
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2013 – 2018

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2015.

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, Q.C. (Speaker)

Her Honour Mrs. M-J. M. THOMPSON (Deputy Speaker)

Rt. Hon. F. J. STUART, Q.C. (Prime Minister, Minister of National Security, the Public Service and Urban Development)

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

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

Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC

Dr. M. M. AGARD

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE (Minister of Health) (Leader of the House)

Hon. R. D. JONES (Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation)

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE (Minister of Environment and Drainage)

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, J.P.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL, Q.C.

Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS (Minister of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development)

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN (Minister of Housing and Lands)

PRAYERS

Prayers were read.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning, Honourable Members. This House is now in session. Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all back from a too short but adequate break. And if looks are anything to go by, I see that you are all refreshed and ready and eager to carry on with the people's work. Mr. Clerk, I have with me the minutes of our meeting held on Tuesday, January 20, 2015.

MINUTES

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: There is one error that is to be corrected. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that those minutes be taken as read, as corrected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you. Unless there are any observations or objections, then let those minutes stand confirmed. The minutes of our meeting held on Friday, August 20, 2015 are not yet available, so that matter may be deferred.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the minutes referred to be deferred.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you. Unless there are any observations, then let those minutes be so deferred. So deferred.

PAPERS

Mr. SPEAKER: I am in receipt of the accounts and statements as prepared by the Accountant General for the months of April 2014 to March 2015.

Rt. Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the report of the Barbados National Oil Company Limited Annual Report for the year 2014.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, sir, I am commanded to lay the Land Tax Rate of Tax Order 2015, the Duties, Taxes and Other Payments Exemption (Diamonds International) Order 2015, and the Barbados Deposit Insurance Corporation Annual Report for 2014.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the National Conservation Commission Fees Regulation 2015.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Police Complaints Authority Annual Report 2014 and the Barbados Prison Service Annual Report, January 1 to December 31, 2014.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the first reading of the Latin American Development Bank Bill 2015.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to move the first reading of the National Conservation Commission Validation of Fees Bill 2015.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the first reading of the Pharmacy Amendment Bill 2015.

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. CLERK: Government Business is the order of today. Order Number 25, sir - in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, to move the second reading of the Latin American Development Bank Bill 2015.

ORDER NO. 25 – LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK BILL, 2015

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, I take this opportunity to thank you very much, and to note on the introducing of this particular bill that this is a matter that is not unfamiliar to the House of Assembly, and it is certainly not unfamiliar to Barbadians who would have been following in the last few weeks and months as the Government pursues its stated policy of exploring alternative sources of financing to assist with the development of projects, mainly infrastructural projects within Barbados. As you know, because of the stringent circumstances we have had to encounter post the 2008/2009 global recession, the financial and capital markets have not been the most accommodating to developing countries and small vulnerable economies such as Barbados in relation to the access of financing at reasonable costs. This has been compounded, of course, because we no longer enjoy the status of having investment grade in the market. And so once we want to go to market to attract financing for the development of the country, we do so at a premium - as they say in the finance language, the risk premium that you pay because of those circumstances, that is high debt and high deficits, low growth, and of course the absence of the ability to retain investment grade status.

And because of that it is incumbent on the Government, because of course development does not stop because there are economic challenges. There are still many physical, social, economic and cultural development activities that have to take place within a country. We do not put pause on our work because we are not able to enjoy certain statuses in the context of the financial capital markets. But what we have to do as a Government is be more judicious and circumspect as to where we source our financing from and at what terms. And it has been the stated policy of the Government, repeated time and time again, that one of the things that developing countries such as Barbados need to do in circumstances like these - in addition to what we have stated, that is, continue with our fiscal consolidation, protect our foreign reserves, bring our debt on a downward trajectory and try to get our general macroeconomic fundamentals going in the direction that we want - we also have, in pursuit of our development objectives, to find alternative sources of financing that are reasonable in terms of the terms and conditions attached thereto.

And in looking around for such options, as we would have stated before when we came here to seek permission

for the resources to join the Latin American bank, as we call it, CAF, and then of course to become officially members of CAF, having signed the memorandum to permit for us to become members - both of which instruments, of course, were passed by this Honourable Chamber - was to identify CAF as an institution that allows us another option for low-cost developmental financing to carry on the very important work of building out our country. It is not new to us. We know this because we have done so with the Inter-American Development Bank. We do it with the Caribbean Development Bank, and we do it to some minor extent with the World Bank. Of course, we have been graduated from IDA resources under the World Bank - what they call the concessional loans from the International Development Association, IDA. This is something that I know Barbados has been fighting for some considerable amount of time, going back to the dates of the last administration or the administration before the last one, and certainly through the last administration into this, for a re-evaluation of the basis on which these international institutions arrive at a measure to determine who should be graduated from concessional financing.

And I think a lot of that has intensified now in the last few months, of course, because of issues pertaining to the Sustainable Development Goals - what you call the post-Millennium Goals development agenda, or the new Sustainable Development Goals. But equally as well, because of the issues that confront us in relation to climate change and the climate change conundrum, that is, that we who are not the greatest polluters in the world are ending up having to spend considerable amounts of our own financing to do adaptation and mitigation efforts to protect our environment and our population from the disastrous effects of climate change, some of which we are already experiencing. We have experienced it in the Caribbean with more ferocious and impactful weather systems. We are experiencing it right now in Barbados and other parts of the region - not just Barbados, in Antigua, in Jamaica, in Guyana. The whole issue of drought, the increase in temperature levels that is impacting on our water supply, because the rainfall levels that we have seen this year have been really abysmal - by some estimates as much as 60 to 62 per cent below what would be considered to be normal for this time of the year. And the projections are that it might not, in fact, get much better than that.

So as we push forward that agenda, the door seems to be coming ajar slightly, that countries such as Barbados which are small, open and vulnerable - even though we have done reasonably well and we have been reasonably successful in advancing our economies and our societies and in the development and the quality of life and standard of living that we have - we are not there yet. We are not at developed status, whatever that may be, in terms of whose definition you are using. But we certainly are not at the stage where we can consider ourselves to be on safe ground

in relation to the ability for us to afford to our residents, on a consistent basis, a quality and standard of life that will be considered to be one of the best in the world. Now, we have done that in becoming one of the top developing countries in the world by the ratings of the United Nations Development Human Development Index. But we know that since the recession of 2008, there have been some slippages. And we can admit that in relation to what is happening not just here in Barbados, but in many countries, including many of the industrialised countries, that have had issues pertaining to their economy, high deficits, high debt, and of course the impact that has on the servicing of the social agenda.

So we believe that we will push this as we have been doing. I know the Right Honourable Prime Minister made very, very strong statements at the UN General Assembly and other places where these matters were being discussed fulsomely. I myself, in my capacity as Minister of Finance, dealing with the finance ministers at the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings, was drawn to make statements on behalf of CARICOM and on behalf of Barbados in relation to these matters. And so we will not let up, because this is a seminal, central, critical issue for us in relation to the equity of international development and finance. And so as we pursue things like what we are doing here with the CAF, we also are going to pursue that as vigorously as we can.

Now, in doing something like CAF, it gives us, as I said, an additional option for financing. It draws us into financing for specific purposes. These are for development projects that build out our infrastructure, that improve our capacity. Indeed, even though we have not yet gone to Cabinet with the final list of projects that we will want to have CAF support us in, we are looking at a number of areas - areas pertaining to water management or water resources management and the capacity for us to do that; in relation to our physical infrastructure where the road networks are concerned, in terms of the transportation needs of Barbadians to be able to traverse, as they go about their human endeavours on a daily basis, the streets and highways and byways of Barbados, to ensure that those are in a good state of repair, and also for visitors who come to Barbados. We also will be looking at both of our ports - the airport and the seaport - through which of course hundreds of thousands of persons come every year as tourists and Barbadians as regular travellers, to ensure that we can handle the capacity as we seek to build out and grow our tourism industry, but also to accommodate those Barbadians who have the fortunate privilege of being able to travel in and out of the country either on business or for pleasure.

So these are the kinds of things that we will be looking at. And then of course, sectorally in agriculture, some investments that we want to do there to assist our

colleagues in agriculture in terms of building out capacity. We of course have the sugar industry redevelopment and restructuring project that we also have to look at. I spoke about tourism as we look at our ports and so forth and so on. But there will be as well one or two social projects that will require financing. And we have always felt, across successive governments in Barbados but certainly in this Democratic Labour Party administration, that projects of an infrastructural nature should always be of the kind to attract financing that is of the most reasonable and concessional cost. We cannot have a situation where you are going to do major infrastructural projects that will last you for 20, 25, 30, 40 years and you are attracting financing at 7 and 8 and 9 per cent in terms of the cost - that is too much. It is not the type of thing we want to encourage.

And so having options like the CDB, the Caribbean Development Bank, the IDB, the Inter-American Development Bank, and now with the Latin American bank, CAF - the Latin American Development Bank - it gives us that additional option to pull ourselves out of the fairly vicious and very unpredictable wide-open private capital markets from which Barbados has been, as I said, excluded because we have been graduated from concessional financing from many of the development institutions, to find a partner that is willing to offer to Barbados a substantial amount of resources by our standards to be able to do those types of development projects that we require at good and reasonable cost. Because this means that we not only get to do the projects, we get as well to begin to lock in to our overall debt management and reduction strategy - debt reduction strategy - by pulling down the servicing costs of those loans which we contract from time to time for development purposes.

And so that is the reason why we accepted the offer to become a member of CAF, to subscribe to the shares of CAF, to have the House of Assembly reduce that agreement to domestic law, so making it of course fully legal, and now to come to the House of Assembly with this bill to allow us to legally go about the process, if we so desire, to borrow money from CAF for whatever purposes we may determine. Of course, the bill is a fairly simple bill in the sense that it does not have - it is not a whole lot of stuff in there. It is not an unfamiliar instrument either, because as I said, similar instruments exist for, say, the CDB and the Inter-American Development Bank. Indeed, if members would draw their attention to Cap. 97 - I believe it is Cap. 97B of the Laws of Barbados - which permits, similarly as we are doing here, for Barbados to borrow from the Inter-American Development Bank. So all of the \$200 million US that we have on contract from the Inter-American Development Bank is facilitated under that. And this now allows for us to facilitate our borrowings through the CAF, or the Latin American Development Bank as we call it here in the bill.

So it goes through a very simple process. Of course, the title and the interpretation clauses, where the borrowings will be coming from and the conditions under which those borrowings will be done. Of course it provides that the loans so borrowed by the Government will be then placed as a charge on the Consolidated Fund. Of course, those resources that are borrowed and go into the Consolidated Fund are paid out of the Consolidated Fund, and the sourcing of the financing to pay back those loans - to finance the interest and the principal, in other words the amortisation of the loan - will come of course from the Consolidated Fund. And so this will now give us the full and clear path to be able to pursue any such borrowings as we may require.

It also stipulates, Mr. Speaker, at clause 3, that of course it provides that all such loans, as is the case once they are entered into, should be laid before this House of Assembly, as we do periodically, the terms and conditions of such - and that is provided for within 120 days after the signing of the agreement, or at least 30 days if the House is not meeting after the commencement of the House of Assembly. Clause 5(1), of course - I spoke before about the loans as a charge on the Consolidated Fund - clause 5(1) allows for the issuance by the Minister responsible for Finance of instruments, including bonds, on such terms and conditions as are necessary for the purposes of securing the loan; and any bonds or any other instruments under subsection (1) may be signed by the Minister or such person as the Minister may designate in writing. Of course, it has an arbitration clause at clause 7 in case there are any disputes between CAF and the Government of Barbados, and that is standard form and normal for this type of bill.

So this is a fairly simple matter, Mr. Speaker, sir - simple in the sense that the bill is not a complicated piece of legislation. It is known to us what we are doing. We have come here before with the various stages, and now this is the final stage that gives us the ability to properly and fully engage borrowings from the CAF for development purposes. And so therefore, Mr. Speaker, sir, with those very few words, I beg to move that this bill be read a second time. I am obliged.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, in this Parliament, you have to bat on all the wickets. Mr. Speaker, we do not see on this side any problem with this particular bill. In fact, one would recall that we felt that the government would have to bring the bill today or as soon as possible in order to get financing from this institution. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that when we look at the records of CAF, we find that it is a development bank that really seeks to help the Latin American countries within this region for development. It is designed for that purpose.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, we realise that there are a number of countries within the region that have benefited from this institution, and therefore the opposition does not see a problem with the government or with Barbados joining CAF at this time. However,

Mr. Speaker, we believe that the government should tell us the projects. Because the Minister said in his remarks that for whatever purpose the government may desire, the government may borrow for whatever purpose it deems fit. We believe that this institution should provide opportunity for projects - not only the ones that the government sees as important, but should bring to Parliament those projects that the country believes will be useful for development, which will provide employment, which will generate capacity. Because I hope that the projects that the Minister has identified - road projects, infrastructural projects, the airport, the seaport, and of course tourism development and agriculture - are well considered. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that today we see a dire need for the government to put money into agricultural research and development. We have a dying sugar industry that is in need of financing. We have the fishing industry that needs to generate more opportunities for fishermen. And of course, we see today a need to diversify the entire agricultural sector. And I hope that in time the government can roll out some of these projects and allow the country to benefit.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that even though the Minister said - and I agree - that it is a development bank and that it provides loans for countries, we need to look at the interest rates as well. The Minister spoke about interest rates at 7 per cent, which I believe is a bit high. 7 per cent in today's world for development banks appears to be high. And I think that even though you have joined this institution, you need to get the best rate out of CAF in order to push development as far as possible. I also feel, Mr. Speaker, that when you look at tourism development now, it is true that tourism is our main source of income for Barbados. So the tourism product is really, to my mind, in need of refurbishment across Barbados. I hope that the Minister can look at what is happening at the Caves of Barbados. I understand that there is a need to redevelop further the airport. I understand that there is a need to develop the seaport as well. So we need to broaden our scope in tourism. And this is important, especially the generation of employment. When one looks at what is happening in a number of hotels, I believe the time has come for us to see how we can on-lend some of this money to the hotel sector in order to help boost the capacity to bring in visitors and provide employment for people. So this project is important, and the government must not only inform this House, but must tell the country what they are doing with these projects and bring the country into their confidence. I think it is a good thing, but it can turn out to

be a bad thing if the government does not hold the country in their confidence.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we on this side believe that we need to have a situation of accountability in these projects. Accountability is important. We have to turn a new page. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, all projects must be properly costed. I have noticed that a number of projects have been provided over the years - over the last 15, 20 and 30 years - but within the last seven years in particular, I believe that we need to look at how these projects are costed and provide Parliament with greater opportunities so that we could not only examine the costing, but treat the public with the understanding that we are all in this together. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I entered this debate in support of this bill before the House because I think it provides the House with an opportunity to look very candidly at the whole question of development financing. And the last speaker raised the question of accountability and the whole issue of how we look at the question of project financing in Barbados from a developmental perspective. And I am happy to certainly associate myself with the sentiments of the Minister of Finance in relation to the purpose of this bill before the House. The bill, of course, provides the government with another option of ensuring that the country can appropriately finance its developmental projects. I note that the Minister of Finance was very careful to indicate to the House that this particular bill allows for government to access financing for very specific purposes. A perusal of the bill before the House will certainly indicate that the bill is very carefully drafted to show that Parliament actually retains full accountability in relation to any funds borrowed by the government. So, as is expected in relation to how these matters are addressed, the Member from St. George North essentially raises questions which in fact the government has been proactive to ensure that the bill covers. And I would hope that in reading the bill, the Member for St. George North would have been able to even commend the Parliament in that we have very carefully ensured that Parliament retains full accountability in relation to this particular financing mechanism.

