doll-baby houses - this is not the debate for this. But I want him to do his work in an honourable way. At the end of the day it is not the member for St. Thomas or any of the other honourable members on this side. It is about the people of Barbados who will benefit. I do not want any assurance right now, Mr. Speaker. I wish the honourable member will give me an opportunity to put my case.

Mr. Speaker, sir, the honourable member came with some lamentations. Of course he did. Some swipes too. The honourable member said he requires 100 per cent dedication for every Barbadian sector from every member every day. His discourse went on to talk about ideas and initiatives to come forward, to move away from the blame

game. That was properly and extensively canvassed. Unemployment in Barbados - the levels are at a 12 per cent range. All kinds of talk. Mr. Speaker, sir, the honourable member referred to the international world. But what was instructive was that the honourable member talked about that in America this morning and where we would use those examples. But the honourable member in his wisdom spoke about the region and countries in this region - Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago - that have seen growth in their economy. Barbados continues to struggle, much to the detriment of the ordinary people who are waiting on this government for a hand up.

The honourable member said we did not have to go splurging to win an election. Tell us where those cuts will come from. How many will go home. He asks how much taxes will be cut. He promised to take the ideas from the BLP into consideration. The BLP want to keep their cake and eat it too in their jumper lands. We are all in this together, and I share with you, the minister, in respect of - we are all in this together. At the end of the day, when there is poverty, if it is in St. Thomas, if it is in St. Michael, St. Philip, St. Lucy, St. James, wherever, it will have a spiralling impact as a result of those who are unemployed, who must feed their children, who must pay their bills, who must pay their mortgage, who must be able to do everything else - and they are not going to remain stagnant when it comes to the lawlessness and the crime of violence. They are going to move all over this blessed country of ours. So I have an interest in helping to make sure that we make a difference. But you know what, Mr. Speaker?

Every time that the Labour Party makes a comment about what it will be willing to do to assist in the last five years, we heard 14 years and nothing to show. I said, no, Mr. Speaker. Serve full five years under this Democratic Labour Party and nothing to show either. Only thing I can see this could show, sir, is the crossover. \$2.4 million. Better traffic light for me, could have done it like on St. Barnabas Hill. I say so, Mr. Speaker, St. Barnabas Hill has got their traffic light. \$2.4 million. The Alexander Bustamante José, \$600 000. I said that. That is money that could be put into use to help some poor people to put food on their table in the way you expect over a two-year period.

Mr. Speaker, \$900 000 in football tournament guard huts that were built by the honourable member as Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker, where there was no security problem ever in a school, and those guard huts are there with the doors falling off. Principals can't find the key because there are no security guards for those 72 guard huts, and they are falling apart. For me, that is wasted money. Summer camps were going in an excellent way previous to the change of government in 2008. Now, lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, summer camps are drawing at least \$6 million a year. The honourable minister said last year,

\$3.4 million alone went into catering. And there were so many other costs.

Mr. Speaker, sir, constituency councils - we know of the challenge. I'm not going to spend my whole half hour on it, but I will get a chance to speak about it elsewhere. The Auditor General's report has its findings incoming, and I always caution the members on the other side, do not be talking about the Auditor General's report all the time. Because if something is wrong for me, it is wrong. But what about the expired drugs and the hundreds of thousands of dollars in drugs from the Drug Service that have not been utilised and the challenges that are in every government department across the length and breadth of Barbados. So I say Barbadians are suffering as a result of the Democratic Labour Party's failed policies, Mr. Speaker, and I will not change what I had to say.

We know today, sir, according to these estimates, sir, for 2013-2014, that there are challenges. The productive sectors are not firing on all cylinders. The trading sector fell by 3.6 per cent, we were told, and we've seen manufacturing has decreased, international business has declined by 22 per cent. There's a slowing in the economy and we are all conscious of that. The revenue intake has diminished and yet we are expected not to make comments and to say we are concerned. We want to see better with the management of the affairs of this country, Barbados - the economic affairs, every ministry. The measure of accountability that was espoused by the Democratic Labour Party, Mr. Speaker, in its manifesto of 2008 talked about governance, accountability, integrity, equity and all the other fancy words, and I've yet to see where these words have come into play in respect of what has been happening in this country.

I am saddened at some of the challenges that are out there. The minister talked about a quick fix. Somebody goes to putting \$15 in a car in petrol and asks not for change to buy a dotto ticket. That is the reality. Now, don't you know, Mr. Speaker, the energy costs are so high, cost of living is so high under the Democratic Labour Party, so high that some people now go to the gas station for \$10 in petrol and they know that \$10 in petrol is a pet bottle full, cannot carry them much farther. But they are still holding on to their pride and they were hoping for better in the last general election.

I thank the people of St. Thomas, Mr. Speaker, and I trust that never ever in that constituency - and those that were people who understand the franchise - I trust that never again in the history of Barbados let anybody lay any complaint about votes being bought. I will say here, I will say anywhere else. But, Mr. Speaker, I can see Barbados going to the highest bidder. The biggest drug dealer can come - that's my expression, Mr. Speaker - and ask people to vote for him or her. And notice I say him or her, and that

person could enter this chamber to be able to dictate what will happen in policy and what will happen in legislation in this place. The richest man or woman, Mr. Speaker, if we go down the road of people paying for votes, we are taking away from black people and white people in Barbados that opportunity to be able to offer their vote for the person or persons whom they think can best manage their affairs and continue forever, once they are in this distinguished chamber, sir, to look after their needs. So I thank the people of Bath, of St. Thomas, who were so honest and so upright in upholding the moral fabric of this society - I think that is very significant.

Mr. Speaker, sir. So the honourable ... talked about the DLP does not get into quick politics. This government fought the election on ideas and not on money. Yet we still won. We still won. I am not going to deal with that anymore. I think, sir, I have made my point, but I don't know, Mr. Speaker, then where the flat-screen TVs came from, where the iPads came from and the hampers in the closed baskets that persons in Barbados, in certain constituencies, received in large amounts. I do not know where the money came from. I am not interested either because I am happy that my people, humble as they are, did what they had to do in the honest and upright fashion.

That has been always the suggestion for all that we do. Now, Mr. Speaker, is to invite international observers here whenever we are going to have an election to be able - we have been having that distinguished position all the years of going and helping officers as our observers. It looks now as though this nasty habit has crept into our society. It will lead to that. So the honourable member making that comment about polling there all the time does not bother me.

Mr. Speaker, sir, I also want to indicate that I am so saddened at the state of affairs in this place that I cannot imagine, I cannot envision what will happen in the next 18 months in Barbados if we do not get some change in the economic situation, if we do not get some change in the social aspect of things, if we do not put systems in place for the moral aspect of life in this country, to get back to where it was and even to be the best that there is, because we were the gem of the Caribbean in the past when it came to our social, moral and economic fabric, our political state in this place as well. And I want for us as a people, as the 30 distinguished members in this chamber, to let us work together to turn that around, that we can say to the people of Barbados and the Caribbean, Barbados can lead by example again. I would wish that to happen, sir.

Mr. Speaker, sir, I will come here to the close because I want to speak of some other aspects and the estimates. The honourable member for Christ Church, the honourable Minister of Education, would have talked about sixth-form schools. The honourable member would have

talked about extensions of the Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College in the north of the island. Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no problem with the honourable members speaking about sixth-form schools, but I would have preferred for the honourable members that served as minister, having done the proper investigation, to make reference to additional upper fifth forms at St. Leonard's School and Springer Memorial, because those are schools where those young individuals required that extra year to be able to bring home better results in their CXC examinations. If we had only instituted the University College of Barbados into the system and the platform was already there, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that we would have been able to get a better result.

Now I will close on small business, sir, and I want to focus on small business because we have some tremendous challenges with persons in the small business sector who a few weeks ago we had heard the honourable minister speak. But now we've learned for sure that the small business sector is really under pressure. They cannot meet the daily demands. Utility bills are killing them, water bills, light bills and so on. Diesel is so expensive for some of those in the manufacturing sector. They were relying on the 40 per cent opportunity to be able to have contracts. And so for the school meals and the Geriatric Hospital, the Child Care Board and other institutions, that has not materialised. And therefore the amounts that they have there, sir, startled me because the diesel rebates that they are waiting on come to over \$1 million. The VAT refunds that they have not received, \$13 million. The goods, \$12 million. Services - the government and the other entities - \$14 million. Providers of works, \$4 million, and the corporate tax refunds, \$3.9 million. Almost \$50 million, Mr. Speaker, that those persons in the small business sector are relying on. Small shops are shutting down, sir. Taxi drivers are complaining, Mr. Speaker. The vendors are complaining. Teachers are complaining. All sectors of Barbados are complaining because they are reeling under the pressure. And I say that it looks to me like we are getting closer to the 1991 to 1994 situation.

But as I close here, I want the honourable minister who has spoken a lot about the Relics Bill, the Antiquities Preservation Bill, to tell the people of Barbados, sir - we know that there were penalties and so on identified - to tell the people of Barbados why the chandeliers at Government House were changed. Because for me the chandeliers at Government House -

- the chandeliers at Government House were a part of our heritage, because we talk about the Garrison and the Bridgetown and its heritage, yet we won't change the Garrison School's name. I don't know what they're thinking, and then the chandeliers at Government House to the tune of almost \$100 000. I want to know, Mr. Speaker, sir, are those chandeliers now placed in the museum,

because they will be older than my grandmother who was born in 1898. I want to know where those chandeliers are, because we cannot be lawmakers and lawbreakers too, because we want to be able to give to friends and family of the Democratic Labour Party the fatted-calf syndrome that was developed when they are giving to their own and forgetting that the rest of Barbados requires an opportunity to survive in these harsh economic times.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I say to the people of Barbados, hold firm, tighten your belts, use your creative skills. Families must help others. Families must help neighbours in these hard times. Churches must continue to do what they're doing. Well, the CBOs, the NGOs, and so on, because it is a terrible forecast for this country and I believe that these estimates that have now undergone so many cuts in every sector really do not meet the needs of Barbadians at this time. And I trust that this government will come up with some creative ideas to get people re-employed, to be able to engage us and to help us to be able to see those glory days that we have seen before. Because it is imperative that the crime must be stamped out, the violence must be stamped out and the moral fabric must again be uplifted. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank you for your indulgence.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the honourable member for St. James South.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I rise to join my support for the SMS building force in this august chamber today. Let me start by thanking the good people of St. James South for imposing their confidence in me again to continue to serve as their parliamentary representative. And of course that would include all members of St. Peter, all members of St. Andrew and the arm of Christ Church West. So I wish to thank them as well for their support in the recent election. As we all know, of course, they spent considerable sums and told other lies to get rid of me, but that certainly did not work out in their favour.

I wish to advise the honourable member for St. Michael South East, who in her maiden speech in the lower house today did say that she won without any votes being bought. I wish to assure the young lady, the honourable member, that I witnessed senior members of the Barbados Labour Party in my constituency on election day attempting to buy votes in this election. Let me repeat it, Mr. Speaker. I witnessed senior members of the Barbados Labour Party in my constituency of St. James South on election day with thousands of dollars attempting to buy votes. So let me make that abundantly clear.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to be here once again to participate in another discussion on the national estimates. Let me start, Mr. Speaker, by reflecting on some

of the comments made by the honourable members on the other side. And I would wish the honourable member for St. Michael North East, who is the current Leader of the Opposition, to note that elections are over and if you are leader, you ought to come in here and lead by example - not to engage in political platform speeches with a lot of rhetoric, but to actually behave as though you understand the challenges that confront this economy and society and speak to them.

So I am not surprised that every speech on the opposition benches, save the one by their leader, has been speeches imbued with a lot of condemnation, criticism and not one constructive analysis or alternative to the challenges that confront the society. Instead, what you have been dealt with in this chamber over the last two days from the opposition side is primarily situations where we have been told, as we were told during elections and for five years prior to that, that things are tight. The country has no money. The Minister of Finance cannot find money, the treasury is broke. All of these things we have been told time and time again and in the same breath they come and say, you cut this, you cut that, you cut every ministry, every department. But I mean, come on, you do not have to be a college graduate to understand the inconsistency of that argument.

On one hand, they are saying things are tight. The public expenditure is too high, government revenue is too low, and therefore you have to cut. And when you decide that you are going to cut in a very judicious manner, the retort from the opposition bench, of course, is you need to give more money to this. You need to give more money to that. In the same speech, as a matter of fact, the same speech - before even a comma, before the semicolon, before the full stop - you hear things are tight, cut this, cut that, and then you should not cut. So until the opposition bench can get its own act together, I really hope in all sincerity, Mr. Speaker, that the tone set in this chamber for the last two days is not what this country has to endure over the next four or five years. This country really and truly needs politicians on both sides of the political divide to put their collective wisdom together and do what we have to do in the best interest of the country.