The other point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the issue of developmental financing - because of course the bill constrains itself to financing projects of a social and economic nature, and the Minister did indicate a number of areas that we will be focusing our attention on - I think this debate gives us a grand opportunity to really look at the whole question of how the country itself will, not only in the current economic environment, but certainly in the future, move towards financing its own development. And

the reason why a government would have to provide facilities of this kind is precisely because of the whole question of the continuum of government. I think what the Parliament has to ask itself, very prudently, is how will we approach the question of developmental financing in a holistic way that does not, in the medium to short term, create a heavier burden than the country is able to bear? And to really break it down very simply, Mr. Speaker, unless a government or a country is able to appropriately develop its sectors - and when I say sectors, I refer to the broad gamut of the economic pillars that are going to drive development - unless a country is able to consistently develop its economic sectors, then it is not likely to be able to afford many of the areas of need that a country will have.

I think the time has come, and I believe this government has recognised that the time has come, to look at developmental financing in a futuristic way and to plan it out by seeking to create partnerships and synergies, particularly with international financing organisations such as the one that we are looking at now - CAF - to give us the leverage to be able to move beyond some of the humps and bumps that are associated with small, open economies, given the way in which global economic financing is going. As a small country, Mr. Speaker, I believe there are some critical things that we have to look at within the context of affordability. We are impacted, Mr. Speaker, by critical areas relating to global warming, for example. Over the years, I think we have to admit that our economic sectors have not been restructured in the manner and with the swiftness that they should have been. For example, the Minister referred to the whole question of how we will utilise the CAF funding. One of the things that we have to incorporate into the economic equation is how we will carefully finance social projects - projects that are critical to looking at our total economic development. We are certainly on record as saying that Barbados is not only an economy. And when we say that, we are not just using words. We are acknowledging the wider and broader issues - that we cannot talk about economic expansion and leave the development of our wider society behind. Currently, for example, we are grappling with issues such as violence in our communities, youth violence, gun violence. All of these have a dollar value on them and they can become even more pronounced unless we very carefully plan out our social and economic financing models in a way that acts as a barrier towards antisocial behaviour.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that Barbados has continued to function in a manner where we are fighting against some very critical global indicators. Issues such as financing are not only a question for the Caribbean. Certainly across the Caribbean, we have seen the debt profiles of countries rising phenomenally, and the debt-to-GDP ratios - not only in the Caribbean, but globally - have increased significantly over a relatively short space of time. I believe that when

you look at Barbados, certainly as Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, I have had to look recently at how we are going to finance a national stadium, for example. How we are going to finance a number of critical projects such as the Empire Cinema, other projects like the Queen's Park Buildings, the Carnegie Library - projects that are critical to giving us that critical mass to be able to grow our cultural and heritage sectors, widely known as the cultural industries, to propel a diversification of the economy.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that we are on the right path in relation to expanding our options. But I believe we have to explain it to people in a manner that really clarifies the issues. Because I have said before that my observation is - and I believe the theorists in relation to economic planning will tell you - that certainly where a country has to borrow, particularly on the international market, Barbados is not alone in this, but where countries have to borrow, it is an indication that the country is not producing enough to finance its own development. Because if you did not have to borrow in some specific areas, then of course it would indicate that you have the wherewithal to do your own financing. Of course, there are areas in which strategic borrowing is done by countries, even although they may have the immediate funding. But of course, you apply certain criteria to how you will strategically borrow. I believe that in the case of Barbados and other small open economies, we need to be able to plan a model which shows that we are producing more. We have to produce more in order to be able to tackle issues such as our debt-to-GDP ratio and bring it down. And it is part of prudent economic planning that by going towards funding of this kind, the government will be able to so structure its debt profile that it gives us a breathing space in which to plan out our agenda.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thought I would make those points because when the general public hears of a government seeking to borrow, I think it is our obligation to explain in very simple terms what is involved. I think the country has now to look across all sectors towards increasing productivity. We have to increase productivity in agriculture. We have to increase productivity and to diversify in terms of our cultural industry sector. And that is the model, I believe, that will help us to be able to manage our fairly tight fiscal situation. But we have an obligation to create in the minds of our people the responsibility that they have now to produce even more. And that is why, for example, the use of developmental funding of this kind in the way that it is being used is critical to helping those sectors - those critical sectors that we believe have the propensity to expand - so that we will be able to provide jobs for our people and to increase economic activity, particularly in the private sector and those sectors that are highly driven, high earners of net foreign exchange.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those remarks I would like to associate myself with the policy framework of this bill and to suggest that it signals a very serious disposition of the government towards not only looking at short-term issues, but to position Barbados to be in a better position to tackle those wider economic issues which will help us to increase our economic growth potential and to strengthen our economic sectors in a holistic manner. I am obliged, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. The honourable Member for St. Michael North West. Thank you very much.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, sir, as I said, this is a matter which I think on both sides of the House, we agree the government should pursue. I want to thank the Minister, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, the Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports, for his very erudite intervention in relation to this matter. I just want to correct one thing from the Honourable Member for St. George North, who I know would not normally be accustomed to be found engaged in discussing these particular matters. And so he might have heard me incorrectly. The Government is not joining CAF to borrow at 7 per cent or near 7 per cent. That is not what I said. I said we are trying to avoid situations where we have to go to the open capital markets and open ourselves to the possibility of getting loans of that nature.

I forgot to mention the point that there is also the potential later this year or maybe early next year for the US Federal Reserve to increase interest rates in the United States. And that would have a knock-on effect for capital raising, particularly for developing countries and emerging economies. So it is something that we want to insulate ourselves from as much as possible. An institution like CAF, usually given the type of loan, you get that at an interest rate of anywhere between 2 and 3 per cent, depending on the type of loan that it is, the facility that you are doing, the type of project that it is - usually 2 per cent plus the six-month LIBOR, which normally tends to be anywhere between 0.3 and 0.6 per cent, depending on the time. So you may end up with 2.5 per cent and of course a few basis points for administrative costs, but certainly not anything way and above that. And that is the type of loan that we like and that we can deal with. And so I think this is a good thing, and I am happy that we have attracted the support of the Honourable Members on that side for this particular endeavour. And with those few words, I beg to move that the bill be read a second time.

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

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

the House resolve itself into Committee for further consideration of the Bill.

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

COMMITTEE

Clauses 1 - 7, inclusive, were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, Mr. Chairman reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Loans (Latin American Development Bank) Act, 2015.

Mr. CLERK: Order No. 24, sir, in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health, to move the second reading of the Pharmacy Amendment Bill, 2015.

ORDER NO. 24 – PHARMACY AMENDMENT BILL, 2015

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, sir, in presenting this amendment to the Chamber this morning, I want to start by indicating that this is after significant consultation - these changes which we are seeking to make today - after significant consultation with the existing Pharmacy Council of Barbados. The Pharmacy Council, of course, is appointed on the authority of the Pharmacy Act, Cap. 372D. And it is this Act which we seek to amend today. The amendments are in themselves rather simple, but sometimes it is worthy for us as legislators to point the public, the general public, in a direction which they can become even more familiar with aspects of our laws.

Indeed, sir, it is important sometimes too to articulate about the implementation of these Acts, these regulations, these schedules, et cetera, so that again the general public is in a position to understand where the thinking is in respect to these specific laws from time to time. And as such, the Council has approached the Ministry of Health with a view to having some changes made.

Generally, sir, I would like to report that we are very satisfied with the work of the Council. They take their tasks very seriously. And I think it is also a good opportunity for us to thank those members of councils like this - the Pharmacy Council. There are many boards, of course,

which Government from time to time appoints by statute to allow for the running of our schools, to allow for the running of our councils, to allow for the running of government businesses. And it is generally a sacrifice - a very, very meaningful sacrifice - which these board members, these members of boards and councils, make to the development of our nation.

I am certainly reminded of the presentation made by one of our distinguished honorary graduates on Saturday evening, Ms. Pamela Cook Hamilton, when she spoke to the whole question of giving back - that those of us who would have benefited from, in her case, training in institutions like the University of the West Indies, should seek to give back. And I say, of course, that the act of persons working and sharing ideas and helping to form policy in these councils and boards is an act of giving back. For that, sir, the Government of Barbados is particularly grateful and the Ministry of Health is certainly mindful of the efforts in this particular case.

As I said at the onset, the intended changes are rather simple in that we are seeking to increase the number of persons who may serve on the Council. On the Pharmacy Council, we are seeking to increase that number from 6 to 8.

The whole idea is that the council will be able to take advantage of a much wider cross-section of clinical and pharmaceutical practitioners in pursuit of even better information when considering aspects of pharmacy management in Barbados. It also seeks to allow the appointment of the chairman and deputy chairman of the Pharmacy Council by the Minister responsible for health. This again is bringing the Pharmacy Council more or less in line with what exists in the Medical Council. The Medical Council, of course, manages the business of the registration of medical practitioners in Barbados and again is an example of the fine work being done by the members of that council to ensure the smooth running of the profession of medicine. Similarly, this council, the Pharmacy Council, seeks to ensure the smooth running of pharmacies in Barbados. And I really do not need to remind the public of how important that is. That is a very important aspect of the whole question of treatment of illnesses and care for our people.

We depend as a people. We have our different relationships - we have our relationships with our doctors and we have indeed our relationships with our pharmacies. I grew up in St. Peter and, you know, we had our pharmacists. Well, it will not be advertising now because it is closed - Roach Pharmacy, of course - and members of the community of St. Peter, your Member for St. Peter at the time would remember this very, very well. Members of the community of St. Peter would go into Speightstown and go to Mr. Roach for any health solution that they

required. If they had a headache, if they had a broken foot - in those days they did not talk of NCDs and that kind of thing - but if they were just sick, if you did not feel well, you went to see Mr. Roach. And may I say that Mr. Roach would, in concert with the doctors, make sure that he found the answer to some sort of relief for the pain which you were suffering.

But today, of course, it is a different world. We are threatened not only by the dispensing of regular drugs, regularly available drugs under the formulary of Barbados - but of course, that is a separate debate itself. The point is that when we go into a pharmacy today, it is almost like going into a mini-mart sometimes, because the shelves are filled with the widest array of goods you could wish for - you could almost, short of perhaps vegetables, buy anything that you may require for your home. In these modern pharmacies, of course, the activity which we are concerned with is the one that occurs behind the counter, where the qualified pharmacist registered with the Barbados Pharmacy Council and the appropriately appointed premises again registered with the Barbados Pharmacy Council and regulated by the Barbados Drug Service operate to the benefit of the people that they seek to serve.

So we are seeking to allow the Minister to be able to appoint the chairman and the deputy chairman. What exists now with the six members is, of course, that they vote for a chairman at their first meeting and that is the way it is done. So again, the council has approached the Ministry, the Minister, and after consultation we have agreed to that measure.

Also, in increasing the number of persons who will be allowed to sit on the council, the construct of these members will be as follows. The Director of the Barbados Drug Service will sit on the council as *ex officio* - that already exists. As I said, eight members, eight persons appointed by the Minister by instrument in writing. One medical practitioner appointed by the Minister after consultation with the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners - that speaks for itself. The Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners at their annual meetings or whenever required would recommend in writing to the Ministry of Health their nominee for that position. Three pharmacists appointed by the Minister after consultation with the Barbados Pharmaceutical Society - again, that speaks for itself. The members of the professional pharmacists in Barbados have a society referred to as the Barbados Pharmaceutical Society and they send their nominations to the Ministry. One pharmacist engaged in the teaching of pharmacy appointed by the Minister after consultation with a principal or other person in charge of an institution in which pharmacy is taught, where that institution is recognised by the Ministry of Education as an institution for the teaching of pharmacy

- and that is used in the Barbados Community College, who send their recommendation again to the Ministry for the appropriate appointments. And three persons at the Minister's discretion.

This is where we have reached a bit of a compromise with the Council in that they were suggesting that we should appoint an attorney as a member of the Council, which is not a bad idea. But the Ministry felt we would leave that to the discretion of the Minister in his or her consideration from time to time. That appointment can be made. I mentioned that for a specific purpose - we have on the Medical Council an attorney by way of the construct of the schedule. But although you benefit from the contribution of the attorney from time to time, if there is a legal issue to be wrestled to the ground, of course the attorney, as a member of the Council, is not going to be prepared to give a formal legal opinion - he will give a view, but you are still going to have to engage an independent attorney. So you get the benefit of legal scholarship, let me put it that way, but the legal opinion would still require you to look outside. So it is our view at the Ministry of Health today that once this amendment is passed we will appoint an attorney to the Council. But we have specifically avoided putting that as part of the amendments to the Pharmacy Act.