I hear the honourable member for St. James Central saying they need them now more than ever. I can appreciate that. It is my understanding that the honourable member for St. James Central obtained six votes, the honourable member for St. Michael North East obtained eight votes, and the honourable member for St. Peter was noticed to be absent. So I mean, I understand these divides that come up there, but yes, we have to get serious about these matters, Mr. Speaker.

So we have before us today - and I put forward the honourable member for St. Michael North West - I wish to

thank him and thank his officers in the Ministry of Finance who really worked tirelessly over the last two weeks to pull this together. I do not think that people fully appreciate that coming right after a general election, the public officers would have had to work around the clock to pull these estimates together, particularly when you had ministries that are reconstructed differently, all the different heads now to address and pull together. And I would want, Mr. Speaker, to thank not just the Minister of Finance but certainly officers in the public sector who really worked around the clock to pull this together for us in this honourable chamber.

So as we march toward the future and reflect deeply on these estimates, we have to understand the underlying principles that govern what is before us today. In this text known as the annual estimates of expenditure, we have current revenue projected for the upcoming financial year of \$2.6 billion, current expenditure - sorry, the revenue - of \$2.6 billion, and total expenditure estimated at \$3.8 billion, showing a deficit there of \$1.2 billion. And the estimates, really and truly, as you know, estimates of expenditure, Mr. Speaker, is one, as it says, estimates of what we intend to spend over the next year. I am sure the Minister of Finance and others will in due course address the issue of that deficit financing by way of the revenue-raising measures to address this.

So we have to get to the first hurdle of dealing with the expenditure. But even in dealing with the expenditure one is very mindful of the continuing challenge position of government in raising the necessary revenue that has to be done to address these expenditures. And all the time you hear from opponents that you need to find more money to do this and do that. I subscribe to the view in public sector administration that all of the solutions to the problems that confront small open economies like Barbados do not reside in just throwing more money behind the problems or the issues. You have to look at increased efficiencies, higher levels of productivity, eliminating waste and duplication and of course engaging the private sector wherever possible. So the solution is not always in saying give a few million dollars there, give a few million dollars there.

For example, the honourable member for the City of Bridgetown, in a very sober maiden speech here today, did make a call for small business to have more money. I do not think that is the only solution or that is the solution to the challenges confronting small business in Barbados. And I expect as we march forward we will engage in more robust debate on these matters. So certainly we have to recognise, Mr. Speaker, fundamentally that there are other solutions to the problems that confront the society and economy than the Almighty dollar bill. It has to relate to how we do things as well.

Now, the ministry that I have been tasked with - the Ministry of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development - is one that certainly will be responsible in a large measure for government's interface and relations with the private sector. I think we are at this point in our economic and social development where the state readily accepts that, having stabilised the economy by and large in recent times, we have to strive towards a greater partnership between the state and private enterprise to move this economy forward. Another goal then in this ministry is to help create the kind of environment - of course with my colleagues in cabinet and government generally speaking - to create the kind of environment that allows for the expansion of jobs and job opportunities in society, the creation of more foreign exchange and the saving of foreign exchange wherever possible. And I am satisfied that this Democratic Labour Party team, led by the honourable member for St. Michael South, have the intestinal fortitude to do what is necessary to create that kind of environment.

So of course I would just like, Mr. Speaker, to touch on some of the issues that confront this particular sector that my ministry is in part responsible for. And let us start with the issue of business facilitation. And this is not one that you can speak to in terms of throwing a couple of million dollars behind it. As I said earlier, all the solutions do not reside in money. There has been a perennial call in this society for government to be a better facilitator of business than it has been in the past. And we do not need to bury our heads in the sand. Apart from being ministers, we are first and foremost politicians. All of us get the calls and complaints every day - not just from the big businessman and woman in society, but from our own individual constituents - about the hardship and the challenges and the nightmares in doing things with government. And I am part of government. But I have to face that reality that the way we do things in government in Barbados in the 21st century is not the most efficient in many respects. And therefore I think that is the reality we have to face and do something about it.

Now, of course, we can pick department by department and programme by programme and dissect them, analyse them, and say, well, we made improvements, say this department is functioning better. But I think at a very macro level, we have to have that understanding that the state has to be more efficient, particularly in the way we do business with our customers. We generally speaking have to be more customer-friendly from the government perspective. Every individual who approaches every government department - whether it is the Welfare Department, the Licensing Authority, the National Housing Corporation, the QEH, the NCC, whatever it is - that customer who approaches a public officer in the execution of their duties as a public officer must be made to feel as though they are the most important customer you have for

the day. And we certainly have to realise that in raising the bar in terms of customer service and better business facilitation, we by extension help to reduce the cost of doing business.

All of these disgruntled customers of public services - those who interface with public officers - translate into dollars and cents. The longer we take to approve licences and the various applications that come before us translate into the possibility of losing business, of not creating jobs. And while all of us in this chamber and in public office generally speaking are guaranteed - thanks to the democratic process - that on the 25th day of every month our money is in the bank, we must be mindful that there are thousands out there who depend on our actions in a timely fashion to guarantee that they too may get to pay a cheque at the end of the month.

So I do not want this to be construed as any attack on the public service. Look, I know the first thing opposition members get up and say, and their two friends in the media, that the Minister of Industry has gone in parliament and cursed the public service. That is not true. We have an inefficient system in which the public officers are compelled to function. And that public service system, as it is now, has to undergo major reforms. And you will note, Mr. Speaker, that in the Democratic Labour Party manifesto, we speak to public sector reform - compensating the package at the level of the governing central bank, for example - because we on this side of the chamber take public sector reform seriously, and it cannot start at the bottom of the ladder either. It has to start at the very highest level of government.

So business facilitation is very key, Mr. Speaker, in all that we do, and certainly in respect of the Ministry of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development - as a ministry that certainly has to interact with the private sector on a constant basis, that has to approve licences, et cetera - we are committed to do our part. I am new to the ministry. I am not entirely new to the business community, but I am new to the ministry and I am prepared not to rush it, but to clearly understand all that exists within this ministry and to, over time - and I am talking about six months or a year down the line, over the next couple of weeks - to start making commitments to the public in terms of our performance indicators. In my ministry, we must give the public deadlines by which we would turn around things that come before us. And once we give a deadline, we must also have the necessary penalties to go with it where we do not meet those deadlines.

On my end, of course, business efficiency and business facilitation cut both ways because those in the private sector must also exhibit the highest level of respect for public officers as well and for public institutions. I am

not going to be constructively critical of the public sector without, at the same time, reflecting on the private sector in Barbados, which has at all times to give the highest level of respect for our public offices and our public administration system as well. So do not expect that you will make an application and deliberately leave out some of the information and still expect that you can get your licence approved within a month's time. It cuts both ways as well. And I am satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that while one cannot really quantify or commit to a dollar value of a reformed public sector, of reformed processes within the public and private sector, I am satisfied from empirical evidence that it translates into millions of dollars of savings and increased investment in this country. At the end of the day, we want to tell the whole world that Barbados is open for business and that we are doing things in an efficient manner in this country.

One of the other issues that we have to address collectively is the issue of transparency. And let us not be the proverbial ostrich. The reality about it is that there is too often a feeling that the answer you get and the action you get from my side of the public sector is dependent upon the officer or the minister you interact with. It may sound strange, but I think that really and truly there are just too many things in our society and economy that are dependent upon a minister to act on.

We need to certainly ensure that there's a higher level of transparency across the system so that whether you are a constituent of St. Thomas or one from St. James South and you go before an officer in the public sector, you ought to be very clear as to the rules of engagement and there ought to be no ambiguity as to the outcome and the rationale for the outcome thereafter. So that certainly, Mr. Speaker, is another aspect of our management system that has to be addressed and it will be addressed in this Democrat Party administration when we talk about the things that reflect the manifesto, that speak to public sector administration, that speak to the management reforms that speak to the various activities in all the key departments. Underlying all of this is the commitment of the Democrat Labour Party administration to bring a higher level of transparency and accountability to what we do as their government.

Of course, in respect now of some business issues, one of the issues that comes before us all the time as reflected in my ministry now is the silo effect, as I call it, in government generally speaking, where sometimes one department and one ministry does not know what the other department is doing, where one ministry's actions impact upon the actions of another ministry. And this Ministry of International Business and Industry, et cetera, is very committed to bridging that gap and to clearly working closely with all other ministries and agencies of the state to ensure we meet the demands of our constituents in the

private and business sector of Barbados. We cannot say to those who are investing in Barbados, whether they be from abroad or local investors, nor can you say to existing entrepreneurs, that you have to run hither and thither to get matters addressed on the state side. We have to become almost like a one-stop shop where, when you have a challenge in interacting with government, we can say we will on your behalf go and find exactly what are the stumbling blocks, what are the hindrances, pull them together and find solutions for you. It doesn't mean that every time you make a request you will get what you want. But certainly we have to do things in a timely fashion and almost in a seamless manner as well.

Of course, therein lie opportunities as well as we reflect now specifically on industry, international business, commerce and small business development. Just as my predecessors in the ministry recognised and certainly worked on, we have to strengthen relationships between the various agencies to ensure that industry and businesses prosper in Barbados. So take, for example, the work of the BIDC and their constituents in industrial development. Development of industry, generally speaking, and of commerce must be in relation to what is happening in agriculture. So as we talk certainly in this society today of an enhanced agro-processing industry, that therein means that on the industrial side we have to work closely with the agricultural side as well. Of course, as we talk about producing more goods locally, we have to ensure that the tourism sector provides that viable market for what is produced locally as well.

Likewise, as we talk about raising the bar and creating more entrepreneurs in Barbados, creating a culture of entrepreneurship in Barbados, it means that fundamentally our education system, as led by Minister Jones, has to be able to respond on one hand and on the other hand also to be proactive in terms of what is on our curriculum from primary right through to tertiary level, to ensure that we create a culture of entrepreneurship where every young man, every young woman who wishes to engage in some business activity has the fundamental training to do that. Where innovation is encouraged and not from the corner in our school system, where young boys and girls who perhaps seem more focused in that area and may otherwise be classified as being disruptive in a classroom are helped to really and truly find their own niche and achieve their full potential. So there have to be these linkages, of course, that have to work hand in hand.

Of course, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, for his sins, otherwise sits on my right in Parliament and therefore he will constantly have his ears bent about the things that his ministry needs to do to ensure that businesses in Barbados can have the kind of environment to function effectively and to make profits and to do well. So I'm sending a caution to the Member for St.

Michael North West that he will forever be hearing from me as his colleague on these matters as well.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed certainly on this aim to finding sustainable ways of reforming this economy. The Prime Minister, of course, has led the charge, certainly as well captured in her recent manifesto when we talk about our vision of creating a society and economy that is socially balanced, economically viable, environmentally sound and characterised by good governance, and therein lies the opportunity for us as well to focus on diversifying this economy and creating new opportunities.

One area that the Democrat Labour Party has focused on extensively over the last three years or so is the area of renewable energy. And I know that what I'm hearing from the opposition benches, sad to say, is not one of encouragement and support - more or less the belief that we have our heart on fossil fuel exploration in the deep seas of Barbados, and yet that is not being ruled out. We have not closed the door in terms of oil exploration and natural gas exploration off Barbados. We recognise that there will, for the foreseeable future, be that need for fossil fuel. And if Barbados has an opportunity to explore its natural seas and other geological structures and find oil within, all the better. We are not ruling that out. I know that the Ministry of Energy continues to engage international stakeholders on that particular aspect of our economic development model. But we recognise that renewable energy, alternative energy to fossil fuel, provides Barbados with a wonderful opportunity to really reshape this economy, to drive down the cost of doing business, to drive down the cost of living in Barbados. And as a responsible government, as an enlightened government, we have led the charge by going out there and seeking to stimulate the interest in this particular area. And I wish, of course, at the outset to commend those in the private sector who have certainly grabbed hold of the opportunities. I mean, for many years we've had solar heaters to provide us with hot water. So fundamentally, Barbados is ahead of the game. We certainly have an industry there that we must build on.