So, Mr. Speaker, sir, those are the basic provisions. Of course, the schedule will go on to talk about the quorum. Six members of the Council present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum. Each member of the Council, of course, except the ex officio member, shall hold office for two years and is eligible for reappointment, so you can hold two successive terms, so to speak. And these kinds of amendments are useful because, as I spoke to the fact, sometimes you can imagine, sir, the challenges you face in your Ministry trying to fulfil the requirements of the councils or the boards that you may require. So sometimes there is a significant challenge in finding persons, and the remuneration set by the Ministry of Finance, of course, is not a lot. It is not about money - it is about sacrifice, which we are extremely grateful for. So that is basically the changes to the Pharmacy Act which are contemplated by this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me if I did not go on to say a little bit about the developments in the whole management of pharmaceuticals in Barbados. Indeed, we have been recently engaged at the Ministry with the rollout of what is termed the Barbados Pharmaceutical Policy document. This, of course, becomes even more urgent when we consider the kind of threats which there are to the whole management of drugs in our country. The Barbados Drug Service presently, as I intimated, deals with the whole question of formulary drugs. And even within the contemplation of the Barbados Drug Service are opportunities to include in that formulary, from time to

time, in varying categories, certain specialist drugs that would become necessary from time to time.

Yesterday morning we opened a conference on infection control - a regional conference being held at the Hilton Hotel. The opening ceremony was held at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. And of course, we had visiting not only regional pharmacists and regional representatives of ministries of health, we had the Pan American Health Organization, the CDC - the Center for Disease Control of the United States - who, PAHO and CDC and WHO, of course, walk hand in hand with us here in Barbados in the whole management of our health care processes and all the related matters. This Infection Control Conference had a significant representation from Latin America. And I say this to say that more and more, certainly in health, and I hear my colleagues speak in their other areas of business, the Caribbean region is reaching out into Latin America - as right we should, as we should rightly do - to enhance our knowledge base, to indeed help us to protect our borders. Because more and more we are finding that this kind of movement of personnel is not restricted so much now to CARICOM, but covers a much wider area of Latin America.

So this Infection Control Conference will deal with the whole question of antimicrobial resistance. As we know, the use or abuse of medication can lead to some level of resistance and the inability to cure our patients. Infection control within our institutions, indeed infection control within our homes. And certainly one of the things that I am urging the Ministry of Health to pursue even more vigorously is the whole question of making sure that we understand that the battle against communicable diseases is not over. We cannot lose sight of the fact that if we do not continue to be vigilant, if we do not continue to respond to the changes in that area, we could find ourselves faced with the re-emergence of some of these diseases.

Indeed, it is noteworthy, sir, that only recently we read in our international media the instance of the nurse in England who had been working with the Ebola virus disease in Africa and who had gotten ill herself and has now actually relapsed, more or less, and has caused the entire World Health Organization and associated bodies to take another look, sir, at this whole question of Ebola virus disease specifically and of re-emerging diseases in general. So we have to understand that things like tuberculosis, et cetera - yes, they are under control. We still have from time to time an instance. No one is saying there may not be an instance. The point is you have an infection control unit so that you ensure that instance is completely contained for the purposes of managing those diseases.

So the objective of the pharmaceutical policy will be to set a framework. And this has been talked about for a long time. Looking through the documentation, this goes

back - the earliest recorded in our files at the Ministry is around 1999. Coming forward, I think the last time Cabinet looked at it would have been 2012. But what we have decided is that we are going to take that document and prepare it for the consideration of the Social Policy Committee subcommittee of the Cabinet of Barbados before we finalise its entire architecture for presentation to this Chamber, sir, and eventually to the public.

The challenge is obvious. Along with the question of our normal pharmaceuticals, we have the question of generic drugs. We have the spread of other treatments. We have illegal drugs. The World Health Organization refers to them as suspicious and spurious drugs. So we have to increase, Mr. Speaker - not decrease - our vigilance. And of course, there is the question of the management of substances like marijuana. Again, these are issues which will not only attract the attention of the Ministry of Health on its own, but will start to border on the entire question of our security forces, et cetera, given the laws that attend that substance today. But again, we must admit that there is a community who from time to time have made their position clear in respect to medical treatments by some types of marijuana, et cetera. So these are things which, as a Ministry of Health, we need to look at. We need to engage the public in discussion before we can finalise any policy. We have seen the position that has been taken in Jamaica. But I certainly have had, as Minister of Health, at least one approach from a Barbadian seeking to have this matter looked at. And I am sure that my colleague the Attorney General has probably had even more cases than myself.

But it is important for us to say to Barbados and to assure this Chamber and indeed the country of the very safe management of our drugs, the management of our pharmaceuticals, the very safe operation of our Barbados Drug Service. And I want to take this opportunity, sir, to commend the Director of our Drug Service and her team at the Barbados Drug Service for a job very, very well done. And indeed, I want to in turn commend the private pharmacists for their significant contribution to this solution.

In Barbados, I am an advocate for peaceful coexistence. And we have tried to ensure that any noises which may occur from time to time - and are inevitable; we can hear one emanating from the benches of St. Thomas even now, sir - any noises which we hear can be dealt with maturely and properly resolved. And this is the mission which we have undertaken with, up to now, certainly tremendous success. And I see nothing on the horizon that tells me that is going to change in the immediate future. And so I want to congratulate Miriam Hynes and her team at the Drug Service along with the private pharmacists of Barbados who continue to do a tremendously responsible job in the management of drugs in our country. And of course, in keeping with cost management, the Ministry of

Health has been able to contain the spending in the area of drugs in a way that has redounded to the benefit of the entire management of the finances of this country. There have been significant improvements in the spending patterns at the Drug Service, ensuring at all times that there is no diminution in the level and quality of services being rendered.

Mr. Speaker, I make the point again. The existence of an anomaly is not a case for destroying the entire system. If there are special cases that require our attention, we go out there and make sure they are dealt with accordingly. We get those occurrences from time to time and it is our ability to deal with those kinds of cases that truly tests the system. So again, sir, as I said, these are really minor amendments, but significant in the sense that they help us to bring an even wider view to the business of the management of pharmaceuticals in Barbados, the management of our pharmacist profession in Barbados, and the management of our physical pharmacy structures in Barbados, so as to ensure that the health of our nation is secure and that we can look forward to continued development in this great country we call Barbados. With those few words, sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. The honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Dr. M. M. AGARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I crave your indulgence, sir, to make a few remarks on this particular Bill that will be known as the Pharmacy Amendment Act, I believe. Mr. Speaker, let me just cast our minds back to this Bill. I believe it is the Pharmacy Act of 1984, and I too wish to commend all the players involved - the Pharmaceutical Society that worked tirelessly from about 1962 to ensure that a Pharmacy Act and measures governing the regulation of this very important profession was formally established. And I believe that the primary Act served its purpose well and that it continues to serve its purpose well in regulating the conduct of professionals, in establishing specific environmental conditions under which drugs should be dispensed in Barbados, in even dictating the types of teaching programmes that we should pursue to ensure that the profession continues to be supported by upcoming professionals who are duty bound to maintain the high standard of professionalism for which they are known. So I certainly want to commend all the actors involved in this particular profession.

But we are here today to address this amendment. And Mr. Speaker, as I listen to the Minister of Health speak to the amendment, I have grappled in my mind with the relevance or the urgency of this particular amendment. Try as I might, I am having difficulty understanding the importance of increasing the numbers of this particular

Pharmacy Council from six to eight. Because in reality, as stated by the Minister, the Pharmacy Council as it is now constituted is made up of the Director of the Drug Service, four pharmacists, a medical practitioner recommended by the Association of Medical Practitioners and appointed by the Minister, and one other person. What this amendment suggests that we do is that we simply add a pharmacist of the teaching profession and one other general individual from the community.

Now, I can be very supportive of the addition of a pharmacist from the teaching profession, but I certainly believe that could have been satisfied under the current regulation. My concern, and my primary concern, is the whole issue of the appointment of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman by the Minister. And the Minister continued to speak in his presentation about these implementations that speak for themselves. But I am having a difficulty with it because exactly what is the use of a Minister's ability to appoint a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman of a body that technically ought to be autonomous? This is a professional body. It has the right to regulate itself. And I see no relevance, no advantage to the Minister being able to appoint the Chairman, especially when you consider that the Chairman will be appointed from the four pharmacists of that body. Therefore, the appointment of the Chairman is already limited. And I am concerned that the only purpose that this amendment will serve is to continue an unnecessary politicisation of the particular body. That and only that.

And I am somewhat disheartened because I believe that in this day and age, with the challenges that we face in health care and certainly in the whole arena of pharmacy, that certainly, if we were going to address in this Honourable Chamber today any issues concerning drugs, that our measures would bear greater relevance to the challenges that are faced both by pharmacists today and the average Barbadian who is met day after day with a critical shortage of essential drugs to maintain their quality of life. So that in as much as I give full support to the Pharmacy Council, I want to register my concerns that this particular amendment will only serve to increase the political interference in this particular Council. And we can certainly do without that.

There are a couple of issues, though, Mr. Speaker, that I wish to address at this time. The first issue. I am hearing an aside that I believe ought to be addressed. I am hearing that the chairman of the councils are appointed by the minister. But I believe that is an aberration. I believe that is an aberration because in a professional body, the chairman should be allowed to be appointed from the professionals within. As I was saying, though, Mr. Speaker, and I shall ignore all the asides coming from that side, I want to address a couple of serious issues.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard time and time again a cry from the pharmacists that they need to have their accounts settled by this Government. I was waiting to hear the Minister of Health address this particular issue because we cannot, we certainly cannot ignore the fact that many of the pharmacists who will be regulated by this council are under financial threat at this time. And they are under financial threat because the Government continues to be lax in the settling of accounts by these pharmacists, and they continue to speak out about it. And I feel duty bound to raise these issues in this Honourable Chamber today because many of these pharmacists are thousands of dollars in debt as a result of tardy payment by Government.

Not only do we need to have a solution to that very critical issue, but it is also important that we address the issue of Government actually behaving as a direct competitor to the druggists out there, because you can take your prescription to any polyclinic, any polyclinic, and have that prescription filled, even the prescription written on a private letterhead. And I believe that this is a regulation that needs to be addressed. Because you cannot, on the one hand, be supporting or saying that you support your pharmacist and that you support the existence of them and that you seek to regulate them in a manner that will allow their viability to be assured. But yet you, the Government, you are a competitor and a direct competitor of the same pharmacist.

And so I am asking the Minister to address those two concerns when he rises to his feet again. The whole issue of Government being in competition with private pharmacists and the issue of Government needing to settle the outstanding accounts of most pharmacists who are struggling today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe that legislation should always serve a wider purpose. Legislation should serve the purpose of being socially transformative. That throughout the country, this legislation should have some bearing on all Barbadians. And in that respect, I want to address a couple of issues before I take my seat.

The Minister made reference to an Infection Control conference and the development of a Barbados pharmaceutical policy document. Now, I believe that this is a very important initiative. It is one that needs to be pursued quite aggressively because certainly within the past couple of months we have heard of complaints of what is otherwise known as MRSA - methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* - plaguing our hospitals. We have heard of *Klebsiella* plaguing our hospitals. And certainly we need to look very critically at our dispensing and use of drugs, especially harsh antibiotics, within the hospital setting and also within the general community.

I certainly want to make a call to all dispensing officers, including medical practitioners, to limit their use or their prescription of antibiotics where necessary. Because certainly the development of resistance will, if it has not already, create a major problem for Barbadians as we randomly and arbitrarily dispense antibiotics and then suffer a development of resistance to these antibiotics. So I am certainly looking forward to this Infection Control conference having some statement to make on the dispensing of harsh antibiotics. And I am certainly calling for the greater regulation of these antibiotics.

I am also calling for greater regulation of antibiotics as dispensed by pharmacists. Because whereas I am not prepared to say that all pharmacists are guilty of this particular action, I do know there are times when an individual would go to a pharmacy for a particular condition and even in the absence of a formal diagnosis or in the absence of a formal prescription, they report that they can get antibiotics from the pharmacist. And I believe that even though this may not be a widespread practice, I need to speak to it, because if it is happening in our society, I think it should be limited in the interest of generalised health in Barbados.

Now, sir, in addition, the pharmaceutical policy is set to address a number of frameworks, including the use of generic drugs. I suppose that they will be addressing the use of some drugs considered to be illegal. And I presume that they will also be addressing the use of alternative formulations, seeing that we now have an emerging alternative medicine facility, so to speak, in this country.

Let me speak first of the generic drugs. I have no fundamental objection to the use of generic drugs. I certainly know of many that are equally efficient in their use. However, in as much as we are attempting to reduce our spending by transitioning from brand name drugs to generic drugs, we need to do so very, very carefully. The reason we need to do so is that more often than not we have the presence of generic drugs that come without instructions, they come without formulations, they come without risk factors or dispensing information. So whilst I support the use of generic drugs, and I certainly do, I believe that there must be a greater regulation of these drugs.

Mr. Speaker, an issue that needs to be addressed is the ability to access drugs in what can be considered the supermarket setting. Now, the Minister made reference to that and I have difficulty with the number of drugs that can now actually be accessed in a supermarket setting. I want to give you just one example of my objection. You can go to any supermarket and purchase aspirin - 81 milligrams of aspirin. It is known as a low dose formulation, but it can be purchased in any supermarket. The problem with that, Mr. Speaker, is that aspirin under the wrong conditions can be

toxic. It is a poison. An individual can go to the supermarket complaining of flu-like symptoms, not recognising that the flu-like symptoms are actually symptoms of dengue. The one thing an individual suffering from dengue must never do is take aspirin. Because aspirin can actually trigger what is known as a haemolytic reaction. There can be internal bleeding and the individual can die. But here it is that we have aspirin on our shelves in a supermarket without regulation.

These are things that we cannot afford to take casually or even to trivialise their presence. And I am asking what are we doing about these formulations which under normal conditions are reasonably safe, but yet under a compromised medical situation can actually be deadly? Are we prepared to take responsibility for these drugs that can be purchased without prescription from supermarket shelves? I think that this is an issue that we must be prepared to address in the interest of all Barbadians. Because we know Barbadians, we know that people like to self-diagnose and that people like to self-prescribe. So we have to address the issue - not just the aspirin, but even some compounds that can be used with hypertension. So those are two examples that I am prepared to offer you with respect to the pharmaceutical policy and its framework.

I want to address a very touchy subject, but I am going to address it all the same. I heard the Attorney General say - and I hope that I am not going to misquote him - that there is not that much of a clamour for a discussion on certain types of drugs now considered illegal drugs in this country. I believe that as a mature society the time will come, and the time is rapidly approaching, when that which we are trying to circumvent and work around and avoid will have to be addressed. Because inasmuch as formally you do not have a major clamour for a national discourse on drugs such as marijuana, the reality in this country is that on the ground there are a number of people who are clamouring for a national discussion on this particular drug.