And when you realise that in 2007 we spent about \$475 000 000 importing fossil fuel in Barbados and by 2011 that had climbed to about \$785 000 000, we recognise we have no choice. And that is why this government stands very committed to making renewable energy a reality in this society. Every household, every business must come fully on board and ensure that renewable energy becomes an integral part of their existence.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And how will we make that happen? Certainly the Ministry of Energy is working steadfastly with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel's office, I believe, on addressing legislative reforms that are necessary to create that kind of environment to make renewable energy come fully on board. In my ministry, the

Fair Trading Commission will do its part. It remains a rather independent entity. But I think the message has been sent forth that government is committed to a renewable energy policy as a way of driving down the cost of business and making this economy more sustainable and more diversified.

And certainly we do that. But I've also spoken to BIDC, for example, and said, look, let us think outside of the box. We have about 1.6 million square metres of country - whatever that translates in terms of roof space - that can certainly be used to provide the base for photovoltaic systems in Barbados. I don't see why every BIDC building cannot be used, the roof at least, to place them and to help generate energy for the businesses operating there. And eventually, once the legislation is done and the FTC has completed their work, to become a major source of power for Barbados. And this is not something the private sector benefits from alone. The state is also perhaps the largest user of fossil fuel in Barbados.

So therefore, Mr. Speaker, we have a commitment to address these issues. I look forward, actually, Mr. Speaker, to hoping that the head in this ministry is called so that we can really engage in debate on these matters. Because at the end of the day, we are not going to stand here and talk about the challenges of the economy, the challenges of raising revenue and our expenditure issues. We need to engage in a more robust manner about the solutions, the sustainable solutions that will move this country forward. So we have a lot to talk about in terms of international business and the transformation that's going to take place in that sector as well. To earn foreign exchange, create job opportunities, we have to talk about industry and commerce and small business that's really going to be driving this economy forward. So there's much we have to do. Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I am obliged to you.

SUSPENSION

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable members, the sitting of the House of Assembly resumes. When the suspension was taken we were on Order Number One and with that we shall continue. Yes, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the good people of the Ivy, the people of Martyr, the people of Israel Foundation, the Finland and all

working class institutions and individuals, I take my politics. I feel that the kind of money that I received for coming to this House of Assembly - I should never enter here, this place, seeing myself as a comedian. I come to do the people's business. The reality is, and I don't speak from any subjective view on which side I am on. I speak on the principles that I believe in, because central to any man coming here should rest very heavily on a set of fundamental core values that should serve as a guideline to each man and woman, an honourable member of this House of Assembly, in understanding exactly what his political assignment from the people is supposed to be.

Sir, I set myself on a historic mission. And while I was sitting here today, I listened attentively to all the members who were trying to connect and make sense in trying to make a consummate analysis of all the historic documents that are available to them, complementing the estimates that is before us. And I came to the conclusion that each perspective is inextricably related to each other and that every facet of human existence is also interrelated. And the document, the sacred document before us, manifesting itself in the estimates, is a reflection, and should be a reflection of the kind of society that sensible people are trying to develop, taking into consideration all the financial constraints that each minister and what that aggregate sum will allow us to do.

So, like Fanon, I set about on my historic mission, and I set out to know what that historic mission is supposed to be. And every day I ask myself, what is my role in politics? And we have this condition as we examine the estimates and see what we can do in our short lifetime here, because members were here yesterday, and then today and tomorrow members are gone. So when we come here, we are really responsible for the life of 260 000 plus persons across Barbados. We have this obligation to betray that mission or to honour it. Some of us, because we enter into this House of Assembly, will believe that since you came here as a result of what is described as a democratic or pseudo-democratic means that you are comfortable because you are guaranteed a salary for five years, an allowance, and all the comforts that parliamentarians enjoy - sometimes with comforts that parliamentarians enjoy, sometimes without even doing the honourable service that they ought to do.

And I would like to believe that I am in a parliament that can not only respect the work of the honourable and late Prime Minister Errol Walton Barrow, but we must be able to pay respect to the historic journey that started in 1831, even before the emancipation, with a man who entered this House of Assembly by the name of Samuel Jackman Prescod. And, you know, probably it might be - if we check the DNA, we discover that. But you know, this national hero, Prescod, understood his historic mission, and he honoured it. He fought against oppression, he fought

against social snobbery, he fought against racism, every form of social divide in the society. He fought to see a black economic enfranchisement in the first half of the 19th century. And now we are into the 21st century. It is still my view. It is still my view, and it is still my mission, it is still my responsibility that whenever I judge the faces that I see in front of me, I judge them to see what they have contributed to our civilisation as a people. People who come to parliament and leave parliament without being able to look back and say, I have etched my name in history in a meaningful way because I have worked to transform the lives of people.

And when I look at the estimates, whether it is \$3.8 billion or less, I am not going to shuffle or dance and say it is not enough and that there is something miraculous that makes \$3.8 billion the figure. Because the reality is that there are provisions that if you don't spend all, you can send it back, and if you want more, you can come back here and get more. They have provisions for that. So I want to see the programme that addresses the nation's development and to find out - I have seen all types of debates that last for a million years. People don't want to stop talking on these issues and everybody is saying, oh, you haven't put enough in the estimates. And then I hear departments say, I have \$2 million to put back in at the end of the year because the bureaucracy did not spend it. Then there are programmes that are in the estimates that are never put in place. So the estimates will be described by some people as a fiction, as a reality, some form of social or even spiritual mythology. But in reality, we are all guided by this \$3.8 billion that we try to focus our attention to see how they can be spent. But \$3.8 billion must be put to logic because figures are meaningless if they don't have meaning. And it is words that will tell you what the figures mean.

My main focus in this exercise - as I told you, I go back to Prescod in 1831 and I go back to Barrow as well. And I go back to Grantley Adams as well. And I go back to the greatest man in the history of the world in the 20th century, Marcus Garvey. I go back there - who don't like it, I am sorry for them - because you can't talk to me about Jeremiah, Maya, and you can't talk to me about Nebuchadnezzar and all types of characters from BC and tell me I am a fool to make reference to history, but I'm not going to buy that. History does not record foolishness. And that is why when some people talk and work even as parliamentarians, history never records anything that they did or say.

Am I very concerned? I am not going to talk about reform or revolutionary changes because people seem to believe that there are only two ideologies. And I have heard people dismissing what I have said as movement thoughts and talk about capitalism or Marxist-Leninism. But if I respect Garvey as a philosopher - as most of you don't

even know one man that is black that is a philosopher - but I respect Garvey as a modern thinker and Garvey understood the importance of man know thyself, man know thyself. So I am cognisant of who over there can support that view. I am cognisant of who over here will not support it. You will have to ask me where the majority exists. But I know that there is no generic type inside the House of Assembly. I know that. So when some people speak and they say I or we, they don't include me. And I know that.

So I am concerned. I am concerned about what can I do, like [Inaudible.] has done, to help to change the life of people. I will say this. I don't hate the faces in here. I don't hate nobody from those things. Now, I will never describe a black man or black woman as ugly as long as I live. I should die first before I do those things. I am here to tell you my view, my perspective of my reality. And I hope that my reality represents the people of St. Michael East. That is what I care about when I come here - that when I look at the estimates, I want to see how it is going to affect the people in the Ivy and the black people across Barbados.

I am not opposed to anybody who decided to put a housing programme in place with a good intention. I am concerned when a white monopoly emerges in the society. I don't care which party it is - I am concerned when I see white monopolies emerging in this society because I know what Prescod fought for and I know that these people brought a brown legislation to drive a divide between whites and browns and that in the system. And that when we fought in 1816 for the liberation of our people, they gave the right to a brown middle class to give evidence in court and they passed a legislation that the browns can be equal to the whites so that browns can come in here first and Prescod stopped that, stood up against it. There are people in Barbados tonight, in my view, who want to manipulate this legislature. They want to get everything underneath the sun. I am concerned about that. They want to get everything under the sun while the masses of people are suffering. They are expanding their lives morning, noon and night in this country. And I believe that ministers sometimes do things with good intentions but, not understanding what exists outside, fall victim to some of these people.

And the estimates - when I look at the estimates and I hear about developments in Barbados - and to be truthful, the minister responsible for housing and lands, I respect him, I like him as an individual. I believe that he has good intentions. But there are some people in corporate Barbados that will do all that they can to see if they can plunder and rape this country and accumulate more wealth than even the state will be able to accumulate. And then you have to go to them and borrow money in order to fund programmes. That is what I am concerned about. No, the people you are talking about, they won't finance the body in the opposition. They put their money in the pool, the

investment in the pool where they know their gigantic returns.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair. Comments to the Chair, please.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Sir, it is just my natural - I know my natural. Caution you fine, sir. Let me focus then and be a little more precise. Yes, we work for Valerie. We see houses built for poor people, high-rise houses. And I love the houses. But look who is responsible for the construction of the houses - entities or thousands. One morning the company, the entity, got another name. And when you move around, you move from Jada here. Then we get pre-conquer. They are syntactic and all kinds of strange names. I don't mind the legal shifting of setting up independent legal entities. The money is going back to the same human beings. So I want the houses for the people. Is there a justification for poor people to get houses? I would love you to introduce a programme that covered thousands of people. Not somebody telling you provide 2 000 housing solutions in 24 hours - and those things, real solutions. There are over 20 000 applicants in the National Housing Corporation waiting for houses that we have had. If the minister, or any minister, any of you, any of our honourable members try to address those issues, I believe that they deserve the support.

But I can't understand how the mission statement in some of these corporations could state and imply that we are going to address the needs of the homeless in our society. And then we end up constructing houses for \$235 000 for people who cannot even get work and people who are underemployed. So you are in the same position in relation to helping the poor, because you construct all of these houses, and none of the 20 000 poor people who apply, hoping to get a house at 50-something, 40-something dollars a week, can qualify. And if by some means you attempt to put them in the units, then these documents here - these documents here are some of the documents that arrived in the House of Assembly today - where people in Country Road, the tenants in the housing area in Country Road, who are glad not to be homeless, to be given an opportunity. But then you end up in a raise of over \$2 000, \$3 000. Nobody thought that you could have notified them before and hopefully you would have got some money during the election to pay off this debt. But these people voted believing that all was well. I got so many people here - can I do that? - that all was well. And then discovered that you receive a notice to quit and deliver up.

This is where the cunning aspect of it occurs. It embedded the 15th March. It was in the office, Lord. And then you also have correspondence here from St. Barnabas and from the Ivy. You don't understand what I am saying to you. Even if the minister has good intentions and he

wants to help poor people, then he has to go further than that because he has to understand poverty. You want to help people who don't have - they cannot pay rent, they cannot buy - the point I was making. A company - they cannot buy the point I am making - in the low-income housing district, they can't pay the rent. So you are going to have this problem and we have to sit down and face the reality. Because, mind you, it is this - that the same way when the people at Valerie and the Grotto can tell you that the initial cost of a project is \$18 million, and you have a methodology that accommodates this strange demand that can move from \$18 million to \$28 million - that is why I listen to estimates. Sometimes I listen, but how can a principal amount be \$18 million and then you come back and tell people, before the project sometimes even opens, that something miraculous or demonic - more likely occurred, not done by any man, but done by nature or some divine force - because they want you to believe that something demonic there that you could tell me \$18 million. But then you come back and say \$28 million today. I can't get me an explanation for that. But you have a legitimate - you have a form of legitimacy that is couched in the language called cost overrun. So you say cost overrun.

So cost overrun. And you go - this is one. You know, a BJ. You have some BJ or TJ for TV. Ward, they got a BJ? No. Same people again. Same people again. I look like none of us in New York. None of us are here. None of the people that Prescod expected would have come in here to change the life of people.

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Sir, none of these people look like us. I am not against them, but somebody must speak. I am not going to talk like the honourable member from St. Michael West Central - from West Central - I say poverty is in the mind. Not known such a bogus premise would come from you. You can't have poverty exclusively in the mind. But you have a welfare department and you have NAB and you have departments that are addressing poverty. If you order any mind, they will go and look for people - psychologists and counsellors direct it from any mind. That is where you are suffering with a psychological immersion. That is where you don't quite understand what you are saying. Not with any bad intentions. Again, you don't understand what you are saying. Our problem of poverty can't be anything to do with the mind. It is a wider dimension that reflects social deprivation.

And that's where you can't pay rent. That is why you can't find a job. That is why you can't feed your children. Because it is something wider than in the mind. I heard another member saying that people are cutting grass at the bell. I hope. Beautiful it is. He can be proud of that.

But not me. Sir Kabir expanded secondary schools in Berber and a polytechnic and a national system board and university. And then you offer the majority of our children an opportunity to cut grass. But then you look for the same social explosion that you're witnessing every day. Because what you offer is not commensurate with equality of education of the children that you are putting out. So don't rejoice at a black boy cutting grass in the bell in 2013. We don't want no black boys from the bell or in the bell cutting. Grassroots opportunities give us opportunities to give expression to our creative imagination and the talent which we have so we can do something that is important. And that's what I want all of us from both sides to understand. Let us help our own when we blend this group from both sides. When the time comes and we walk out of here like the Right Honourable Errol Walton Barrow, the Right Honourable Brandy Adams, like Samuel Jackman Preston, all of us who enter these halls, let us make sure that when we leave here, we fulfil our historic mission. Because if we don't contribute anything to make life better for our own people and they can say what they like about me, I am no racist. If they want to say that, say it, because that is the defence. Right? But I want to see people like us serving at the highest level and we given the opportunities to be empowered to do something substantial for their own children, those alive and those unborn. Sir, I want to thank you very much for accommodating me.

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

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill before us. So you would have heard from previous presentations of the four pillars on which this Democrat Liberal party went to the people of Barbados. And I really just want to fashion my presentation with respect to the fourth pillar, which is good governance. Because many areas of my ministry that is in the Attorney General's office and the Ministry of Home Affairs at some point in time collide with the area of good governance and political good governance in this country. Yesterday, however, let me begin now that I remember yesterday, the member for St. Michael North East,

at the start of her presentation highlighted the fact that two visitors to this island were shot and whether her mention of that incident was out of concern or otherwise, I can say to her and to members on her side that in fact that on this side, via the Minister of Health and the Minister of Tourism, that we ensured that these individuals received the best possible care available in Barbados. And indeed it is to my knowledge that the perpetrator was arrested yesterday afternoon. I say this because for us to have good governance and for us to continue with our way of life as a country, there are two institutions that we must continue to give the type of support that we are giving to, one being the Royal Barbados Police Force and the other being the

Defence Force of Barbados because they have the responsibility of protecting our democracy as we know it.

Indeed, we have had some issues, as I am sure that you are aware, with respect to crime and in particular crime linked to the scrap gold trade. Again yesterday you heard from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition suggesting that we were slow to amend the legislation to tackle the issue of the scrap gold trade. And that is far from the truth. Indeed, we did move with alacrity to have the legislation modernised. And what you have seen over the last couple of weeks - indeed I think two or three arrests - arose as a result of the modernisation of the legislation. There have been some issues, we confess that there have been some issues, that indeed robberies from the person have escalated, but it certainly has not escalated to the extent where, as a country, I felt as Attorney General that we needed to panic.

I mean, the officials at the Ministry, myself and the Royal Barbados Police Force are monitoring this situation and I have already arranged a meeting with the Acting Controller of Customs because this is not something that we can address by ourselves. We need all actors involved. If necessary, I have already said to the Commissioner of Police, if necessary we will search all bags leaving this country like we did post-9/11, to ensure - because I am actually not as concerned about the legitimate dealers as I am about the individuals who are taking ill-gotten jewellery out of this country and selling it when they go to other parts of the world. I am more concerned about them. So that when I hear calls for us to seize the trade, the reality is that will not automatically bring an end to what we are seeing today. The legitimate dealers are on board. We are working with them. The legitimate scrap metal dealers are on board. We are working with them.

I just want to say to this Honourable Chamber that I am aware of the situation. We are aware of the situation. We are monitoring the situation. But we do not believe that it has reached a proportion where you need to set off alarm bells as is being suggested by some quarters. I thought I would flag that because it was raised earlier yesterday afternoon. If you listen to some speakers, you will believe that crime is something that only obtains in Barbados and that indeed we are the only jurisdiction where one can be robbed or where you have some kind of criminal infraction.

Just last week I had a long conversation with the Minister responsible for justice in Antigua. They were facing significant challenges and we actually provided them with some resources to assist them with their challenges. Just this morning on my television, on CNN, I saw in India a British tourist jumping through her hotel window to escape an attempted rape by the owner of the hotel. The point I am making is that for us, as members of Parliament, to give credibility to any mouthings that might

suggest that only in Barbados certain things obtain is uncharitable, to say the least. So we really need to - I just want to, as I said, signal the fact that the Royal Barbados Police Force will continue to receive the support from this administration that it has been given for the last five years, and indeed, under these estimates, we have made provisions for their continued support.

I listened to the Member for St. Michael East. It is regretful that - hopefully he can hear my voice - because we have actually looked at certain areas where we believe that interventions are required and given the spirit of cooperation that I am hearing from my colleagues on the other side, and I know that I will have cooperation from this side, that I look forward to engaging members of Parliament where there are particular areas that I believe that we can work together to assist, that indeed they will put their hands up and say, yes, we understand, because it is not a situation where the police alone will be able to address all of the issues. In some areas we are going to need the Ministry of Youth, for example. We are going to need Social Care. Already I have asked my Senator to arrange a meeting with my colleagues in the Ministry so that we can look at those areas that are causing us some concern and bring strategies to bear to reduce what we are seeing in some communities.

So indeed, consistent with that, the whole issue of community engagement is something that we are paying more attention to this year with the Royal Barbados Police Force, so that there is some monies in the estimates, for example, to rejuvenate the Police Boys and Girls Club. I remember when I first started going down to Chelsea Road many, many years ago. Every afternoon I saw many young men and women playing dominoes, playing basketball, netball, whatever sports at that facility. And we have determined that indeed we will transform it back to a facility that young people from across constituencies - but obviously from Bay Street and the surrounding areas - will once again make use of those facilities.

On the structural side, we will continue work transforming police stations across Barbados and we have again, in our estimates, made provision for them. So, for example, we will continue major structural work on the control room at Central Police Station and the OCID buildings. They already have some work and we will continue that work. We will work with the project managers to see if we can get the Belleplaine and Arch Hall police stations out of the ground. We will continue the work on the Hastings-Worthing police station. Work is ongoing at the Police Stables, District A. We have a maintenance programme for all of our police stations and court stations. So our estimates have indeed touched the Royal Barbados Police Force in a significant way.

Also in my Ministry, the whole issue of law reform we are addressing. We have decided that in fact the time has come for us to set up a Law Reform Commission whose sole mandate will be to look at all of our laws - not in a piecemeal manner, but certainly to look at all of our laws so that they will be modernised on a continuous basis, as opposed to what happens now, where you might have an amendment to one piece of legislation without taking cognisance of how it impacts every other piece of legislation. And that is a significant step that we believe will transform our ability to respond legislatively to our needs as a modern society.

Similarly, I want to say - and I want to take exception to a comment made by the Leader of the Opposition, the current temporary Leader of the Opposition - that we were slow to provide legislation for the Minister of International Business. I have said on more than one occasion, and I will say here in particular for the newer members, that in fact this Government cannot be faulted in terms of what it has done legislatively for the international business sector. We have done more legislatively for the international business sector in our last five years than that other side did in 14 years. The facts are there to be received. So when I hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East suggesting that we have not done anything legislatively for the international business sector, I stare in dismay. But I am confident that my colleague from St. James South will spend some time on that, so I do not need to spend a lot of my time discussing international business. But I just want to flag the fact that it is uncharitable for the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that we have not delivered legislatively. And it indeed denies the hard work of my colleagues in the Chief Parliamentary Counsel's office, who in many instances work beyond the call of duty and continue to work beyond the call of duty to ensure that our legislative programme is one that we can be proud of. And I look forward to continuing to work with them so that our present programme over the next five years will be able to be implemented.

I am very proud, Mr. Speaker, of the work that we are doing in terms of our legislative programme. I am very proud of our move to modernise our e-laws. Yesterday I had a chat with the Clerk of Parliament because it is our intention to have our e-laws online and accessible to anyone and everyone, and they will be hosted by Parliament because we believe that Parliament is the right repository to host the laws of Barbados. And again in our estimates there is money allocated for the hosting of our laws. As I said, we are moving in the direction so that we can have a modern legislative programme, but certainly so that any piece of legislation that you, serving as an attorney-at-law, will want to have sight of - in fact, at the click of a mouse you will be able to access. We are clear in our Ministry of our responsibility to Barbados, to the

people of Barbados, and our responsibility in particular to ensure continued good governance.

And in that regard, one other department that I would like to mention is the National Task Force for Intervention, again doing excellent work with various actors. They are working with the Regional Police Training School, they are working with the RSS to ensure that any programmes that we put together are put together with the best research available to us. Because we are not just interested in putting together programmes for the sake of putting together programmes - we are clear that any programmes that we put together must be for the benefit of this country, must be for the benefit of individuals who reside in this country.

On that note, I also want to signal the fact that I know from time to time you would hear that we have had a shortage of police officers. As I speak to you, there are 51 recruits at the training school at the RPTC, 31 of whom are Barbadians. We are now seeing more interest. You may recall that about two years ago we were concerned about the shortage of young men in particular. And I said then that I did not believe that we had exhausted all of our resources in terms of going into the schools and explaining to young men in particular of the dynamic opportunities in the Royal Barbados Police Force. And I believe that we are seeing some fruit now because there has never been a shortage of women. As I said before, the issue had been the shortage of young men, of qualified young men. And we are now seeing - as I said, we have 31 Barbadians now - and we believe that in fact we are at the stage where we should soon be able to have a full complement of police officers. Of course, you will always have attrition, always have police officers going and coming, so there will always be a need for new recruits. But I am saying that any thoughts that we had, or that individuals had, that we may have to look outside of Barbados - I do not believe that is now something that we should be concerned about.

Also at the RPTC, we said that we will indeed upgrade the institution - not only physically, some work will be done, but certainly we will upgrade its curriculum so that we become more of a college. There was a time when police officers went off to Britain for a significant amount of their training. We believe that there is no reason why more training cannot be offered in Barbados and certainly in the region. And in that regard, it is our intention to ensure that more courses are offered and in particular more management courses are offered at the RPTC.

My colleague from St. James South spent a lot of time on facilitation and I believe the whole issue of ensuring that we deliver more as a country and as ministries is important, and I want to support him on that. In that regard, maybe I should say that we have already

looked internally. We have done an institutional audit of the Solicitor General's Chambers, looking to see if we have the right human resources, because we want to ensure that we are delivering at our optimum. Similarly, at the Department of Emergency Management, we have done a similar exercise where we are looking at the personnel, looking at our resources to ensure that we have the best resources possible, because frankly speaking, we want to ensure that in all departments we are firing at our optimum. And that is something that we will continue across our Ministry to ensure that there is increased and enhanced productivity.

You will not find that in our estimates in terms of dollars and cents, but it is something that as a country we have signalled, and this is not something peculiar to the public service, because I remember a study that suggested that in terms of productivity there was not a significant difference between the private sector and the public sector in worker satisfaction. Indeed, but what I am saying is that there is room for improvement and therefore we are examining our processes to ensure that where there is room for improvement, that can be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, for the Attorney General's office I have many more words for you, but they will come in a future debate from the Attorney General's office perspective. Therefore, I am saying that in terms of our responsibility to the continued governance and good governance of this country, we are very cognisant of our responsibility. There are a couple of areas that we also realise we need to address. There have been complaints from time to time about the Supreme Court, about the Registry in particular. We recognise that there are some issues there.

Again, we will go in, examine the processes, see what needs to be done. I want to signal I did it before and I have not delivered, but I certainly will deliver this year. We will indeed modernise the Legal Profession Act. I receive too many complaints from members of the public, and that is an essential part of our overall governance structure, because members of the public must feel that when they come to the Law Courts, that the advocates are doing what is in their best interest, that if there is a follow-up, they have a legitimate recourse or they have somewhere that they can go who will hear their complaints. So we are going to modernise our legal professional legislation. And I dare say that the time - I know that the President of the CCJ has been articulating that what he would like to see across the Caribbean is a code of conduct for judges across the Caribbean. The time has probably come for us also in Barbados to examine that, because we want to ensure that our overall governance structure is exemplary. So those are the areas that immediately I can say to you that we intend to address.

The member for St. Andrew raised the issue of our anti-corruption legislation. As you know, we passed the legislation late last year. We now need to put the processes in place. We are committed to doing it. We need to examine the personnel that will be required. We need to examine the terms and conditions. We need to examine where they will be housed. So it is not a case where - and he very well knows that - we could have turned on a switch and automatically said, well, right, let us go, because there is a process that we need to examine.