I believe that we need to have this discussion in a sober and well-informed environment. Maybe the first thing that we need to do is to make a distinction between legalisation of the drug and decriminalisation of the drug. Because that is what is creating most of the confusion in Barbados. I don't know that there is a major clamour for the legalisation of marijuana. I don't know that. But with respect to the decriminalisation - with respect to personal use of very small quantities, with respect to religious use, with respect to the use for medical conditions such as cancer, even though people will say that there are alternative drugs that will serve the same purpose, and yes, indeed there are - the reality is that people want options. They want to be able to exercise their options without running afoul of the law. And we have to have this discussion.

I believe in a mature society that we must have the discussion. And what I am hearing certainly from the younger people in my constituency, for sure, is that the reason this discussion must take place is because it is a social justice issue. That is what it is - a social justice issue. They have said to me that when you look at the profile of those who are always under threat, those who are always arrested, those who are always prosecuted, those who are always incarcerated, there is one distinctive profile that comes to mind and that is fundamentally wrong. It is a social justice issue that needs to be addressed. And certainly so.

Certainly, sir, I am looking forward to this pharmaceutical policy that the Minister of Health is speaking about. I am looking forward to the frameworks that are going to be developed. But it is certainly my desire to see a Barbados where we can be bold, where we can be fearless, where we can certainly address the needs of the country as the needs of the country need to be addressed without fear that we are going to be offending any particular group of individuals.

So, sir, with these simple remarks, I say to the Minister of Health that whilst I have no fundamental objection to supporting the amendment, if the amendment is so certainly going to lend itself to improved professionalism and improved regulation of this very critical profession or industry, I certainly want him to address all of the elephants in the room that need to be addressed. Payment of pharmacists, for one; regulation of non-prescription drugs that are accessible to Barbadians, for two; and three, that national discussion that we need to have on what is now considered an illegal substance. I am obliged.

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give support to this Bill, to enforce the amendment to the Pharmacy Act, Cap. 372D, and to say that the Minister of Health is definitely in the right direction by bringing this before Parliament today. I listened well to the Hon. Member for Christ Church West and her discourse on the topic and noted a few concerns that she raised. And I thought perhaps I can make a few comments in response.

But generally speaking, the mischief here is that hitherto the Minister of Health did not have the authority to appoint the Chair or the Deputy Chair of the Pharmacy Council. And I think if one casts their mind back to look at Cap. 372D of the Pharmacy Act and reflects upon the role and responsibility of the Pharmacy Council, it perhaps will be remiss of the Government and Parliament if we did not vest in the Minister of Health the authority to appoint the

Chair and the Deputy Chair of such an important institution.

What has hitherto transpired in the health system in Barbados is that those councils - the members of the council - were appointed by ministers, but they decided among themselves who should be Chair and Deputy Chairman. And I have always felt that was wrong. It is believed that the minister, acting on behalf of the state and by extension acting in the best interest of the public, ought to have the authority to determine who should be Chair or Deputy Chair of such important bodies. It certainly was done with the medical professions under the Medical Professions Act of 2011.

I believe the Hon. Member for Christ Church West must disabuse her mind of the belief that a professional body ought to be one and the same as a governing council. The Barbados Pharmaceutical Society is the body that represents pharmacists in Barbados. You are free to join the Barbados Pharmaceutical Society as a pharmacist. You are also free, I believe, not to join them. But the Barbados Pharmaceutical Society does not have the authority to determine on matters such as licensing of pharmacists, courses of study to be qualified as a pharmacist, discipline of pharmacists in Barbados, and all of the attendant fundamental governance issues. Those authorities are vested in the Pharmacy Council, which comes under an Act of Parliament.

And therefore, quite often people confuse the role of a membership body with that of a council that is responsible for licensing, discipline, administration, and setting standards and advising the minister. That is a pivotal role that often is overlooked. That council, like all the other councils, advises the minister. So in this case, I believe that is one of the mischiefs that the minister - and the Government - is quite rightfully seeking to address by ensuring that the minister has the authority. And my position is that any such body that is formed under an Act of Parliament and reports to a minister, the minister ought to have the authority to say who should be Chair and Deputy Chair.

I do not believe that this in any way, shape, or fashion politicises the work of the council. And we are very fortunate in Barbados over the years, particularly in the health professional bodies, not to have these councils conduct themselves in a political manner. They are usually individuals of great repute in their profession. And I do not think that they allow themselves to be used. And quite frankly, I have no evidence that over the years any minister has really sought to put them in that difficult position of politicising them.

And what is there to politicise? If you go to Barbados Community College and spend two or three years

in study and qualify to be a pharmacist, you get your licence. The minister cannot say that you cannot be licensed as a pharmacist. The minister cannot tell the Pharmacy Council who to register as a pharmacist in Barbados or not, because the law clearly outlines the regulations and the qualifications to practise pharmacy as a pharmacist in Barbados. So I think that we can really debunk the thought that there ought to be any element of politicisation if the minister has a say in the matter. And we must be very careful of these comments, because there may be a time when the Hon. Member is in a position where she may have to make such a decision, and she would not want the same accusations to be levelled her way.

The other issue, Mr. Speaker, relates to the increase in membership of the Pharmacy Council from its current number of seven up to nine members. And there is absolutely no harm in increasing the numbers. What I particularly like about this Bill is that the minister is now in a position to appoint to the Pharmacy Council individuals who are not pharmacists. Hitherto it really was a council that comprised six registered pharmacists and one medical practitioner. And I have always held the view that these professional bodies in Barbados are well served - and the public is well served - by having councils overseeing the affairs of a profession whose membership is not entirely constituted of individuals who operate in that profession. We did it for the doctors. There was a time when the Barbados Medical Council comprised only of doctors - a very incestuous affair. The same thing with lawyers today. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, that needs to change in a hurry. And the same thing existed hitherto with pharmacists.

I am of the view that the professionals themselves and the public are well served by having members who are not members of that particular profession being members of the council. They bring a different perspective. It goes back to a fundamental point, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Member.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to raise a point of clarification. The Pharmacy Act has always made provision for one ordinary member. The amendment now makes provision for two ordinary members - that is, non-pharmacists. I do not want to cut the Hon. Member in his remarks, but I just want to state emphatically that the Pharmacy Act has always made provision for one member who was not a pharmacist - and who was not a doctor.

Noted. The fundamental point, though, is that the minister is now in a position to add to the Pharmacy Council more individuals who need not be members of the profession of pharmacists. And I believe that such individuals - who may or may not be pharmacists - can perhaps bring a perspective to the governance of the

industry, the governance of the profession, and bring to the minister the kind of advice that is necessary for more informed decisions to be made about the administration of pharmacists and the administration of pharmacies and such like in Barbados.

I do not, however - and I caution this - demand of the Pharmacy Council that perhaps we should have a lawyer on the Pharmacy Council. When the Medical Council was formed, I had a lawyer there. One must question the value that brings to the arrangement, because the reality is that a lawyer serving on the council is not the lawyer for the council, as the minister quite rightly pointed out. And therefore I would caution. But of course, there are some who believe that profession can provide answers to everything in this country, and therefore we need lawyers in everything around here. I do not subscribe to that view, Mr. Speaker.

So I believe that on those points the minister is quite right in pressing ahead in addressing some of these matters in the manner in which he has done so thus far. There are just a few other points that the Hon. Member for Christ Church West raised, and I think the minister started to allude to a few of them - in that the conversation allows us to go beyond a narrow discussion on the Pharmacy Council and its membership and start to look and ask ourselves about the pharmacy industry in Barbados and what it takes to move it to another level.

I am of the view, Mr. Speaker, that it ought to be mandatory that continuing professional education be done as a prerequisite for continuing to be registered as a pharmacist in this country. I hold the view that all of these professions in Barbados should have continuing professional education made mandatory - whether you are a doctor, but they have theirs; the nurses have theirs. Now the dentists need it, the engineers need it, the lawyers need it. All of them in this country need to start having continuing professional education as part of their programme for continuing registration. It does well for the profession and it does well for the public.

There are far too many professionals in this country who have not opened a book related to their profession since they left university, and ten or fifteen years later they are being paraded as experts in this country - totally out of touch with reality sometimes. While some may say politicians are a profession too, and therefore let that be applicable to us as well. But the issue of continuing professional education I believe ought to be addressed in respect of the pharmacists in Barbados. Things change every day. It is a very dynamic industry.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. Member. Just a minute please. Sorry, sorry. We do not want a glass of water.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Member.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. So certainly, as we are saying, continuing professional education must be made mandatory as part of it. I believe this because it is a very dynamic industry. Things are changing every day - not just the formulations and so on, but the whole issue of patient care. The pharmacist must be seen as an integral part of patient care in Barbados, as is the case in all other parts of the world - not just someone whose role is to fill a prescription and hand it out.

And that is why I keep saying that pharmacists, in looking at their business model, must appreciate that they must go way beyond just understanding what the doctor has written on a prescription form and handing it out. The whole issue of consultation must continue to loom large in the delivery of their service. The fact that you are able to sit with the patient, to see that individual as your patient and not just a doctor's patient - that must all weigh into the equation in terms of your ability to deliver and dispense a service and not just a product to an individual.

I agree with the Hon. Member for Christ Church West when the point is made about what we could call in simple terms over-the-counter drugs. Because the reality about it in Barbados is that we do not have to wait

until something dramatic happens, an adverse incident upon one of our citizens to say that we need to curb or better manage the dispensing of or the provision of over the counter drugs, healthcare and certain pharmacies. Medicine is not my forte. I am merely just a good patient occasionally. But the reality about it, as the honourable member pointed out, there are some medications or some drugs that one can walk into a supermarket and purchase, oblivious of the potentially negative consequences if you mix it with another drug that has been prescribed by a doctor. And while on one hand one can appreciate the ease afforded to the individual by walking in and buying something for the chest cold you got or the runny nose or the itching skin, if you are not mindful of the consequences when you mix that with another drug, then some severe adverse consequences would occur. And, Madam Deputy Speaker, they do occur in Barbados on a regular basis. We just do not discuss them in the public domain. So therefore I agree that there is the time for us to wrap our minds around that particular issue of the ready availability of over the counter drugs - and the potential risks to individuals in this society.

And I believe that therein lies a greater opportunity for the pharmacists to be more involved in the wider

society in the delivery of healthcare in Barbados. We need to have more educational programmes being conducted by the pharmacists in Barbados. They need to make themselves more readily available in the wider community for consultations. They need to go back to the fundamentals - in the village days when the druggist was seen as the person you went to for so many things, so much advice. And today now it has become somewhat of a very sterile environment as they move away from a lot of the work going on before.

The other point, Madam Deputy Speaker, relating to the over the counter drugs is that we have to be wary of the possibility of individuals becoming addicted to some of them. And perhaps that is one of the easiest and cheapest ways in which some Barbadians become addicted to some of these pharmaceuticals, because they are so readily available and it eases the pain today. And you keep going at it, going at it all the time until you become dependent. And then there is a more serious cost to the wider society as we go forward.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, as I said at the beginning, I am very much in support of this position being posited today by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Minister of Health, in respect to reforms in the Pharmacy Council, the constitution of the members of the Council, the fact that the Minister has the authority to appoint chair and deputy chair, and quite rightfully to add to the variety of skill set that can be brought to the Council for its work. But I believe there is much more we have to do as we engage in a discussion about the industry. For example, what should be the prerequisites to want to practise pharmacy as a pharmacist in Barbados today? Should we not march towards where it must be a university degree, at least three years of study at that level? You know, these are all things that we cannot compromise on. I note that the nursing profession, for example, have just agreed or started to implement a degree in nursing because, Madam Deputy Speaker, it sends a signal that we are raising the bar. Hitherto, pharmacists were not seen as serious movers and shakers in the healthcare system, but by giving an additional year of formal academic studies in a wider range of disciplines related to the healthcare field and the pharmaceutical industry and the delivery of pharmacy work on the whole, we are actually raising the bar - the entry bar - and raising the level of service legitimately expected by patients and customers in Barbados. So there is much more we have to do.

The issue of discipline also looms large. I believe the Pharmacy Council must state that as a serious part of its work. I have not heard of any stories, but if there are pharmacists in Barbados who are conducting themselves in a less than professional manner, the Pharmacy Council must be bold enough to deal with them. One of the powers that this new Act brings to the table is that by adding

individuals who may not be members of the profession, you are helping to minimise that incestuous type of behaviour that can occur, because when the Council comprises only of members of the same profession, there is often great reluctance to deal with one of your own. We have had that in the Medical Council heretofore; we have had it in other councils in Barbados. And that has to change.

And that is why, Madam Deputy Speaker, I keep saying all the time that in respect to the legal profession, they need a serious checkup in this country. I do not believe that the Bar Association should be pretty much one and the same as the Legal Profession Council in this respect. That needs to change as a matter of urgency as well. Just as we are making strides in the health sector, we need to make some changes - fundamental changes - to the administration and governance of lawyers in Barbados on the whole, especially the honourable Member for St. James North in particular.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I therefore stand fully in support of this Bill before Parliament today and eagerly look forward to its implementation, as I believe it is a step in improving the overall healthcare system in Barbados and strengthening it. I am obliged to you.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Philip South. Thank you.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Madam Deputy Speaker. Just a short intervention in support of this bill. The member for Christ Church West in her presentation opened a few doors that I thought were worthy of some further discussion. In particular, Madam Deputy Speaker, as a country we have been focused on - when we speak of illegal drugs, we have been focused on in particular marijuana and cocaine, which is pretty well known. But I must say that I am a bit concerned about what we are seeing in the world. These new psychotropic drugs that are readily available outside of Barbados. And I dare say, from my information, some of which are creeping into our society, and therefore we need to see how best we can ensure that there is a wide body of knowledge among all practitioners. And by practitioners here, I will explain what I mean. So that these new substances which can come into Barbados through the posts, in people's bags, in luggage, etc., and in persons - that in fact our personnel are properly trained in that regard.