I also want to highlight the fact that one area that we are also going to pay particular attention to is our training with respect to disaster preparedness. I am satisfied that the Defence Force is able and equipped, if there is an actual disaster, if there is any type of disaster in this country, and we will continue to provide training for the Defence Force so that they can assist us in particular in the area of disaster preparedness and our recovery if necessary. And as you very well know, their marine unit plays a significant role in our drug interdiction efforts. So again, our estimates take into consideration what we would like to do with respect to the Barbados Defence Force.

As I said to you, we have already looked at the Department of Emergency Management - it lacks a home. As I speak to you again, we are working on providing the DEM with a home. We have already, late last year, agreed to provide NEMA with land so that NEMA can construct a facility at Lower Estate. And it is also our hope over the next year to indeed ensure that the Department of Emergency Management also can have its own home at Lower Estate, because it is important for them to have the requisite amount of space and type of facility that will see that if there is some kind of an event, they are in fact properly housed and can respond. So they will need a facility, for example, that may be able to house eight or ten of them overnight - a facility that we are satisfied that if there is a hurricane, it will withstand winds of a certain speed or intensity.

Similarly, sir, one of the projects that we are working on this year is we want to have an integrated 911 system. As I speak to you, there is a paper on my desk recognising the significant cost that will be involved. And I believe that the cost that I saw was about \$7 billion in putting and rolling out such a system. But what we do have now is the fact that you call one number for fire, you call one number for the police, and then you might call District C and not get the same type of services if you call Crab Hill. And we want to have an integrated system so that you will call one number on one platform with trained individuals. Again, if I use the police, you have a situation where you have staff that are police officers and staff that are civilians. And if you have an event, the civilians, because they operate under a different code, can pack their bags at 4:30 and say, well, right, I am off, I am going

home, whereas the police officers have to continue throughout the night. So we want to have an integrated system on one platform and housed in a building that can also withstand a significant natural event, so that we would also then have to identify suitable accommodation for them, because there is no use placing those types of resources into a building and you have a storm and it blows down.

In addition to it, sir, because we are trying to ensure that we maximise all of our resources, in our ministry we are examining the issue of how - even on a partial basis - how do we move into some type of a parole system? And one of the things that we are examining is whether or not we would also have to use some kind of electronic solution. We all watch our various crime programmes where you have these ankle bracelets and you can tell whether or not an individual is exactly where he is. If, for example, it is an order that he is not supposed to go within 100 yards of a particular place, then you can see where he is. Or if he is supposed to be at home, then you can see that he is indeed at home. What we are hoping to do is to ensure that any solution is also tied into a 911 system, so we are part of the same platform - so that indeed you will be able to sit down and examine whether or not Bill Marshall is in St. Joseph when he says that he is there or if he is elsewhere, assuming that he does have a bracelet attached to him. No, he never goes to Bay Street. He is a bit more sophisticated than that.

So we are clear in terms of where we are going as a ministry and how we are going to contribute to the enhanced governance framework of this country. I will end on this note, sir. The member for St. Thomas in her presentation said that we were faced with a moral decline in this country. And I am going to sum up by saying that we were faced with a moral decline in this country. And I said to her tongue in cheek whilst passing her desk, that it must be noted that the 19-year-olds and 20-year-olds and 21-year-olds in this country that are now giving us trouble - the five years that we have had leading this country have not been enough to erode the 14 years under the Barbados Labour Party. And I do mean that, and I mean it to the extent where - that is why I am repeating it publicly - because indeed, and I was always of the opinion that in 2007, when I volunteered in elective politics, that one of the things that we needed to address was indeed the fact that there was moral decline in this country. So I am glad that the member for St. Thomas has finally caught up. We are aware of it and that is why we have placed governance so high on our list of priorities. That is why we have continued to ensure that we led the way in terms of governance. And that is why during the last election they said whatever they liked about our Prime Minister, but they could not find anything to say about him that would lead anyone to believe that he was not fit to govern this country.

So we are very well aware of the importance of governance to the continued development of this country. It is one of our pillars - it is the fourth pillar of our manifesto. And I am committing to you, sir, as I am committing to my colleagues, as I am committing to the other side, that I will do all within my powers as Attorney General and as Minister of Home Affairs to ensure that we can contribute towards the continued good governance of this country. With those words, sir, I begin by supporting this Appropriation Bill. Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for St. James Central.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, sir, I think it is most appropriate for me to begin by once again expressing my thanks to those good citizens of the constituency of St. James Central who, having reposed their confidence in me, allowed it to be possible to be here today. And while I am on my feet, sir, I would wish through you to extend my thanks and those of my family to those Honourable Members on both sides who have so very kindly, either by verbal or in some cases even written expressions of condolence, made it possible to sustain the difficulties of the current time.

Mr. Speaker, sir, I noted yesterday that the member for St. Michael North West prefaced his remarks by making what I thought was the very appropriate observation that we are past the election phase and it would be a useful thing if we could speak to some extent on the analysis. And this is not exactly how he put it, but this is the spirit of that which I understood him to say - speak to some extent on the analysis of the way forward. It is an invitation which I am minded to accept. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I think it is a useful thing in this debate to share but a few perspectives which I would wish for the honourable House to reflect upon in the spirit in which they are given.

Mr. Speaker, sir, the first perspective, ironically, is one which is captured perhaps best of all by the honourable Minister of Finance himself. It was he, sir, who painted a very blunt picture that Barbados cannot continue as though it were business as usual. He made the point, Mr. Speaker, sir, and painted the picture that we are living in a time and have an economy to contend with which is clearly underperforming. These estimates support that, sir. He painted the picture, Mr. Speaker, sir, of anemic growth in Barbados at best, if not no growth at all. He painted a picture, Mr. Speaker, sir, of an economy in which the key sectors are in decline and steep decline. And it is a matter about which we are going to have to be candid in the course of this debate and especially when we come to the latter stages, serving calling heads. He painted a picture, Mr. Speaker, sir, of the urgent need for us to undergo economic restructuring in Barbados.

And again, but for the fact that perhaps the honourable member for St. Michael North West may have done well to have remembered that the Democratic Labour Party came into office and found their adaptation strategy fully fleshed out with respect to the future of the agriculture sector and sugar industry in particular, and a framework - a legal framework - for an offshore energy sector. But for those two points of differentiation, sir, I can agree with his submission that the economy needs to be restructured. And the irony perhaps, Mr. Speaker, sir, is that fundamental dilemma which I respectfully submit to this House is the one that is haunting this country. That fundamental dilemma, sir, about which the honourable member may have best chosen to speak, he opted to remain silent.

That dilemma, in my judgment, Mr. Speaker, sir, is the dilemma of being able to devise programmes, developmental programmes, useful programmes - and being as fair to the government as I can possibly be, I don't think there's any shortage of evidence that the government is capable and competent to come up with the intellectual crystallisation of useful programmes. But the difficulty, sir, seems to lie in the capacity to implement. And it is that point that the Leader of the Opposition sought to make when she spoke to the implementation deficit disorder which is facing the country.

Mr. Speaker, sir, it is a reality about which I do not think - or from which I do not think - we can easily shrink. It is not the first time that I have heard the honourable Minister of Finance come to this chamber, sir, and regale this House with promises and commitments. That government is dedicated to Barbados' long-term economic growth and by extension he has teased and tempted and I think, sir, also frustrated the listening public when he speaks to the issue of economic restructuring. There is no doubt in my mind, Mr. Speaker, sir, as I said, that it is a fundamental concern for this country, but we have to understand and accept that. We can't just persistently speak to it. But the time has come when we have to point to tangible deliverables.

There is no doubt, sir, that Barbados - and more importantly the productive sectors of this economy and the enterprises making up the productive sectors and the individuals who in their own right play a role in those enterprises - see themselves as standing on the tip of the toenail of time. We really don't have a lot of room, sir, to just continue to talk about these things. Now I don't say this to be unkind or to be churlish. As I said, I don't doubt that the Minister of Finance is competent and capable of coming up with useful strategy, but sir, by way of argument and to offer this chamber an example, I direct your attention, sir, to the budgetary proposals of Tuesday, August 16, 2011.

When the honourable Minister, sir, would have said this at page 70 - he said, sir, successive governments have recognised that the creative economy ought to be one of the pillars on which our future economic growth must be premised. No quarrel with that. And while there have been gains and noticeable ones, if we are to ensure that this sector is truly to be regarded as one of the mainstream economic sectors in Barbados, we must address in a coherent manner some of the structural barriers confronted by the creative economy. He went on, sir. It is for this reason that the Division of Culture has worked so painstakingly on preparation of the draft Cultural Industries Bill, which we are happy to announce is now ready. My understanding is that consultations with relevant stakeholders have started and will conclude shortly before the bill is debated in Parliament towards the end of this calendar year. That, sir, was in August of 2011. We, sir, are in March of 2013 - and that is 20 months later. And the implementation is the issue here.

And it is inescapable as a problem, sir, because just by this one example, we touch the lives of countless Barbadians playing a role in the cultural and creative industries - and we all know the several subsectors that they touch. And the empowerment of those persons who, as has been said during the course of this debate, depend on the government to facilitate them via legislative intervention or other forms of intervention of a fiscal nature to make sure, sir, that they can earn a livelihood in Barbados.

Now, as I said, sir, I have no doubt that the government can crystallise useful policy. At page 72 of the same budget, sir, the Minister of Finance said, Mr. Speaker, given the diffidence of our commercial banking sector to finance enterprises in the creative economy, especially as it relates to working capital, the Government of Barbados will provide, by way of a government-backed guarantee, a facility to provide for the borrowing of \$50 million in amounts of \$10 million every year for the next five years starting in 2012, to support this mechanism. And these resources will go directly to support the promotional marketing distribution efforts outside of Barbados for Barbadian musicians, Barbadian artists, designers and chefs. Further details will be enunciated at a later date.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there can be no quarrel in the world with that. In my judgment - I can't speak for everybody here - but in my judgment I think, sir, that the creative industries is a compelling and attractive sector, that it represents in a real way a new economy in Barbados. It represents in a real way, sir, the future of foreign exchange earning for micro, small and medium enterprises in this country. It therefore cries out for the kind of financing that the Minister of Finance has talked about.

Now, what I have been unable to find - and as I said, I don't come to this place to be churlish - what I have been unable to find is any evidence that suggests that this programme today has been implemented and that the funds are attainable by practitioners, whether they be the chefs, the artists, the designers, the musicians, whosoever, sir, that they are intended to benefit. And that is the difficulty, sir. Now, the Minister of Finance has a right of reply in this debate and I would want, sir, to throw to him the invitation that he speak to this and measures of a related type. Because as I'm saying, sir, even if this has been implemented - and as I say, I can find no evidence that it has, but I can't stand here and say categorically and without equivocation that it has not - the point is, sir, that there is clear evidence in the Barbados economy of today that there are opportunities that have been discussed ad nauseam, but that we have to come to the point of implementation.

That is not a partisan point, sir. That is a point that says that the Barbadian public out there, who in their wisdom created a virtual dead heat in this House, are saying to us that we have to work together to make sure that obstacles and hurdles and impediments to their development are removed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, sir, while I am there, I perhaps should also direct your attention, sir, to another matter which I also think cries out for some attention. And it is again turning on the same point of implementation. Now, in a very tastefully described budget on June 26, 2012 - this one is entitled 'To Promote, Protect and Procure' - the Minister of Finance raised an issue which again, in my judgment, is invaluable. He teased us, sir, yesterday by introducing into the debate language which causes one to believe that there will be fundamental restructuring regarding the arrangements at statutory boards. But to that end, sir, he was specific only to the extent that he remained vague.

In this budget, sir, in 2012, the Minister of Finance said - and again, this I agree with wholeheartedly - that we cannot afford to delay much needed investments in energy efficiency, food production and upgrades of hotel plant. The traditional financial institutions are not providing the financing that is required. We cannot wait on international capital. We must act now to secure our own future in Barbados. And then he proposed the following: to undertake an initial public offering of 30 per cent of the shares of Grantley Adams International Airport Inc., the oil company, the Barbados Port Authority, and the listing of these companies on the Barbados Stock Exchange. And he went on to say, sir, that over the next few months evaluation of the entities would be undertaken and the initial public offering process initiated.

Now, Mr. Speaker, sir, again, in the context of a government which has been saying that they are borrowing to pay public servants, in the context of a government which is haemorrhaging in terms of its expenditures and which is not meeting its revenue targets, then a policy of this nature becomes interesting and useful. But, sir, we have to have an update - and this was ten months ago. The first opportunity to address the nation on this matter is the estimates debate that began yesterday. And I therefore feel, sir, that it is remiss of the Minister of Finance to omit - to omit - to speak to an issue of that nature.

AN HON. MEMBER: I don't remember. Just a minute. You quoted the budget from last year. You didn't mention the page. Could we have the page?

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: The budget for last year is page 70 - I believe it is 72, sir. Page 72. And this one - for last year 2012 - is page 87. And the one, sir, before - 72. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, sir, the point that I'm making is that I think it is a very useful thing that the Minister of Finance bring us up to date with this initiative. Again, I personally, sir - I can't speak for everybody else - but I have no quarrel with the substance of the initiative. I think the intervention, sir, would have been a good one had it been done. But we now, as a country, need to hear from the government as to what stage this particular type of intervention is at. And to fail to give an update on those matters, sir, is essentially to create a crisis of confidence in persons who are, one, directly employed in the area, and two, potential investors in the areas in which the offering might be made.

Now again, Mr. Speaker, sir, there's another issue which is tangential to that because it is all about the raising of revenue for the government. And yesterday I suffered the misfortune of being in here to hear one who acts as Prime Minister from time to time charged as being irresponsible. An observation made by the Leader of the Opposition, sir, which really and truly is just about realism - an invitation for us to take our heads out of the sand and to confront the reality of the time.

It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, sir, that in 2011 the Central Bank of Barbados issued a board paper in which they say that there is a reluctance of banks to increase their exposure to government paper even though domestic liquidity remains high. And they went further, sir, and pointed out that it was in August of 2011 that one treasury bill tender was undersubscribed by as much as \$75 million and the Bank had to step in in order to avoid overt problems. That is the language of the Central Bank, sir. That's not the language of anybody in the Barbados Labour Party. Now what we are attempting to bring across to the government is that when one is served with those types of signals then it is necessary and prudent to take heed of them. And that, sir,

is as far as I wish to go at this stage with respect to the question of the first observation that I wanted to make.

Now, Mr. Speaker, sir, the second perspective I wanted to share with this chamber is one which has caused me some concern for a little while. Barbados, Mr. Speaker, is an economy which sees 70 per cent of its business being done in the context of domestic commerce - 70 per cent of its GDP in the context of domestic commerce. That means, sir, that we buy and sell from each other as the primary activity in the economy of Barbados. It tells me, Mr. Speaker, sir, that we are more consumption oriented than we are investment oriented.

I agree 100 per cent with the Minister of Finance that Barbados, if we are to seriously speak the language of restructuring, then, sir, we have to do so urgently. I think he made that point. But I also want to say, sir, that we have to do so holistically. This economy - and in my judgment, Mr. Speaker, sir - the question of restructuring in this economy cannot seriously be undertaken if we do not address the issue of limited access to adequate funding for entities which are prepared to invest in the new key sectors which the government has indicated are to be the driving, determining parts of the economy into the future.

You can't have on one hand an inability to raise adequate financing and then on the other hand expect that you're going to get the investment buy-in that you want for the new sectors that you're preparing to roll out. Those sectors are agriculture, alternative energy, the creative industries, Mr. Speaker, sir, information technology. I will be the first to agree with these as being all key, but they have a common feature running through them. In fact, sir, they have two common features running through them. First, most of the players, sir, will be small. In fact worse than small - micro, small and medium enterprises in the cultural industries. A lot of the practitioners, sir, are one and two person entities. Micro businesses. You will have as well, sir, the fact that these new areas are high risk in terms of their investment profile and therefore they're not going to attract the support, or easily attract the support, of the commercial banks in Barbados which are notoriously conservative. So therefore, sir, we're going to face a situation in which there is an acute or severe shortage of access to investment capital on the part of the same enterprises that we are hoping will invest in the new areas of economic activity that we are preparing to enrol.

Now, Mr. Speaker, sir, as I said, I can only share perspective. My judgement on the matter is that it is incumbent on the government, given that reality, to work assiduously through the Ministry of Commerce. It can't only be the Ministry of Commerce alone, sir. You have to hold hands with the private sector in the exercise and to build out, sir, to the fullest capacity a junior stock market in Barbados. The high risk profile of the areas in which we're

inviting investment, the small size of the companies, the undercapitalisation of small enterprises will not allow them to access funds on the major stock market. But Mr. Speaker, sir, if they are not going to access financing by way of borrowing easily, then the only way they're going to get the financing necessary to do the investment that we want them to do - to build out the economy that we want built out - is if, sir, they're able to get equity investment. And to do that we have to have the stock exchange facility in order to facilitate that. And that is a perspective, sir, which again I would wish to share with this chamber and offer it for honourable members to chew upon.

Now, Mr. Speaker, sir, the third perspective is one that I think should concern us all deeply. I do not come from a school of thought which says that because I pick up an estimates book and I identify a cut in a particular sector at a particular time, that means that all is awry and the end of the world has come. I don't come from that school of thought. I fully appreciate that there can be and should be efficiencies built into the budgeting process and that, as the member for St. James South has said, it is important, sir, as part of budgeting in small open economies that we try to do this exercise in as economically practical a way as possible. But sir, the estimates must also tell a tale of policy priorities for any government. That is true of this side. When we're in government, it's true of all governments. You pick up the estimates and when you go through them systematically they should tell you a tale of government's policy priorities.

If I were asked today, sir, to identify those areas which I would wish to target for first emphasis - the low-lying fruit where I can get an early harvest - my feeling is, Mr. Speaker, sir, that I would be saying that those that identify good foreign exchange earning potential should be the ones we should go after. I would advise, sir, that government promotes and unleashes the high export potential of indigenous Barbadian services and that we do everything to capitalise investment in that sector - small, micro, medium-sized service enterprises. But Mr. Speaker, sir, when I look at the pattern of emphasis across this government's life - and this government can't treat its life as having no beginning because the election took place yesterday - this government has been in office now for close to six years. And the reality is, Mr. Speaker, sir, that in 2009 \$20 million was being devoted to the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation. Yes, \$20 million. By 2011, Invest Barbados - by 2011, sir, two years later, that had been cut to \$12 million. In these estimates, sir, it is now \$4.5 million. That's not building in efficiencies; that goes beyond efficiencies. That is, sir, essentially savagely cutting what I perceive to be a critical sectoral support to services development in Barbados.

And Mr. Speaker, sir, over a period of nine to 13 - four years - we have lost \$16 million in development

assistance to a sector that should be exporting services in Barbados and building up the capacity of indigenous Barbadian enterprises to export services competitively in this region, in this hemisphere, sir, and across the world in all four modes of service supply. I am going to hear, Mr. Speaker, sir, that it was moved and that the indigenous service export division of Barbados - Invest Barbados - was moved. But it was moved, Mr. Speaker, sir, until July of 2012, no big lot of fanfare, but it didn't escape me that it was moved. I shall preface my remarks by going to 2009 and coming right back up. But if you're going to argue that it's moved, Mr. Speaker, sir, where was it moved to? It was moved to B IDC and the budget for B IDC, sir, is in the same type of shape. I will be the last person, Mr. Speaker, sir, I will be the last person to be urging anyone to go there if I was the honourable member on that side.

The reality is, Mr. Speaker, sir, that in 2009 they were getting \$23 million at the B IDC and there was no services export division attached at that time. In 2012, \$18 million, sir, and there was no services division.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please, Members, please. I call for order, please.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: I'm obliged. Thank you. In 2012, sir, there was \$18 million offered at B IDC and there was no services division attached to it. And this year, sir, we are down to \$16 million. So that, sir, with a services division attached, with more work to do, with more building of capacity to undertake, sir, with the challenge that Barbados must lead itself out of this recession by way of internationalising the domestic indigenous service platform - Mr. Speaker, sir, we have less money in the vote and that is the problem that I have, sir.

With these estimates we should, Mr. Speaker, be at a stage where we could be speaking to all the young people in Barbados who are now lying on a block - the ones who the honourable member takes delight in saying can cut grass in perpetuity. We should be telling them, sir, that NVQ training is available, sir, at every single school in Barbados. Trinidad and Jamaica have passed the pilot stage for doing national vocational qualifications, sir, since 2008. We are at a stage, sir, where we have - I believe, and I'm speaking subject to correction only to the extent that it might be more than - it might not be more than five. We have three or four schools in Barbados which are currently doing NVQ as a pilot. It should be across the board. That is how, sir, we then build out the capacity to export services across this region. Fellows who are welders, people who are doing every possible craft known to man and skills. But sir, we are not there. And the challenge for us, sir, is how do we get there?

The last thing I want to say in closing, sir, in the two and a half minutes left is, sir, that I think that one of the key

things this economy must benefit from is fairness and transparency. We all know - let us not pretend that we are unaware - new entrants into this marketplace in the telecommunications sector and the distributive commercial sector have come here in recent times, sir, from outside of Barbados and have access, better terms of access, to the Barbados marketplace than have Barbadian-born and bred businessmen in competing sectors. And I think, sir, that it is a wrong thing to have an unequal playing field, to have two different rules in one marketplace. The honourable Minister of Finance is as knowledgeable - well, almost as knowledgeable - in international trade matters as he who now speaks to you, sir. And he should therefore know that it is wrong for this country's indigenous service providers to have to accept two sets of rules - one set of rules for people who come in to visit Barbados and compete against them, while they cannot access the same concessions on the same lovely and lavish terms that are being offered to non-nationals of this country, sir. It could not happen in the international arena. There would be a clear-cut case for somebody to be in court by now. And I am asking the government, sir, for the future, not to recommit itself to this kind of erroneous path. I honestly believe, sir, that the government has already exposed itself to substantial liability for the legal actions which are probably going to ensue. I happen to know that many entities have written to the Ministry of Finance and have, according to them, not yet gotten the benefit of any response on the matter.

But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, sir, that there has in Barbados to be a level playing field for all. You can't have two and three sets of rules and cherry-picking who benefits and who does not benefit. Mr. Speaker, sir, with those remarks I want to thank you for your indulgence.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the honourable member for Christ Church West Central. Thank you very much.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join this debate and to support the appropriation bill before this House. And before making my substantive contribution, Mr. Speaker, I too would like to express my appreciation to the constituents of Christ Church West Central for having me once again the confidence to represent their interests in this august chamber and to continue to act on their behalf in the pursuit of the developmental goals of this government. I want to briefly say, Mr. Speaker, that I have also been very fortunate to be speaking at this time in the debate because I would have been able to hear quite a number of the contributions from the other side. Of course, the last speaker who would have spoken made his contribution in an effort, of course, to substantially distance himself from the contribution of the Leader of the Opposition.

And it became elusively clear to me that the script which - [Interruption.]

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. I remember the honourable member is misleading the House, Mr. Speaker, sir. I spoke, sir, and not only did I not attempt to distance myself from that which the Leader of the Opposition said, but I supported. Not only did I not attempt to distance myself, sir, but I supported.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: The member has the right to interpret what I am saying. I believe he will rise several times as I make my contribution. But when I heard his contribution, I considered that it was a clear attempt to distance himself from the contribution of the Leader of the Opposition. And of course, he joined at least another member on that side that demonstrated that they were not prepared to follow the script which would have been written by the Member for St. Michael North East and certainly shared with her comrades in terms of the content of their respective contributions.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that my disappointment so far in this debate has more to do with what I would have expected coming from the benches of the opposition. This debate comes at a very important time in our political history in the sense that this is our first estimates debate following a very keenly contested general election, an election in which both parties presented to Barbados manifestos which sought to outline their particular various paths to development which they intended to follow.

And I want to refer very quickly to some of the things that the honourable member for St. James Central would have raised in his attempt, I believe, to demonstrate that he wanted to offer some suggestions to this government for digestion. And in doing so he departed from his other colleagues because I heard none other than dialogue and commentary on matters of serious economic and social import without recognising that the role of the opposition in this House is not only to make passing observations. Indeed, I continue to hear from the Leader of the Opposition a call on this government to establish a select committee to allow the opposition to caucus with this government and to help us, in her words, to plot the economic path for Barbados. And without recognising that the opportunity and the time to tell Barbados of the ideas and the various alternative strategies are really on this floor during the debate. And it cannot be that the opposition sees its only role is to come in here and to flag and to seek to create a kind of an environment in which they seek to destroy the policies of the government.

I must say that I heard at least one member of the opposition who clearly moved away from that approach and I want to commend him for that because that is really our purpose in this House. The honourable member for St. James Central made the point that he felt that we are at a time when the youth of Barbados should be told that they can access NVQs at every school and that it is critical for

them in terms of our move towards incorporating the youth in terms of the creative sector, et cetera. Of course, nowhere in their manifesto, which was just printed a few days before polling day, do you see any reference to this very miraculous idea of incorporating the youth of Barbados into such a quote unquote progressive strategy.