What we have discovered is that we have a considerable amount of work to do with many of our officers - with Customs, for example, with pharmacists overall. We need to have our doctors involved, we need to have the National Council of Substance Abuse involved, we need to have the Royal Barbados Police Force involved. And more importantly, we need to have a better

coordination of response and of the sharing of information so that when these new drugs are discovered, there is training. And just a couple of weeks ago, two workshops were conducted here with the assistance of the OAS CCAD - one on these new substances and the other on the sale of drugs over the Internet. And out of these workshops it is quite clear to me that we have a knowledge deficiency in Barbados and we also have a lack of coordination of the sharing of knowledge among the relevant agencies. And in that regard, between ourselves - that is the Ministry of Home Affairs - and I dare say the Ministry of Health, we need to sit down, get our personnel together and work out how we can have more of a national response.

Because the things that we see on television with young people experimenting with inhalants, et cetera, we tend to believe that is not Barbados. The reality is that there is nothing that happens in the wider world that does not happen in Barbados. So we need therefore to up our game in terms of educating our young people. We need to up our game in terms of educating our parents so that they themselves can identify when their children are exhibiting behaviours that are, shall I say, not normal - so they can identify where their issues stem from, just from the inhaling of simple household products that may lead to addiction.

Again, I spoke to a certain pharmacist recently and my question to her was: how do you coordinate? How do you prevent someone from abusing prescriptions? In other words, I said to her, if John Smith goes to doctor A, receives a prescription, then goes to doctor B, receives the same prescription, then goes to doctor C and receives the same prescription - is there anything in place, is there any kind of system in place to detect whether or not that individual is in fact abusing those particular drugs? And I dare say, except for some substances, that is a gap that I identified that we need to have a look at, to see how we can plug that gap - in particular for individuals who legitimately may be in need of pain medications and can quite easily get addicted to pain medications.

So my point here, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that there is a gap and that as a country we have not identified it. We need now to mount a response so that we can root out the abuse of not only illegal substances, but also, as I said, normal everyday substances that one finds in one's household.

The other area mentioned by the member for Christ Church West is the issue of natural herbalists and whether the time has not come for us to also see how they can be regulated. And I believe, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the time has come. One can understand how easily it can happen that when someone is very ill, even terminally ill, one is quite willing to try almost anything. And yes, you hear that the natural herbalists would advise you not to

follow your normal prescription regimen. What is not clear to me is how do we ensure that if someone is taking a prescription issued by medical doctors and then goes to a herbalist and follows a regimen from that herbalist, how do we ensure that that concoction does not do more damage than good?

Now, I have to say that based on my growing up in a household where my mother and my grandmother believed in natural remedies, I do recognise that there is something to it. And even now I can say that from time to time I still have a bit of bush tea prepared by one of my best friends. But the serious point I am making is that we have noticed - and I have noticed - the number of different herbalists around Barbados, and we need to, just as we are saying that we need to have a more serious regime for pharmacists and for pharmacies, by extension we need to cast an eye and see how we address the issue of the natural herbalists.

Then the other point I want to make - because I heard also about the examination of marijuana, and I heard in particular that this is now a social justice issue. I think that is how it is politely put. And I interpret that to mean that only a certain section of Barbados was being either targeted or arrested by the law enforcement agencies. And I want to say that by extension that also suggests a certain bias by the law enforcement agencies, which is not true. Because, Madam Deputy Speaker, I say all the time - the Royal Barbados Police Force can only arrest someone who is there in the public or based on information that they have received. Now, what I say to my constituents, for example: why do you complain about the police chasing you when in fact you come onto the streets, you come onto the public highway with your joint in your hand and then complain the police are chasing you? I do not understand that.

The other side of the coin is that when the police and the Coast Guard conduct an operation, they do not know who is in the boat. They do not conduct operations based on who they are told is going to be in the boats. They are told that the shipment is coming to Barbados and they target the shipment. So I wish to disassociate myself from any suggestion that there is this bias, that this is a social justice issue, as the member for Christ Church West so politely puts it - because as I said, Madam Deputy Speaker, it suggests bias and therefore I want to disassociate myself from it.

Then my final point is the issue of the sale of drugs over the Internet, because this again is an area where there is significant weakness. The average Barbadian can go onto the Internet and purchase various substances from time to time. I myself - yes, the member for St. Thomas is correct - from time to time, I myself, on behalf of the member for St. George North, because the member for St. George North consistently asked me to research substances for him, I would go and examine these substances, and you can easily

purchase these substances over the Internet via the use of a VISA card. And therefore, again, as a country, we need to ensure that there are procedures in place so that we can protect our people, because we do not know the integrity of the information that is out there with certain substances. And I see my friend from St. George North is smiling because he knows what I am speaking about. He knows that I am speaking the truth.

In addition to which, of course, the other side of the coin is that we also have some pharmacists, some pharmacies in Barbados who are also providing goods over the Internet. And we also need regulations to ensure that they are not running afoul of laws outside of Barbados - in particular, laws where we conduct our international business - because we do not want to jeopardise our international business by being accused of providing vehicles for persons to circumvent the laws of other jurisdictions. So in that regard we also need to examine the Internet pharmacies in Barbados, ensure that they are properly regulated here as much as possible, and get a good sense in terms of where the business goes - that in fact they are not circumventing the laws of third countries, in particular third countries with whom we conduct business.

I am not going to comment on the overall framework of the Pharmacy Council. I plead bias. I have a bit of inside knowledge in terms of the operation of the Pharmacy Council and I can only say that I recognise the significant work done by the Pharmacy Council. And my final comment is that overall - and I am sure the Minister of Health will support me in this regard - based on my information, the public pharmacies have been doing a tremendous amount of work over the last couple of years. They have seen almost a 40 or 50 per cent increase in the amount of traffic that they have had to deal with, not only at the QEH but certainly also at the polyclinics across Barbados. And they have stood the test of time. They stood up to the challenge of the large volume of prescriptions that they have been seeing. So I want to end by giving my support to this bill. Yes, it is a slight amendment to the law, but it is also important because what the Minister wanted to ensure was that the Pharmacy Council has the teeth to do the type of regulation that is required - because it is important for us to be able to protect the integrity of the sector. With those few words, I again support this bill. Thank you, Madam.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Honourable member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: In rising to wrap up discussion on this amendment, I want to start by thanking Honourable Members for their contributions and support, because the point must be made even in raising very important issues. The Member for Christ Church West was clearly supportive of the objectives of the amendment. Her

concern about ministerial involvement in appointments, etc., is something which is an easy item to raise. But certainly there I think that we have to respect the office of Ministers and understand that certainly as a Minister I do not and cannot operate in a vacuum. One operates on the basis of advice given by the officers of the Ministry. One operates on the basis of information reaching you from the public of Barbados. And therefore the ultimate decision is made - yes - by the Minister, and usually in consultation with the highest office of the country, that is the Cabinet of Barbados. And therefore I think that although it is a criticism that is often made, the Honourable Member must bear in mind it is really a criticism of an office for which we need to build up a lot more regard, appreciating the gravity of the kind of decisions that are made in that office of Ministers.

Her point about the abuse of drugs I alluded to in discussions with the antimicrobial resistance battle, which is not local in any way - it is an international battle. And I certainly take note of her comments in regard to over-the-counter drugs, etc. And this was supported in the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. James South. Continued professional education is something which we certainly consider as extremely important. I must make note of the fact that we have just started to offer at the Barbados Community College a degree in pharmacology, and this is a four-year programme which has rolled out from this year. So there is some progress being made in the whole question of the training of our young professional pharmacists.

The four-year Bachelor's in Pharmacy programme of course supports or strengthens what is now a three-year associate degree programme at the same Community College. So there is recognition for the need to continue providing opportunities for training, for continuing to provide opportunities for retraining. And indeed I do support the call from the Honourable Member also in respect to the question of continued professional education. This is something that has caught on very well in the medical profession and we are now beginning to roll it out in other areas. And I hear his call, of course, for a much wider application of this approach in other professions.

Mr. Speaker, I take the point made by the Honourable Attorney General when he spoke to the question of repetition of drugs for persons who may be taking these drugs habitually or addictively. And one of the approaches that we intend to strengthen is that this will be included in the application of our information technology solution to clinical practice in Barbados. There is already in existence some level of computer management of the pharmacy programme, but it does not deal with the kind of real-time activities which will be required to manage such a process. So as we roll out MedData, as it is called, in the polyclinics and eventually in the hospital and eventually in

the private sector - because I think we need to make this point - it is important that as part of the Ministry of Health's rollout of this health information system in Barbados, we need to bring the private sector on board. That will allow us, using some unique identifier for every individual in Barbados, to be able to point to issues as raised by the Honourable Attorney General in his contribution.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what has come out of this debate today - as simple as an amendment as it may sound - is the fact that there is need for the country to discuss many issues related to the whole management of drugs in Barbados: the legal drugs and the illegal drugs. And this debate, as the Honourable Attorney General has said, and indeed as the Member for Christ Church West indicated, will and must come. And at that time I am sure that many more Barbadians would be able to come out and put their position. Whether it is led by the Ministry of Health or led by the Ministry of Home Affairs is in some ways irrelevant. The point is that the debate must take place and it must inform the direction in which this country goes in the whole question of pharmacy management.

I need to make the point again that the pharmaceutical policy for Barbados is in the final stages of development for presentation to this Chamber and to the country of Barbados. And therefore that document will also seek to discuss and point the direction in which we go in terms of the overall management of pharmaceuticals in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I think therefore that this has been an interesting - yes, brief, but interesting - debate which obviously has indicated the need to come back again to this topic and to share even more broadly with Barbadians. And Sir, with those few remarks and graciously thanking contributors to the discussion, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee for further consideration of this Bill.

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

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

The Schedule became the Schedule to the Bill.

On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, Mr. Chairman reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Pharmacy Amendment Act, 2015.

PAPERS

Mr. SPEAKER: Papers. Yes. Honourable Prime Minister.

Rt. Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, earlier I had indicated to the House that I was commanded to lay the Barbados National Oil Company Limited Annual Report for the year 2014. Apparently there was a typographical error on the document before me. It should really be the Barbados National Oil Company Limited Annual Report for 2013. So I stand to make that correction and to indicate to the House that I am in fact commanded to lay the Annual Report for the year 2013 of the Barbados National Oil Company Limited.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be suspended for lunch until 2.15 this afternoon.

The question that the House be suspended until 2.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: All Honourable Members, this sitting is resumed. Government Business - resume Order Number 17. Order Number 17 will be moved by the Honourable Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance. The Resolution to approve, in accordance with Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Chapter 228, the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of a parcel of land situated at Durance Village in the parish of St. James in this island, for the public purpose of the construction of a roadway which will facilitate access to the proposed nursery school at the site of the Old St. John the Baptist Boys' School. Member for Christ Church East Central.

ORDER NO. 17 – RESOLUTION – LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP. 228 – COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT DURANCE VILLAGE, ST. JAMES

Hon. R. D. JONES: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This parcel of land measuring 832.9 square metres or thereabouts is needed to provide access to a new nursery school which will be developed at the old St. John the Baptist site. You would know, or you would remember, sir, that at that site you also had at one time a police complex. And in keeping with the wider philosophy of the Government of the day - that where you can utilise existing space to develop the infrastructure, in this case for the building out of a nursery school, that you so do - the buildings at that site will be converted into a nursery school to serve that part of St. James. And of course, because nursery schools tend also to attract highly mobile populations, it would serve whoever comes to that area.

This is one of the nursery school developments which of course had its origins in the notion of providing access to education or early childhood care and development going back for quite a long time. Indeed, it was drawn to my attention that as far back as 1961 the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party pointed to the whole notion of the development of early childhood education - 1961, some 54 years ago. So this whole idea of the provision of nursery education was part and parcel of the education sector of Barbados. I remember the particular parts of that manifesto spoke to the development of early childhood, pre-school or nursery education being implemented by 1962 when the party would have commenced the government in Barbados. It also spoke to the notion that wherever convenient, nursery annexes would be established at large primary schools, and their purpose would be to bridge the gap between infancy and the primary schools. But it did not leave out the specialists who would work with these young ones. At point three on nursery schools it said: special importance will be attached to the training of teachers for these schools where the Froebel and Montessori methods will be utilised, with modification appropriate to local conditions. So way back in 1961, the notion of the provision of early childhood care and development, or the establishment of nursery schools, was implanted in the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party.

My mind tells me that the first standalone establishment of a large nursery was in fact constructed during that particular period. But greater momentum has developed now, coming out of several regional, local and international discussions on what we do with our three-to-five-year-olds in our various countries. Between 1994 and 2008 the effort was sustained in the country - and I'd like to be fair - and we had the development of All Saints and St. Boniface as nursery schools. And in fact, keeping true to the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, where space was available in primary schools, nursery classes

were in fact developed. Then we moved to the period 2008 where the Algon Miller Nursery School was commenced and completed. The Maria Holder Nursery School was built at Sharon, completed and occupied in 2011. And that started the commencement of a new breed or style of nursery schools in Barbados, supported of course by the Maria Holder Trust. So what you saw happening, Mr. Speaker, was a philosophy and ideology in relation to early childhood care and development being assisted and built out by the Government along with philanthropic assistance in this country.

The school at Jones Village in St. James is one of a number of new nursery schools to be built. In fact, this was the first one of a group of six that should have started construction. But because of the necessary practices of acquisition - identifying who owned the land and all of that - it took a bit of time to reach this particular stage. But that has not stopped the build-out of the nursery schools. In fact, if you journey to the parish of Christ Church in an area known as Gall Hill Number 2, as you move to the Churchill Road, you will find that there is a new nursery school being constructed. I am told that the nursery school should be completed by mid-January, but that the relevant parties are trying to complete it by mid-December. This will be a custom-built nursery school with all of the particular features important to nursery education. And soon to commence as well would be another custom-built nursery school at Oldbury, Glenshire, in the parish of St. Philip, that would be used to accommodate 120 students from quite a large demographic, because St. Philip is one of the fastest-growing parishes relative to population in Barbados, and therefore provision has been made for the establishment of a nursery school in that area.

So that would bring to us the one at Jones Village in St. James, the one at Gall Hill Number 2 in Christ Church, the one at Oldbury in St. Philip. The Government Hill Nursery School is a relatively small nursery school, so a new nursery school will be constructed on the state's land where Cooperative Heights used to be. As you enter to go into Charles F. Broome and into the Government Hill School on the right, a new nursery school will be constructed as well to house 120 students. I believe the current population at the Government Hill Nursery stands at around 70. In the northern part, in Carlton, they had identified the land where the old Auburn's Infants used to be located, but that has proven a bit problematic and the search is on for a larger piece of land in that area to facilitate also the expansion of nursery education. You will have up on the highway St. Boniface, and on the lower road you will have another nursery school catering to the population - what we call up the hill and down the hill - which can capture students moving from the north and some coming up from the south of St. James to take care of that population. And it is proposed that in the Skeete's Court area another school will also be constructed.