Now I want the honourable member to understand and know that the few observations he made of some kind of purposeful content demonstrated that he had read the Democratic Labour Party manifesto before coming into the chamber and that he read it and he was able to regurgitate some progressive policies which of course are nowhere to be found in the body of their manifesto, which I have not had an opportunity to read. But we are currently, Mr. Speaker, we are currently poised to build another community college to take our young people further in the area of technical and vocational study and certainly along the path that the honourable member believes that we should go.

Well, the manifesto, of course, has not yet been made a document of the House. I am not sure that I should do it on their behalf, but seeing that I refer to it, Mr. Speaker, I make it a document of the House on their behalf. I have a funny feeling, Mr. Speaker, that they did not want to make it a document of the House because they are now ashamed of its content. A very poorly drafted document, a very poorly drafted document that does not connect to any of the critical issues facing Barbados today.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable member for St. James Central did refer to his disappointment in relation to the cultural industries. I really thought that if there was anybody or any Member of Parliament to speak with any conviction on the cultural industries bill or the creative sector, it ought not to be any of the members on the other side. They spent, Mr. Speaker, in excess of ten years trying to come up with a very poor draft of a cultural industries bill. They now refer to it as a cultural and creative industry bill which is designed to create some tax breaks for artists and musicians. We have gone past that. We have gone past that. We have spent the time to consult very widely with all of the creatives in Barbados to come up with a bill that will not only revolutionise the creative sector in Barbados, but will take the cultural industry sector into the realm of a full-fledged industry for the first time in the history of Barbados.

That is where we are at, Mr. Speaker, because the honourable Minister of Finance spent a long time in his contribution making the point that this economy, because of the failure of the Barbados Labour Party in the past to restructure this economy, the initiatives which have been put into these estimates are clearly designed to reconstruct the economy of Barbados and to pave a road and a path by which we will diversify the economy of Barbados for the

first time. After five years of government, after setting a foundation, a clear foundation, because we did not enter this parliament without having a roadmap as to where we were going to take Barbados. And one of those roadmaps had to do with the vision we had for transforming the economy based on the creative sector. And we felt that underpinning that had to be a carefully crafted and carefully drafted cultural industry development bill which the cabinet of Barbados has already approved.

We have taken the time - we have taken the time - because when I assumed responsibility for the Ministry of Culture and I discovered a draft of a cultural industries bill which they had permitted us to pass, I asked the question whether the sectors and the interest groups were consulted. I was appalled that none of the sectors in Barbados whose businesses, whose interests touch and concern the creative sector were consulted on that poorly drafted bill. And we have taken the time to do the consultation and we are determined very shortly to bring that bill before this House for debate. And I will wait for the opportunity to debate in more detail that bill which we are bringing to this House.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear - because the honourable member spent the night reading some paragraphs of the budget, I believe, of 2011 - but it is beyond doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the reason why we have been very careful in these estimates to not only reflect on the past in terms of the lack of clearly defined structures in our Barbados economy that connected with the global economy, was that in order to even start on a path of reconstruction, you had to revisit some of those critical problems left behind by the Barbados Labour Party government. And it is clear - I have to - because it is clear I want to read something too. Because if the honourable member for St. James Central can read something, I can read something too. And I read it because it is very critical to explain why we are at the path we are at.

I refer to the 2006 IMF country report because I have said in this House before that the Democratic Labour Party government has been trying to brag for years of a growth rate, an average growth rate of around 3 per cent. In other words, they left an economy that was based on growth of 3 per cent on average. And I have charged the Democratic Labour Party with having presented a false position, an artificial growth rate that was based only on foreign direct inflows. And the 2006 IMF country report is very clear on what was happening in the Barbados economy. And while they were given a false picture of growth based only on foreign direct inflows, the minute you had a global recession, our economic weaknesses would have been exposed. And that is why we have had now to pause and to reflect on a restructuring of our economy. In other words, it cannot be business as usual. But the corrective measures are being put in place now.

I thought that I would have heard some support for our quest to move towards alternative energy as being one of the critical growth paths that we have to embark on. I did not hear that. So, Mr. Speaker, my disappointment, though, is understandable. And therefore, I did not expect to hear any real serious contributions from the members of the opposition or any serious ideas. I heard about a lot of tears of regret about what did not happen in somebody's constituency, what roads were not mended, how much was spent on summer camps in terms of catering and flat screen TVs and all kinds of things that bear no direct relationship to what is happening in Barbados at this time.

And I want to very briefly, Mr. Speaker, speak to some of the initiatives which of course we are following within the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth. Because if ever there was a contradiction in relation to the positive efforts being made by this government in relation to entrepreneurship, job creation for our young people, the transformation of the creative sector, and of course, ensuring that young people can be empowered in this country - what I have to say now would certainly add light to what is being created by the Barbados Labour Party contributors so far, that nothing is being done in Barbados to empower the very critical sectors which fall under my responsibility.

And I want to refer to some, Mr. Speaker, because last year I announced a programme called Endless Possibilities, a programme which was targeted at disadvantaged young people - many of them who, as they say, boys on the blocks, girls on the blocks - but disadvantaged young people who were having difficulty accessing jobs both in the public and private sector. And therefore, in response to that, we launched a programme called Endless Possibilities, a job training, mentorship and job placement programme. That programme trained young people in the rudiments of jobs in terms of what they had to do to apply for jobs, what to do within the workplace. And we partnered with a number of private sector and public sector entities and we have rolled that programme out in various cohorts of between 30 to 40 young people each cohort. And we were able to join with the private sector in particular. And I want to certainly on this occasion thank and commend the efforts of those private sector managers and CEOs who mentored those young people in this programme. And I can say to you, of the three cohorts of that programme today, we have had some 80 per cent of those young people being placed in full-time employment.

So impressed was the cabinet of Barbados with that programme that we have now received instructions to put in place a national strategic plan to ensure that programme can be enlarged and redone to the benefit of more Barbadians, more young people.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the YES programme - Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme - which the Democratic Labour Party usually come in here and say, well, we started that - but we have taken that programme and we have transformed it in terms of its effectiveness, its usefulness. And I can say to you that programme will be further invigorated and transformed to bring about the benefits in terms of entrepreneurship for our young people. And we continue every year since we have been in office, we have been able through that programme to grow significantly new businesses in Barbados. And we have been able, Mr. Speaker, to place young people at the cutting edge of entrepreneurship. And therefore I have given a clear mandate to the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme to expand that programme so that it can benefit even more young people.

And we will create partnerships - we will create partnerships, Mr. Speaker - with all of the relevant agencies in Barbados. We have done so. We have done so, Mr. Speaker, with the Youth Business Trust, and we will continue to reach out to our young people to bring them to the forefront in terms of entrepreneurial development.

We are also going to be targeting, Mr. Speaker, the capacity of youth. And I want to say that particularly in relation to young females, the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme will target in particular young females to ensure that the percentage of young women involved in incorporating and starting new businesses can be significantly increased in Barbados. Those are the solid programmes that we are doing, Mr. Speaker, because the YES Juniors programme - because when we talk about entrepreneurship and growing entrepreneurs in Barbados, you cannot reduce it to talk. You have to start it from the primary schools. You have to start it from the primary schools.

And therefore the YES Juniors programme which is currently in the primary school system will be enlarged. We've also committed ourselves to starting a cooperative, Mr. Speaker, a cooperative designed to provide additional financing to young entrepreneurs in Barbados. And I have asked the youth entrepreneurs, the programme managers, to discuss this idea with the credit unions of Barbados because we recognise that the availability of seed capital and financing is something that we have to pay more attention to. But I believe that a useful partnership with the credit unions of Barbados is the way to go in relation to creating the kind of availability for financing of entrepreneurship, particularly among young people in Barbados.

One of the things that we did, Mr. Speaker, over the past five years when it comes to youth development and planning for young people was not to follow the path of the Barbados Labour Party and only throw at young people

various gimmicks and non-essentials. We have put in place - and we brought to this House to debate - a national youth policy which of course placed the Barbados Labour Party during the campaign at a significant disadvantage because they could not clearly articulate any policy of any merit that was designed to cater to the young people of Barbados. But we have in place a national youth policy and I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have started to implement that national youth policy. We have already put in place a very high-level interministerial committee comprised of permanent secretaries across some of the most critical ministries and they have started the work of coordinating, helping us to coordinate the implementation of the national youth policy in Barbados.

And that national youth policy contains all of the key areas of intervention - entrepreneurship, dealing with the whole issue of gangs, youth empowerment - that were written by the same young people in Barbados. So we are not reinventing anything. We have gone to the young people of Barbados, we have caucused with them, we have taken them into our confidence and we have a national youth policy which speaks to their dreams and their aspirations and that is how we are going to work on the whole question of ensuring that our young people are appropriately developed.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Honourable Member for the City spoke to the whole question of addressing poverty in Bridgetown and of course some other members on the other side have spoken to addressing the issue of poverty in Barbados. What was missing from the contributions from the other side continues to be any serious proposals, any alternative strategies designed to attack this issue of poverty, particularly among young people in Barbados. And of course many of them refuse to give the Government the credit for having spearheaded and piloted one of the most innovative projects in Barbados, which is the inscription of historic Bridgetown and its Garrison. And now we are reaping the benefits of that because the Honourable Minister of Tourism can speak to you in terms of the attraction to Barbados by those visitors who are in search of heritage sites. And I want to say that the inscription of historic Bridgetown and its Garrison is a pivotal plank of our cultural heritage policy. And the issue of poverty eradication, particularly in the city, will be one of the key areas of intervention upon which we will build this world heritage property that we have.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, and to certainly offer the other side some hope because as I heard them speak most of them did not have any hope that their policies could do anything - and therefore because of the absence of any kind of alternative strategies, I believe that they are comfortable in relying on the policies of the Democratic Labour Party. They may not want to see it, but they have not even made their manifesto. But I want to say,

Mr. Speaker, in the short five minutes that I have - because I hope that as we get into the Heads I will have a much longer time to go into some details - but through the Commission of Pan African Affairs, Mr. Speaker, we have put in place a programme, a very ambitious programme that has been designed to deal with some of the very important issues affecting both the inner city and other parts of Barbados.

This programme, which is called the SERIOUS Programme - Social Identity Renewal and Integrated Upliftment Strategy for Barbados - a national interministerial and interagency programme which is being funded to the tune of \$1.9 million. Mr. Speaker, the initial funding of this programme and the expected income streams to be generated from this programme will help to propel the programme in the future. But what we are saying, Mr. Speaker, is that we want to create at least three community-based organisations in the city, the north, and the south of the island, and we have taken on board the model of the Pine-less Creative Workshop because we believe that there are ingredients of that model that we can borrow on. But that programme will create national leaders in Barbados, particularly from those disadvantaged communities. And we are going to create a commercial entity to allow them to use their creative skills to tap into not only the regional but international markets. And we are going to work with them, Mr. Speaker, to take advantage of opportunities in relation to historic Bridgetown and its Garrison.

That is a policy initiative which is informed by the National Youth Policy in relation to employment, and at least two innovation centres will be created in Barbados as well. We will also assist in establishing or building 500 new businesses or projects that employ participating artists, youth and community participants in the year of festival, drum, manufacture, alternative energy, agriculture, craft, the creative industries, heritage, tour guiding and of course the whole idea of creating other innovative projects. That too is a part of the national youth policy which relates to employment and the empowering of young businesses on a yearly basis. There will also be ongoing training in core values and leadership, community development and of course HIV/AIDS prevention. This programme is a partnership with the National HIV/AIDS Commission and will be financed as part of the World Bank programme - that is designed, Mr. Speaker, to provide some of the same incentives, some of the same areas of assistance to our young people.

I believe the Honourable Member for St. Michael East would have spoken to this, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the course of this term there will be a number of strategies designed to position a number of our agencies to deliver on the goals that we have. And those strategies will see, Mr. Speaker, the restructuring of agencies such as the National

Cultural Foundation, which will be restructured to become more relevant to where we are taking the whole question of the development of culture from the community level. The proposed Cultural Industry Development Bill will focus our attention on the creative sector and growing the cultural industries and will put in place a specific body, a specific corporate entity to monitor that development and to obviously work with our creatives and so on.