All of this is as a result of the partnership which has developed between the Maria Holder Trust and the Ministry of Education, but by wider implication the Government and people of Barbados, and we wish of course to continue to thank them for their input into this very important area of education in Barbados. Going back a little while, the Government had agreed, along with CARICOM agencies - the Prime Ministers, I should say the Heads of Government - that by 2015 all nursery-age children, those from three up, would be placed in a formal environment in which trained and competent practitioners would be able to develop their skills, knowledge and competencies. We have not yet reached that point, but based on our statistics and the number in that age cohort, we should satisfy this particular agenda by 2018. So by 2018 all students aged three to five will be able to be accommodated either in public sector or private sector institutions. And this is part of the broader policy not to displace existing institutions which provide early childhood care and development, but to use it as a complementary process to satisfy the total early childhood grouping in that particular area.

I wish, Mr. Speaker, just to make a few other comments, because allied to this infrastructural development has been training, which started before but has now reached quite a high point. Erdiston has in the past provided training for early childhood practitioners, but in the last two years we have seen a step up. We have seen partnership and cooperation between WHEELAC, Wheelock College, Teachers College and the Higher Education Development Unit in the provision of specific and targeted training for these practitioners. So we trained 25 in 2013-2014; some of them have now gone on to do their masters in this particular area of specialisation. We have now commenced a second cohort for 2015-2016 of another 25, and within another matter of months we will have another 25 for 2016-2017. So you will have, in this particular partnership, some 75 to 80 early childhood practitioners - early childhood educators - being trained with the agencies mentioned. And this is again as a result of the support and intervention of the Maria Holder Trust.

So as I said earlier, the philosophy, the ideology, all tied to this rollout of this very important group of our citizens - this particular cohort, our young citizens. I wish to make the point that for many decades we have spent a lot of money and paid a lot of attention to primary education, five to eleven; secondary education, eleven to sixteen; post-secondary, particularly in the area of expansion - the sixteen-plus, either the returning fifth-formers or upper fifth, those who go past sixteen, as well as now those students who are doing the CAPE programme. In the past I believe there were about four or so A-level or CAPE schools, namely Harrison College, Queen's College, Combermere and Lodge. And what we have done is expand the number of those schools which write CAPE subjects or,

in some instances where necessary, CVQ Level 2 - Level 1 being the initial stage, which is equivalent to the CSEC subject. So we have joined to those four: St. Michael's Foundation, Springer Memorial, St. Leonard's Boys', and this year, which commenced in September, the Alexandra School. Because it is our view that it is better for the build-out of the sixteen-plus, sixteen to eighteen-plus, within the school setting of these schools and others, because others will also join in that build-out.

We have to thank those principals who sat down, looked at the idea, were able to accommodate it within existing structures and resources, and continue to build out. I am hoping that over the next two years, Mr. Speaker, we can find the resources - teachers are not a problem. I think this country has been so well served by its teaching population, with their qualifications, their skills, their lifelong learning experiences. I don't believe there is anything that our teachers cannot do in a positive way to influence the learning behaviour of our 60 000-plus students in both the primary and secondary schools in the public and private sector. So I would want to see a school like Alleyne - which I sat in this House about two months ago and said is one of the gems of education in Barbados - also come formally into that post-sixteen structure to provide that level of learning and adaptability. Because it is important that we do this, because as you move to the tertiary level you do not want to waste resources, you do not want to spend an inordinately long period of time with those students at either the Community College, SJPP or the University of the West Indies.

So that is why you have seen a bit of rebalancing in the whole process of education over the last two to three years, where we say we have to ensure that there is adequate distribution of the resources from nursery right through the entire system right through to the University of the West Indies. And we have been doing this, and to find the resources in difficult circumstances for the further build-out of nursery education, that rebalancing had to take place. So the population of Barbados must be aware that this emphasis and this effort is to give those who might not be able to get into any of the existing public nursery schools or the private nursery schools the opportunity, once completed over the next two or so years, to go into one of these new nursery schools. And that their children, their wards, will be well taken care of by the teachers and the school leaders within the education system of Barbados. And this must be seen as an important effort.

When we look across the Caribbean, there are one or two countries which have satisfied the request or the idea of provision - 100 per cent provision - for early childhood care and development, early pre-primary education. There are different names you call the same thing, so do not be misled, but Barbados is right there, and I am saying that in about two years this should be satisfied. And we base that

statement on our analysis of the statistics when we look at the last census - young children being born and the number - that we should satisfy this particular area quite well.

We have also seen, Mr. Speaker, another important philanthropic institution in Barbados working in another area of development - that is special needs education. And I do not think that we can leave those out as we speak to these efforts. One saw the Sandy Lane Trust and the Tanglewood Trust building out two important institutions: the Early Stimulation Centre called the Sunshine School, that is at Perry Gap near the Barbados Workers' Union headquarters, just at the back of that; and now the Derek Smith School and Vocational Centre at Lears. All of these have been partnership efforts with the Government of Barbados. The Sunshine School is a school that goes to age eleven, developed by the Trust itself. The Government of Barbados provides the resources for payment of staff and that kind of thing at the Derek Smith School and Vocational Centre there at Lears. So \$1.5 million is provided in our Estimates to take care of those needs. That was the agreement, and we should also express our sincere thanks to them. Where there is a need, and institutions in the society - philanthropic organisations, NGOs, community-based organisations, people with the wherewithal - working with the state through its various departments or ministries, are encouraged to let us build out these institutions together.

We have seen also the Maria Holder Trust working in the secondary school sector, particularly in the area of technical and vocational education. At the Parkinson School, soon to be opened, was a construction of a technical wing costing around \$3 million - what we would call a two-storied facility with the appropriate equipment for use by the students and maybe others who can access it. At the Royal Parkinson Memorial School, the Trust provided 50 per cent of the cost for the construction of that facility and would ensure that all of the equipment for that facility is placed within that important part of educational development - the technical, vocational, industrial arts wing of the school. And this would give that school, along with so many others, the ability to push ahead with the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications, which are competency-based qualifications that have been developed over time, originating in Jamaica through CANTA - the Caribbean Association of National Training Organisations. The equivalent of course being the TVET Council here in Barbados, who is a member of CANTA. And I believe we have about 180 standards - and the word standard could be used in the same context as how you say a subject. So standards are developed for cosmetology, a standard is developed for barbering, a standard is developed for cake-making or pastry-making, and about 180-plus standards in all.

Several of our schools have moved ahead in the implementation of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification. The first of those schools being the Daryl Jordan Secondary in St. Lucy, along with Alleyne Secondary, working in conjunction with Daryl Jordan for block-release as a Caribbean Vocational Qualification. Others have joined that process: St. George Secondary, Grantley Adams, St. Leonard's Boys'. But all of our schools are gradually moving - Princess Margaret as well - into recognising the importance of what people refer to as the outcomes-based academic sphere of education, heavily linked to the technical, vocational, competency-based education sphere as well. So you will see, or you have seen, some students leaving school rather than with one hand wrapped around a certificate - they have both hands wrapped around two certificates: one that deals with the academic, the other that deals with competency training. And particularly in the competency-based area, a child can leave school with a CVQ Level 1, go on a work site and be a competent bricklayer or competent steel bender. And you will find as well that they do not have to stop there - the CVQ has up to five levels: CVQ Level 1 equivalent to CSEC; CVQ Level 2 equivalent to CAPE; CVQ Level 3 equivalent to an associate degree; CVQ Level 4 equivalent to a master's degree; CVQ Level 5 equivalent to our doctoral programme or fellowship. So the equivalencies are there.

Most of that will come up later if it comes up under the item dealing with the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development. But there is a picture of students now being able to graduate from our secondary school system with a wider array of qualifications to better satisfy their needs. And I want to link that to the early childhood educational sector, because we know that not all citizens of Barbados have the wherewithal to say, well, I am going to send my child to a -

private institution, private early childhood educational institution. And that is where the state - or the government, but let us use the word state as a broad institution looking into the landscape of the total society and equipped with the knowledge or the notion of equality and equity and social justice and fairness - provides that framework through which many of those who might find themselves in vulnerable circumstances can also benefit from that early nurturing, that early care, that early opening of their whole learning ability to achieve. I am sure that as others come on board - other practitioners, other sociologists, educational psychologists, et cetera - they will be able to study over time the impact of our efforts in early childhood development, early childhood education, pre-primary education, and what that important move that commenced some time ago and further consolidated continuously through governments would have caused those persons, those young people, to reach.

It is important that we continue to place resources for this particular age cohort - the 3 to 5 - in our school system and in the private spaces wherever there exists. So this resolution dealing with the acquisition of that parcel of land, 132.9 square metres, is but a small contribution to an otherwise dynamic area of education which is taking place within this country without a lot of noise being made, a lot of screaming being undertaken, but seamlessly working its way throughout the system.

I can tell you, if you visit any of these places where you find those three to four year olds, three to five year olds, it is so revealing. The beauty of their desire to know, to learn, to become, to be part of an emerging civilisation of conscious people is really remarkable. The questions they ask, the love they give, the responses that they give, is truly remarkable. It is really refreshing within those young people.

So one wonders sometimes why, as you grow older, there might be a deviation from that early loving environment for all of our three to five year olds, and the burdens which are created and the challenges within the wider society that some of them would then want to present. But that is not the time for that debate again. We have to be serious as we look at post-16 students, our 13 year olds, that difficult period of transition, and what else we can do to ensure that they transition successfully into good citizens of Barbados and good citizens of the world.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to continue any further on this. I just wanted to provide a historical context as well as a contemporary context in relation to what is happening and the holistic framework from 1961 right up to this particular period, and the efforts being expended both by Government, philanthropic organisations, and persons within the wider private sector of Barbados. So with those words, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this resolution do now pass.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for St. [Inaudible.]

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I rise firstly to give the support of the opposition party to this resolution. We would always support any resolution that is for the further development of education of children in this country and of the total development of the youth of this country on the whole. But of course this resolution gives honourable members here today the opportunity to speak within the wider context of early childhood education in Barbados and in the wider form in terms of educational policy and development of those in charge of the educational system of our citizens.

At this time, I will not challenge the honourable Minister of Education's statement that the Democratic

Labour Party in 1961 included in its manifesto the issue of developing early childhood education in Barbados. That would be great because the honourable member has on previous occasions offered to share with the opposition papers on education. In fact, he said he was going to bring one the next day in the Estimates. Up to now, we are still awaiting that paper. So I give him the benefit of the doubt on this occasion.

Clearly, the Prime Minister speaks about sanctimonious hypocrisy and that. That might be an issue about letting me see this manifesto, but I will not challenge him on that on this occasion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable member, I don't think that is appropriate language. You seem to be saying that the member is sanctimoniously hypocritical. I don't care how you dress it up. I think there is parliamentary language and you should withdraw it, please.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: I withdraw that aspect of the record, but the fact is that we have not got papers on educational policy which the honourable member promised us since March this year. That is a factor. But the reality of the situation is that, as the honourable member conceded, nursery education took off under the last Barbados Labour Party administration, led by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter and under the ministerial leadership of the present Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and quite a few nursery schools were formed and established during that period. And that is well - as we agree, I think on both sides - that should be the case.

Because the general view, for example, by Eva Hujala, who is one of the leading world specialists in child development education, a lady from Finland - the general view is that early education is the first and most critical stage of lifelong learning and that neurological research has in fact shown that 90 per cent of the brain growth occurs during the first five years of life. Therefore, it stands to reason that we should place some kind of emphasis on education between ages 3 and 5. Finland, for example, provides each and every parent - both the mother and father of newborn babies - with a book for their child at birth as well as a book for the child itself, in order to foster a culture of reading. So critical an emphasis is placed by Finland, which is of course one of the leading countries in the world in terms of the Human Development Index, on early childhood development.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we need to examine and have a total policy on early childhood development. We in the opposition, of course, join with the honourable Minister of Education in commending institutions such as the Maria Holder Trust, the Sandy Lane Trust, and the Tanglewood Trust - Derek Smith - for coming to the forefront at this critical stage, and especially now when our government

continues to be short of funds and we continue to be in an economic recession now for the seventh or eighth straight year in this country. We commend these trusts, largely by non-Barbadian born but now people who regard Barbados as their home or second home, in terms of bringing their financial resources together to create and establish these educational institutions, especially for those who would not have been able under normal circumstances to afford such education.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, it was so critical - and I have to again thank the Honourable Minister of Finance for eventually waiving the issue of VAT and customs duties on the bus of which we spoke the last time there was a debate on persons with disabilities. But I condemn the government for taking so long to waive those customs duties and VAT on a bus for persons with disabilities - a bus that had been in the port for six months since January this year - when the government has an agreement with the same Maria Holder Trust that material would be brought in duty free. So we could not understand why there was such a delay and why there was such an issue and why it had to take me raising the issue in Parliament and others calling the Ministry of Finance for the issue to be addressed. But we still have to give credit to the Ministry of Finance for eventually waiving the issue and to hope that such an occurrence does not take place again when there is a written agreement between the Government of Barbados and the Maria Holder Trust - whom the Minister praised as well - that material and equipment, et cetera, would come in duty free and VAT free for the benefit of Barbadians, and for children, and especially underprivileged special needs children, to learn and to advance as is their right under the laws of Barbados.

I am happy that the Minister has clarified the position on the site at Lower Carlton - the St. Albans site - because earlier this year we were hearing that land had been allocated at St. Albans, the old primary school site there opposite St. Albans Primary Church in my constituency, for the building of a nursery school. And again, that was to be funded by the Maria Holder Trust. But the common feeling among the residents in that district, those who know the geography of the place, was that it was too small a piece of land to build any nursery. And we have heard that today from the Minister. In fact, I had that issue to raise when I heard him mention it. And I would trust that the search for an alternative site within the area would be diligently pursued, especially since, as we said, the Maria Holder Trust has committed itself to fund such a nursery school.

The issue was raised as to certification of children leaving primary school. And we in the opposition would certainly want to urge the government to seriously address this particular issue. Because the fact is that still too many of our children leave school at 16 years old, 17 years old,

without certification. I believe that it is close to 50 per cent. I am not so sure of the exact figure, but my understanding is that it is still close to one in two children who leave school without certification. And I know the government, the policymakers, have come up with this idea of widening it - the CVQs which was mentioned in the honourable Minister's presentation just now. And certainly we look forward to that being concretised and to a set policy being put in place on that issue so that more of our children can leave school with certification. Because we need to maximise our human resource capacity in this country. We must have an educational system - in fact a total system of policy - whereby no one is left behind, as many people must be involved in terms of our national development, especially at this time of development of our country moving into 50 years of independence.

The question also arises as to what kind of citizen we wish to see in this country. What kind of individual do we need to continue taking Barbados forward in terms of our national development? The Government of Barbados, in my opinion, has not really devised any vision of where it wants to see Barbados in the next 15 to 20 years. And I certainly believe that this is one of the defects of this government in terms of policy. You have to formulate a vision of where you want your country to be. You have to in turn develop a criteria - a profile - of what kind of citizen you need to take you there.

Certainly I would want to see the development of a policy at pre-primary school level, nursery school level, of a citizen who is going to be full of self-esteem, of self-confidence; a citizen who is independent; a citizen who has a spirit of volunteerism that will help them to realise that they have to contribute and put back into the country what they have benefited from, that they have to help those who are less fortunate and more vulnerable than them. We have to find a way to have a policy to produce a more active and productive citizen - a citizen who will have greater respect for the differences of their school partners and a person with more positive attitudes towards their environment and their different cultures. We will also need, in my opinion, in our opinion, to produce young people who have the ability and capacity to think critically and to solve problems and to resolve conflict without feeling that they need to embark on violence to determine a difference with an individual. And all of those criteria and profiles of a citizen that we need to take us forward in this country have to be inculcated from nursery school level. Therefore, a policy has to be developed to take us to that stage.

We have not had curriculum reform in this country since this Democratic Labour Party government came into office almost eight years ago. We have not had a total curriculum reform whatsoever since the year 2000 - since the year 2000 when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was Minister of Education and the Honourable

Member for St. Thomas was Parliamentary Secretary in that ministry. Fifteen years is a decade and a half and it is high time that we have total curriculum reform.

We need, as I said, Mr. Speaker, to formulate some kind of policy. Barbados, with the educational background historically that we have had, and especially since adult suffrage developed by both political parties, the educational policy - we are in a prime position to move Barbados forward, where we become the scientific and technological hub in the Caribbean. We all speak about Singapore many times in this country and others. I believe I read recently that a delegation is going to Singapore soon, or has gone, to see how they are celebrating their 50th year of independence, which is this year, having become a sovereign country just before us. Singapore developed a policy under Lee Kuan Yew as to what it wanted to be, where it wanted its place to be, not only in the Pacific region, the Asian region where it lies, but within the whole world. And we can devise a scheme whereby we can become the scientific and technological hub in the whole Caribbean. But we need some kind of policy, starting from preschool and coming up, as to how we will get there.

The Barbados entrepreneurial group, I believe, also came up with a policy when the last Barbados Labour Party administration was in office, of moving Barbados forward to become an entrepreneurial hub in the Caribbean by 2020. We have regressed in that respect as well, with the difficulty - as the Honourable Minister of Industry agrees - of doing business in Barbados becoming more and more difficult every day, business of whatever kind. Right now, for instance, a photocopier has broken down in the registry in Barbados, hindering legal work. So you cannot do a lot of legal business because apparently the finances are not there to repair a photocopier or replace it for two weeks. All of that goes against the ease of doing business in this country. And therefore we have fallen back in our noble desire to have Barbados become an entrepreneurial hub in this part of the world.

But certainly, if we are to get there again, we need to create a policy that from young we will try to inculcate in our children some kind of desire to become entrepreneurs and to become independent in terms of their employment and to be able to employ others when they become adults. But that spirit is not going to be acquired when you reach university level or early adulthood. All of that needs to be created from young. And therefore we need, for instance, to have successful businesspersons, successful entrepreneurs go into our primary schools and teach our youth the ability and the basics in terms of business and entrepreneurialism and what it takes to reach there. But all of these can only come from a ministerial mandate - it needs leadership at the top of our educational system for all of this to be fostered - because the Minister of Education is the person mandated under the Education Act to frame an educational policy to

provide this varied and comprehensive educational system characterised by excellence. We must always bear this in mind: that we have to aim for excellence within our educational system.

The issue of special needs comes to bear in mind. And what is the government's policy, if any, on special needs education? I know, yes, as the Minister said recently, a school has been opened up on the Earlington site, I believe, at Edison, which caters to special needs children. I believe they have 12 children starting out. But I have not been able to discern, even with the naked eye, any policy emanating from this government on special needs education. And again, we must have that because no one must be left behind. Persons with special needs, persons who are differently able, a lot of them have special talents in other areas in terms of creativity, maybe in terms of arts and craft. And these must be - they have a right to have these special talents developed like any other child in this country. Therefore, what is the government's policy on special needs? It certainly, if they do have one, has not been pronounced to the people of Barbados or to this Parliament.

Chandler School, for example, also needs support. Yes, the Chandler School in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas needs government support. They have about 50 children going to school there. It is a school and institution that had been established in the early 1960s with the help of both the Lions Club of Barbados, as it then was, and the Rotary Club as well. And that school ought not to be left behind in this era when we need all our resources to help develop our human capacity as a nation, especially of our youth. And therefore we urge the government to provide some support for the Chandler School. In fact, a member on the government side is deputy chairman of the school and he in fact should support such a call.

I would wish, Mr. Speaker, to take the opportunity to commend the staff and the students of St. Albans Primary School in my constituency for their emphasis on science. St. Albans School, for the last three or four years, has had a science day and in fact that has turned out to be two or three days. And the level of their development and awareness of science at that age - primary school level - is as good as any secondary school sixth form. And that has been said by officials from the Ministry of Education. And you would want to commend St. Albans Primary School, the stakeholders, the staff and the students, and parents, for seeing that as a means of an opportunity to develop the children of that school, largely coming from the area and the surrounding districts in St. James North, and to give them certainly the option, as they become adults, to realise that science and technology, mathematics, et cetera, is something that they can get a career from and a worthwhile living from when they become adults.

On the issue, Mr. Speaker, of the acquisition of the land, we note that it is about 8 500 square feet of land - these days, of course, we speak in terms of metres, so it is 832 square metres of land. We do not know how much the government is paying for this land. But it brings us to the issue of compensation for landowners when the government acquires land, as the government has a right to do. And of course, any government looking at development of its people for social and economic purposes, for a public purpose, will do so. But again, we have to speak about compensation for landowners when government acquires the land. The principle, of course, as we have said before, and

as the right honourable Prime Minister agreed with me when I raised it, I believe last year that compensation should be adequate and it should be speedy. It is no sense saying that we are going to compensate the individual whose land is acquired eventually and they are going to get interest. I don't know if the interest used to be 6 per cent. I don't know if it's still 6 per cent at some time in the future and they get compensation 20 years down the road when they are dead or old and et cetera. And we have to concede, yes, both political parties have been at fault, both political administrations have been at fault on this issue. But the reality is, let us as parliamentarians put ourselves in the shoes of an individual whose land has been acquired for public purpose and you keep them without compensation for about 15, 20 years. I myself have had a couple of matters where I have had tremendous difficulty dealing with the Ministry of Housing on the issue of compensation. You hear that the plan hasn't been done, the parcel number hasn't been given by Land and Surveys and really and truly you get tired of the excuses by bureaucracy. But again, this needs direction from the political leadership that has overall statutory responsibility for the Ministry of Housing and overall political responsibility on this issue to compensate landowners speedily and adequately when their property is acquired. In many cases, land is acquired and not even a valuation is put on the land. The landowner doesn't even know how much money he can get for it. And this really is not fair in the year 2015 and we are acquiring land - I mean before us on the order paper are resolutions for I think quite a few parcels of land - and we trust that the government has allocated money for these land acquisitions and for compensation to be given to the landowners within a reasonable time.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we said, you know, we support this resolution. We though urge the government to create an overall policy framework for early childhood development and for special needs education of the youth and to realise that education of our people is certainly of tremendous significance if we wish to finally move ourselves out of this harsh economic and social recession that we have been under the Democratic Labour Party for the last seven years. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join this debate and of course to give full support for the motion before the House, particularly since this land acquisition that is being discussed here today lies in the constituency of St. James South that I have the honour of representing in this Parliament. And certainly the ultimate goal here is the creation and development of a nursery school at the old St. John the Baptist Boys' School, which was subsequently used as a police station for an extended period of time and has been lying in a state of disrepair for a few years, almost seven years or so. And hence this proposal to construct and operate a nursery school at that site has been in the works for many years. And I am very happy as a parliamentary representative for the constituency of St. James South that we have finally gotten to this point now where an access road has been agreed upon and the Cabinet agreed that we would do the acquisition and we are here in Parliament today. And simply put, that acquisition is necessary to ensure safe access to and from the property to the nursery school, since the access that has been used from the time that facility has been in place adjoins the major road, the Odessa Road, and hence has been deemed by the town planner to be dangerous not just for the children, but also for the parents and staff who have to use the facility ultimately.

So on behalf of the residents of St. James South, I wish to thank the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Education in particular for getting us to this point. But this must be seen within the context of two contexts really. One, about embracing philanthropy in Barbados and secondly about a commitment on the part of the Government of Barbados to expand access to nursery education for all Barbadians. And needless to say, this latter part has come about because of the change in demographics, because of the changing family situation in Barbados as well as a commitment on the part of government - successive governments, I must say - to expand education opportunity at this young age of three to five. And on the family side, certainly we are very cognisant of the fact that gone are the days when children at that age had grandparents or had a mother in particular at home to mind them until they were ready to enter primary school at five years old. Today, obviously parents need to place their children in some kind of daycare facility from a very early age. Of course we have the pre-nursery schools that would take them from a few months old perhaps until they are ready to enter full nursery school and then into primary school. And I believe that the state has to be aware of these changing circumstances and be very proactive in planning and preparing for them.

Certainly I don't think that we have done as good a job over the last 20 years in particular in making adequate

provision for this group of citizens, those under the age of five, because it certainly does have a major impact upon the ability of parents and it is particularly upon the ability of women to obtain and maintain meaningful employment in Barbados when they have to remain at home taking care of their young charges. So certainly this must be seen within that context - in the era of providing additional opportunities for parents to be able to get on with their other existence and know that their children are in a safe environment and learning and developing the cognitive skills and the social skills necessary to build a solid foundation and become a meaningful contributor to the economic and social development of Barbados.

So I certainly wish to commend the Ministry of Education for having the vision of expanding access to nursery schools in Barbados. Needless to say, the more we do, the more we realise there is much more to be done. And therefore we have the call for more nursery schools to be established around Barbados. I think that is driven by the fact, too, that many parents want to know that nursery schools are available and accessible within their geographical space or certainly within the route that they take in driving to and from work. And I believe that the planners have to pay a bit more attention to this particular phenomenon. I certainly realise, as M.P. for St. James South, the constant complaints I get from residents of Haynesville who complain of not getting access to the nursery school and the child care facility in Haynesville, because there are residents from outside of the Haynesville community who deem it necessary to use that facility because of the convenience based on its location. And hence there is a feeling that residents in Haynesville are denied and deprived of the opportunity to get their children into that nursery. Of course, the state has limited resources. And we often find ourselves, as parliamentarians, in a bind between recognising the limited resources of the state and its inability to meet the demands of all and satisfying the demands of our immediate constituents.

And I believe that the same argument will arise as we move forward with this nursery school at Hordes Hill. I will certainly make the plea for priority to be given to residents in the surrounding communities, St. James South and also St. James generally. But I am very mindful that there is a considerable amount of demand that will necessitate this being seen as a facility serving the north of the island until such point in time as we can do better in addressing the demand for nursery school education.

It is not for me to pronounce upon the curriculum at that level, except to say, Mr. Speaker, that as I listened to the Honourable Member for St. James North just now reflecting upon curriculum development and reflecting upon academia, I am concerned that a lot of our young children perhaps are being pressured into a heavy focus on traditional academic subjects of maths, English, reading

and writing, but are not being taught the fundamentals of social graces, not being taught how to communicate effectively with one another, how to be your brother's keeper, the fundamental things in life. And as a result, I am afraid that if we continue on that trajectory, we will have children that have a lot of certificates but really cannot function in the world. And I believe, certainly at that tender age of three to five, I don't wish for my child to be crammed with Mathematics and English and reading and writing et cetera. I think that children ought to be allowed to be children at that age, certainly, and to appreciate and to learn a lot more than what we consider to be the traditional academia. Let us perhaps leave that to a later part of their journey in life. And this is very instructive because I believe that a lot of what we discuss today, especially in terms of conduct among young people, has its root in a lot of what they are being taught, what is being shown to them at that tender age of three to five.

The other point I make, Mr. Speaker, in relation to this matter is that I don't want individuals who may look to use this nursery school or other nursery schools around the island to feel that this is another opportunity to abdicate their responsibility as parents. Because I continue to be very concerned as we enter into a discussion from time to time in respect of the conduct of young people that really we ought to be having more of a discussion about the conduct of older people and adults in this society. Because quite often we need to realise that Barbados is quietly emerging as a society where everyone is looking to pass the buck on to someone else and blame everybody else for what really and truly ought to be their responsibility. And I am growing increasingly concerned about the number of parents in this society who are willing, at the drop of a hat, to abdicate their responsibility as parents to our school system. And I don't believe that this is fair. I think our teachers labour immensely every day and I don't think that we can reasonably expect them to take on the role of parents. I think parents, even at that tender age of nursery school, have to accept that they have a responsibility to guide and direct the affairs of their children.

The second plank, Mr. Speaker, in respect of this matter before us - the acquisition of land for the nursery school - is to reflect upon the contribution and the importance of philanthropy in the Barbadian context today. And the reality about it is that the Honourable Member of Parliament for St. James North made comments to the effect that perhaps the work of the Maria Holder Trust is in direct relation to the state of the economy. I say that is rather unfortunate because regardless of the economy, whether it is growing or contracting, there is a role for those who are deep-pocketed and who are committed to a cause to play in this society. And I believe that this ought to give us the opportunity as a group of parliamentarians to reflect upon the immense contribution that high net worth individuals have been making to Barbadian society. And

you know, before we used to speak of them in terms of their homes in Sandy Lane, the kind of cars they drive, where they dine et cetera. But the truth of the matter, just as we have reflected through the Maria Holder Trust, there are those individuals who have fallen in love with Barbados. They have felt safe and secure in Barbados. They have made Barbados their home away from home and in many instances they have opted to make it their primary home. And they have causes that they have identified with - certainly in this case the cause of alleviating challenges among young people; causes that relate to building strong family structures and maintaining them; causes that relate to access to education at various levels; causes that relate to taking care of those with special needs and many others. And where these opportunities exist, to my mind, it is the role of the state to encourage them and foster their development by ensuring that we have the best enabling environment to make that happen.