But Mr. Speaker, in bringing my presentation to an end, I want to say that the business of expansion and diversifying our economy cannot be based on traditional industries. And we recognise that. And that is why the whole focus of this Appropriation Bill has been on creating new avenues for economic and social development in Barbados. We have already examined many of the issues which we have to examine in relation to restructuring the economy. And we are saying that this opportunity that we have to actually look at new areas of investment and attracting new areas of economic and social development must be one in which we do not see it based on a partisan position. This is one in which we want to see the Barbados Labour Party reaching across the divide as they are asking to join with the Government in this very innovative strategy - a strategy that, well, they did not follow. We are now poised to follow it and therefore we believe that this is the path on which we can strengthen our economic pillars.

We believe that in the critical area of culture, sports and youth that we will be able to generate that much-needed value added to strengthen our economy and to create the opportunities that our young people in particular yearn for. But we must understand that we have to pursue new business in order to achieve the kind of economic growth that we wish to achieve in this country. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you. Thank you.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The question that the House be suspended until 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2013 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

CONTENTS

ORDER NO. 1 – APPROPRIATION BILL, 2013.....1

Mr. D. G. Sutherland, 1, 4, 5; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, 4;
 Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, 4; Hon. S. D. Blackett, 5; Mr. E. G.
 Hinkson, 9, 11; Hon. C. P. Sinckler, 11; Mrs. M-J. M.
 Thompson, 13; Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic, 14, 16; Mr. J. D.
 Paul, 16.

RESUMPTION

ORDER NO. 1 (resumed)

Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, 20; Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe, 25;
 Mr. G. W. Payne, 28, 31; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, 31;
 Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, 32; Miss C. Y. Forde, 35; Hon. D.
 O’N. Inniss, 39.

RESUMPTION

ORDER NO. 1 (resumed)

Mr. T. A. Prescod, 43, 45, 46; Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, 46;
 Mr. K. D. Symmonds, 50, 52, 54, 55; Hon. S. A. Lashley,
 54, 55.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BLACKETT, Hon. S. D. (St. Michael Central)
BOSTIC, Lt. Col. J. D.
BOYCE, Hon. J. D. E. (Christ Church South)
BRADSHAW, Miss S. J. O. (St. Michael South East)
BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. D. (St. Philip South)
FORDE, Miss C. Y. (St. Thomas)
HINKSON, Mr. E. G. (St. James North)
INNISS, Hon. D. O’N. (St. James South)
KELLMAN, Hon. D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. S. A. (Christ Church West Central)
LOWE, Dr. the Hon. D. S. (Christ Church East)
PAUL, Mr. J. D. (St. Michael West Central)
PAYNE, Mr. G. W. (St. Andrew)
PRESCOD, Mr. T. A. (St. Michael East)
SINCKLER, Hon. C. P. (St. Michael North West)
SUTHERLAND, Mr. D. G. (St. George South)
SYMMONDS, Mr. K. D. (St. James Central)
THOMPSON, Mrs. M-J. M. (St. John)

DISCLAIMER. *This transcript was prepared with the assistance of artificial intelligence tools and is provided for reference only. It has not been reviewed, verified or approved by the Hansard Department of the Parliament of Barbados and does not constitute an official parliamentary record. It may contain errors or omissions, including inaccuracies in wording or speaker identification. For authoritative quotations or confirmation of proceedings, consult the official Hansard record when available.*

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 2013–2018 Parliament.

Q1. Front matter. This is a resumed Sitting of the debate begun on Monday, March 18, 2013. The source does not record the PRESENT list; the Members listed are those identified from the record, and the time of resumption, 10.00 a.m., is as stated in the source. Please supply from the Votes and Proceedings.

Q2. Throughout. The bracketed time-checks in the source are out of sequence (for example '[12.30 a.m.]', '[1.00 a.m.]' and '[2.00 a.m.]' in each of the morning, afternoon and evening periods) and have been omitted.

Q3. Order No. 1. The heading is taken from Mr. SPEAKER's statement that the House was 'on Order Number One' and from Members' references to the Appropriation Bill for 2013. Please confirm the number and title from the Order Paper.

Q4. Order No. 1, Mr. D. G. Sutherland. The source reads 'the member for St. Michael North West, in her eloquent speech yesterday' (captions 'St. Michael Norfis'). The Member for St. Michael North West, the Minister of Finance, is a man; the speech described, on tourism and international business, was that of the Leader of the Opposition, Member for St. Michael North East, and the reference has been corrected. The source also gives a Central Bank press release of 'December 2030'; left as recorded. Please confirm both.

Q5. Order No. 1, during Mr. D. G. Sutherland. The interjection is headed 'HON. MEMBER FOR ST. LUCY' in the source. Mr. Sutherland had just referred to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, and the speaker denies having said what was attributed to him; printed under Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN. Please confirm.

Q6. Order No. 1, Hon. S. D. Blackett. The source gives Mr. SPEAKER's call only as 'Thank you' and begins the Minister's speech 'Michael Central. Thank you very much'. The call is printed as 'Honourable Member for St. Michael Central'. 'SMS debate' in the source is printed 'Estimates debate'. Please confirm.

Q7. Order No. 1, Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic. Headed 'HON. PATRICK M. T. TODD' in the source; he was not a Member of the 2013–2018 House. Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for the City, the speaker delivers a maiden

speech on behalf of the City of Bridgetown, and Hon. D. O'N. Inniss later refers to the 'sober maiden speech' of the Member for the City of Bridgetown, so both parts of the speech are printed under Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC. The words 'continued the work', headed Mr. SPEAKER in the source, complete the Member's sentence and are restored to it. Please confirm.

Q8. Order No. 1, Mr. J. D. Paul. Headed 'HON. G. P. IAN GOODING-EDGHILL' in the source; he was not a Member of the 2013–2018 House. Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for St. Michael West Central, the speaker thanks the constituents of St. Michael West Central, and the captions name Mr. James D. Paul; printed under Mr. J. D. PAUL. Please confirm.

Q9. Order No. 1, Miss C. Y. Forde. The source has Miss Forde refer to 'the other member for St. Michael North West' as having said that poverty is a state of mind and as having expertise in agriculture. It was Mr. J. D. Paul, Member for St. Michael West Central, who said in this debate that 'poverty is a state of mind', and both references are printed as the Member for St. Michael West Central. Her reference to 'the honourable member for St. Michael North West Central' in the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (captions 'St. Michael North ... Secular north') is printed as the Member for St. Philip North, the new Minister of Transport and Works. Please confirm.

Q10. Order No. 1, second suspension. The source does not record the motion to suspend after Hon. D. O'N. Inniss's speech; it gives only Mr. SPEAKER putting the question that the House be suspended until 5.30 p.m. The mover is not identified and the time of suspension is not recorded. Please supply.

Q11. Order No. 1, Mr. T. A. Prescod. The source reads 'the honourable member from St. Michael West – angel from West Angel' (captions 'St. Michael's. West angel'). The reference is to the statement that poverty is a state of mind, made by Mr. J. D. Paul, Member for St. Michael West Central, and has been printed accordingly. Please confirm.

Q12. Order No. 1, during Mr. K. D. Symmonds. The request for a page reference ('You quoted the budget from last year. You didn't mention the page') is headed only 'HON. MEMBER' in the source and is printed under AN HON. MEMBER. The source then records 'Order please, members, please' and Mr. SPEAKER's 'Mr. Speaker, South Central. I call for order', possibly addressed to the Member for St. Michael South Central; printed as Mr. SPEAKER's call to order. Please identify the Member and confirm.

Q13. Order No. 1, Hon. S. A. Lashley. Headed 'HON. ADRIAN R. FORDE (Christ Church West Central)' in the source and printed there under the name of Miss C. Y. Forde. Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for Christ Church West Central, the speaker refers to his Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, and the captions name Hon. Stephen A. Lashley; printed under Hon. S. A. LASHLEY. Please confirm.

Q14. Order No. 1, during Hon. S. A. Lashley. The point of order (captions 'What's the point of all?') is headed 'SPEAKER UNCERTAIN' in the source. The speaker denies having distanced himself from the Leader of the Opposition, which Hon. S. A. Lashley had just said of the last speaker, Mr. K. D. Symmonds; printed under Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS. Please confirm.

Q15. Suspension. The source closes with '[THE SITTING WAS SUSPENDED UNTIL TUESDAY AT 10.00 A.M.]', but the motion and Mr. SPEAKER's question were to suspend until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow, Wednesday, March 20, 2013. The time of suspension is not recorded. Please confirm.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly resumed at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 19, 2013, the Sitting of Monday, March 18, 2013 having been suspended, with Mr. SPEAKER presiding, and continued the debate on Order No. 1, the Appropriation Bill, 2013. Mr. D. G. Sutherland spoke on roads in St. George South and the Ministry of Transport and Works, saying that highway maintenance and construction was down from \$50 million to \$46 million, that \$1 million had been allocated for bridge repairs with only \$76 000 in the forward estimate, and asking which roadworks the \$80 million public-private partnership would cover. He said there were 100 buses or fewer on the road; Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, on a point of order, said some 193 buses were available for service. Hon. D. St.E. Kellman interjected to deny Mr. Sutherland's account of his remarks on backyard slaughter. Hon. S. D. Blackett, Minister of Social Care, described the IC Bridge pilot project targeting 30 households, one from each constituency, the welfare-to-

work programme and the renaming of the Welfare Department, and gave allocations of some \$18 million to the Welfare Department and \$11 million to the National Assistance Board.

In his maiden speech Mr. E. G. Hinkson said the Estimates offered little hope to the unemployed, estimating unemployment in St. James North at over 25 per cent and around 35 per cent among young people, said that 1 000 new jobs from a \$600 million stimulus package would be less than 1 per cent of employment, and criticised the allocation of \$70 million to the Cave Hill campus; Hon. C. P. Sinckler rose to correct him on the payment of reverse tax credits. Mrs. M-J. M. Thompson supported the stimulus package, citing housing at Exmouth and Grotto, the cruise pier, the Bay Street Marina and the \$80 million roadworks project, and called for greater productivity. Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic, in his maiden speech, said subsidies to the small business sector had been cut from \$1.3 million in 2008 to \$450 000, and called for investment in Bridgetown as a World Heritage city and a holistic approach to poverty in the urban corridor. Mr. J. D. Paul supported the Estimates and spoke on linkages between Government and the private sector, entrepreneurship, community tourism and the Youth in Agriculture programme. On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce the House was suspended until 2.00 p.m. for lunch and the official photograph of Parliament.

After the resumption Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, in her maiden speech, said tourism contributed about 15 per cent of gross domestic product and 46 per cent of foreign exchange earnings, cited a decline of 15 per cent in cruise passenger arrivals in 2012 and the closure of hotels including Almond Beach, and asked how the Barbados Tourism Authority, with \$101 000 000 budgeted, would pay creditors owed over \$36 million. Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe described the green energy programme, which he said would provide 31 per cent of power capacity and supply 43 000 homes, and defended the NEaT programme. Mr. G. W. Payne said the Minister of Finance's presentation was disconnected from the Estimates and questioned a proposed 30 per cent threshold for workers' representative bodies and the housing and road programmes; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, on a point of order, distinguished lots at \$5 and \$15 a square foot. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, Minister of Health, defended the Government's record on traffic and tourism, said \$342 000 000 was allocated to health services and confirmed the decision to build a new hospital. Miss C. Y. Forde raised roads in St. Thomas, poverty and almost \$50 million said to be owed to small businesses, and asked about chandeliers removed from Government House. Hon. D. O'N. Inniss gave current revenue of \$2.6 billion against total expenditure of \$3.8 billion, stressed business facilitation and transparency, and said fossil fuel imports had risen from about \$475 000 000 in 2007 to \$785 000 000 in 2011. The House was then suspended until 5.30 p.m.

In the evening Mr. T. A. Prescod drew on Prescod, Barrow, Grantley Adams and Marcus Garvey, rejected the view that poverty was a state of mind, and said there were over 20 000 applicants with the National Housing Corporation, questioning houses costing \$235 000 and a project cost that rose from \$18 million to \$28 million. Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, Attorney-General, spoke on crime linked to the scrap gold trade, a Law Reform Commission, 51 police recruits in training, 31 of them Barbadians, and an integrated 911 system. Mr. K. D. Symmonds argued that the Government's weakness lay in implementation, citing creative economy measures from the 2011 Budget and the

proposed initial public offering of 30 per cent of the shares of Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. from the 2012 Budget, and said the allocation to the BIDC had fallen to \$16 million. Hon. S. A. Lashley, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, said a cultural industries bill would shortly be brought to the House after consultation, and described the Endless Possibilities programme, the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme and the SERIOUS programme. On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce the House was suspended until 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2013.