And this Democratic Labour Party government has been pushing through the Ministry of Finance as well as through the Prime Minister's office and other mechanisms the kind of approach that encourages and embraces philanthropy in Barbados. And this is something that we must all take fully on board. And it is not an effort to replace the state; it is to complement the work of the state. It is also a way of rejoicing in and recognising the immense contribution and appreciating the worth and the contribution of those who have the wherewithal to make an impact positively upon some aspects of our society. And it is not just the Maria Holder Trust. I think that there are perhaps the Edna Leon Trust and others - wonderful examples of how trusts work and we can see the tangible benefits of their planning and their professionalism in delivery. But there are many others out there who may not be heard about every day, but who are quietly and steadfastly giving back to this society. And many of them are indeed Barbadians. They may not be writing cheques of six-figure sums et cetera. Some of them may only be volunteering their time. But the reality about it is that there are many in this society who are certainly helping to take care of the less fortunate in Barbados. So deserving that second plank of philanthropy and accepting its contribution must not go unrecognised. And I certainly want to join with my colleagues in thanking and acknowledging the immense contribution of the Maria Holder Trust and also, I believe associated with them to some extent, the Brewster Trust in providing opportunities through brick and mortar facilities, as they have done with nursery schools, as well as perhaps the less visible contribution that they have made in terms of scholarships and providing financial support to the needy in this society. It is not a matter of their doing it because the state cannot do it. It is a matter of their doing it because they are committed and because there is a need in this society, and the state and certainly this government continues to show deep appreciation for their immense contribution.

So Mr. Speaker, as parliamentary representative for the constituency of St. James South, I certainly thank my colleagues for getting us to this point and on behalf of my constituents look forward eagerly to the day when we can officially open that nursery school at Hordes Hill and satisfy the needs of many in that immediate community and further afield, while at the same time creating job opportunities - as there will be during the construction phase, which I hope will start soon - as well as those who provide the teaching and ancillary services therein, and above all to ensure that we are able once again through the assistance of the Maria Holder Trust to provide the right environment that is conducive for the cognitive and social development of our three to five year old group in this society. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I also rise to support this resolution before the House and to make the point that I, unlike my comrade, I totally agree with the Honourable Member for St. James North where he made the point that this type of support is a sign that the economy is in trouble. Because this type of support started prior to the Democratic Labour Party and it started at Sharon in the parish of St. Thomas. So if the Honourable Member for St. James North wants to admit that when they were telling the public that the economy was good, that it wasn't good, I will support him in that suggestion - because anybody in here would know that the first school that started with Sharon, when the Moral Holder Trust started, was the one at the school in St. Thomas. So if he wants to admit that to the House, and that what he has been telling the south is that the economic power started under the Democratic Labour Party.

Now he has admitted, as he has admitted previously when he said that he misled the House as it relates to the relationship between the Ministry of Finance and also the Moral Holder Trust as it relates to concessions. So if today is his day, sir, for admitting.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: On a point of order. I never said that I misled any House on any issue, far less on the relationship between the Ministry of Finance and the Moral Holder Trust. So I do not know where the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is going with that at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well. I take it he was saying that was his interpretation of what you said. All right, please continue.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: So, Mr. Speaker, now he has joined the debate. He said that there was no such agreement between the two. Today he came and admitted that there is an agreement in place. So I can only think, and there is a matter, sir, in his speech that I would like to also

compliment him for, sir - when he called on this government to pay the outstanding monies for land acquisition, sir. Because everybody who knows would know, sir, that the majority of the money that is owed under the Ministry of Housing for land acquisitions occurred prior to 2008. And the other member is right - that is not right, and I agree with him. It was not right for them, when they had all the money in the world, to leave that bill for the Ministry now to have to service. So I want to also agree with you, Honourable Member, sir.

And I want to say, sir, that this project - I do not believe it has anything to do with the economy. It has a lot to do with the policy of the Democratic Labour Party. Whereas from as early as 2008 we signalled the persons in Barbados who had wealth, or those who had a kind heart, to contribute to projects in the interests of country Barbados and to demonstrate their faith in the country. Demonstrate their faith in the country Barbados, which these people have done. And up to last week, sir, I saw the Honourable Member for St. James North in the newspaper accepting gifts from one of these high-net-worth people. But the Honourable Member thinks it is fitting for him to accept gifts but not for the country Barbados to accept gifts. Then the Honourable Member sent his notes in the newspaper, on the television, accepting - guess what? He had high flyers about feeling like a queen. It is only he and his roommate who can be the only persons that can receive. But when it comes to country Barbados, it is a problem for the country to receive.

Mr. Speaker, he also spoke about valuations. And everybody knows that when you are doing a land acquisition, one of the first things you have to do is to send to the Land Tax Department to get a valuation. So when I am hearing now from the Honourable Member that there is no valuation being done, the Honourable Member can only be speaking prior to 2008. Because it is the policy of the Ministry of Housing and Lands that as soon as they receive an inquiry, they write the Land Tax Department of Barbados to get the valuation of the land. It is.

And, Mr. Speaker, sir, as a lawyer, the Honourable Member for St. James North knows that the other person from whom we are acquiring the land has a right to get a valuer of their own and a lawyer of their own to represent them. So I do not understand the argument the Honourable Member has put before this House, because he cannot be speaking as a lawyer or he cannot be speaking as a person with knowledge of the procedure on these matters. Because if my memory serves me correctly, I have seen his name in the file representing people on these matters. And I am here to believe that the Honourable Member has misled his clients on this particular matter.

So, Mr. Speaker, sir, I want to say, sir, that these projects - and the Honourable Member is very fortunate,

sir, because as he said, he is so fortunate that he even has the opportunity of having one of these projects in his constituency. So he cannot claim that this government is being political and that they are not allocating a project like this. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, that I am the Minister of Housing. I have to acquire or agree to the land or agree to whatever other conditions. I do not have one of these allocated, but I will be agreeing and looking for land to ensure that the Honourable Member for St. James North has an opportunity to have one of these schools in his constituency. And instead of the Honourable Member coming to the House and thanking the people and thanking the government on behalf of his people, he is in here quarrelling about a school being put in his constituency. Can you imagine that he is not even grateful to the government for agreeing to put a school in his constituency? Instead of agreeing, he is in here complaining - which means now that what he is saying is that the land is too small. And if I am to interpret what he is telling me, that I should not look for land within his constituency because he is not grateful for the school, and that I should look for land closer to his constituency for the Moral Holder Trust for this school to be constructed.

And I hope the Honourable Member for Education is listening and has listened to the debate, because we are hearing dissatisfaction from the Member for St. James North. It seems that he is not grateful about this school coming to his constituency. So I want to thank all those persons who have recognised on his behalf, yes, that there is indeed a good policy - the policy of the Democratic Labour Party that started as far back as the 1960s. And the Barbados Labour Party had an opportunity to perform this policy as far back as 2000, and they sat on it. So much so that when we came to government, we had to complete the first school that came under this particular proposal, because we completed and opened the one at Sharon when we came to government.

But the Honourable Member for St. James North, as normal, can only see positives and negatives and never see the conversion of a negative into a positive. And I hope one of these days that we will be able to help the Honourable Member to see the light and to recognise that there are not only devils in the world, but there is also something called the Lord and that there is something called a positive.

So with those few remarks, sir, I want to say that I support this and I will continue to ensure, sir, that we do the search to find a piece of land, sir. And I hope when we find a piece of land within his constituency, sir, that he does not block us from getting the land. Because it is clear that the Honourable Member for St. James North does not want this school in his constituency. I thank you, sir.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this particular land acquisition, largely because of the nature of it. Because certainly any attempt to at least strengthen the educational structure of this society by the provision of nursery education is something I think that we must support. And, Mr. Speaker, sir, I also believe that while we have to - and I think we have to applaud the government - that at a time when certainly we are faced with many challenges, that we can still take the time to address the social.

The social aspect in terms of the development of this nation's children. And I think that we therefore have to recognise that the investment comes at considerable sacrifice and that we must therefore be broadly appreciative of the effort being made in that regard. And, Mr. Speaker, sir, listening to the contributions, we recognise really that an investment is being made in the people of Barbados. And more especially, an investment is being made in the young people of Barbados. And I think that we have served to recognise that. But what is also more important in that, one of the things that we have said constantly about the programme of the government is that we are trying to develop not only an economy, but a society. And to the extent that the attitudes that our people display actually impact on the extent to which we will be successful in determining economic targets that we set ourselves, it is something that we need to pay attention to. And it is the type of education that we deliver in our schools that will actually determine the extent to which we are successful.

You know, one of the points raised in the debate so far is the whole question of entrepreneurship and the fact that, by and large, we have not been able to develop the whole entrepreneurial spirit as much as we would like to see in our young people. And I heard the reference to the talk about leadership being required in order to do that. But, Mr. Speaker, sir, we have to be frank. And in that regard, we also have to recognise that while, yes, we can provide the environment of learning, a great responsibility, sir, rests upon at the same time the homes and the extent to which the homes themselves support what is happening in schools. Because, you know, one of the things, sir, that we are investing - I want to say this - we are investing a lot in our children in terms of trying to develop them. But at the same time, when we look to see the type of behaviours that we see being displayed, we sometimes have to wonder whether or not we are actually investing those resources in the right places.

Because certainly, again, I think that the investment that we are making is something that we understand that we have to address the human condition. We have to look to see how we can change attitudes in order for people to be more successful in what they are doing. And I think really that in the area of nursery education, where we are attempting to address the thinking of young people at a

very early age, we are trying to inculcate certain values that we hope will help them to be able to progress as they go on in life. And not only that, to make a contribution, sir, to the nation at large. And I think that is something that we need to recognise.

However, sir, you know, speaking on a broader level, it is sometimes disheartening when - in terms of what is happening, especially in the school environment - when you witness sometimes what is happening on social media, when the behaviours that we see being displayed by young people on social media. And it has gotten to the stage where, instead of sometimes hiding from these behaviours, the behaviours that people are actually engaged in are posted right there for everybody to see. And the question that sometimes you have to ask is: is that really what happens when an individual could be caught behaving in the most despicable manner, engaging in the worst possible type of behaviour? What happens? In other words, is it that the society is saying to those individuals who they put up on the social media that you are heroes, that basically we applaud it, or is it that we have things inside there that are saying to people that, look, we need to have some type of penalties for those individuals who display that type of behaviour?

We also have to ask the question, sir, the extent to which, when these people go back to the classrooms, what type of penalties do we have? And I really think that we are reaching a situation where, for the investment that we are making in education and the fact that we recognise that the investment that we are making is in the future of this country, we have to ask ourselves - and many of us have to ask ourselves, sir - what will become of us if, by chance, the persons who we see displaying those acts multiply in any way. And I say that is an issue, sir, that we need to address and we need to tackle. How do we deal with this issue? And where does the responsibility for these types of behaviours lie? And whether or not we as a society are contributing to those behaviours?

Because, you know, sir, when I see in the area of these schools and you get people transmitting these things from cell phone to cell phone, and it seems that the people become popular and we encourage it - the question that we have to ask ourselves, sir, is: are there any penalties being brought to bear to the extent where people go there? I mean, I remember, sir, when we went to school, you had a situation where your school - you had to uphold the standards at your school. And it was expected that you do that. But nowadays we talk about it globally in our society, but very little of us want to enforce what it is. In other words, we like to talk the talk. And that is where I find that our young people are being misled because we are showing a kind of double standard. On the one hand, we see young people engage in these types of behaviour, but on the other hand, sir, what we do, we popularise it. And that is an

issue, sir, I really think that we need to address because again, we are making a considerable investment. And sometimes we don't understand that the amount of investment that we are making there comes at the expense of investment in other sectors.

In other words, when we go and make an investment in a nursery school or in a school, we are looking to invest in the future. That is what we are looking to do. We are looking to make an investment that somehow in the future we will be able to produce young people who can make a contribution to economic activity in this country. And not only that, to also be able to hold that society together. And if the activities that we see young people engage in suggest to us that the investment is not worthwhile, then maybe what we need to do is be more strategic and apply, sir, certain things that we need to apply in those schools in order to at least get a different response and to have changes in behaviour.

And one of the issues, too, that I think that we really need to recognise is the whole issue of values and the extent to which we are actually imparting the type of values that we want to see in our children. So I really would want to say that maybe the emphasis in terms of training - it seems as if we have to produce good students and students have to be able at the same time to be good academically. But one of the strong points that we had in our schools - one thing that was taught to us constantly - is in the old area of values. And I really think that maybe we need to move to the point where we go back to the teaching of values. And not only that, but the enforcement. Because one of the things that was at least there in our schools before was the fact that discipline was enforced. And I am not sure today that sometimes when you look at what is happening and what is being suggested, whether or not we are having discipline being enforced in the schools in the way it should be.

That is why, sir, I will want to say I applaud the efforts on the part of principals, especially in the primary schools, where they have at least insisted on a standard of dress for parents that are coming to the school. And I think, in a sense, we have to support the principals for taking a stand where if you are going to enter a school, you should at least come to the school in a manner in which you are properly dressed. Because one of the things that I think that we don't understand is that our children look up to us. Our children, even despite what we say, look at their mother and father in a way that says that they expect to see a certain person when they come to the school and they don't want to be embarrassed. And if at the same time we encourage a situation in which people come to these schools and they are not appropriately dressed, sometimes children do not tell you, but in some cases it is an embarrassment to some of those children. And I really think that we need to, therefore, sir, hold hands with the

principals on this particular point where we encourage persons to come to the schools in a proper manner. I think that there is nothing wrong with that.

The second thing, sir, I would want to refer to is in the whole area of cell phones. And I think I want to indicate that one of the troubling things that we have to deal with is cell phones. The fact of the matter is that it is a facet of our age. It is a feature of our age, and we have to admit that it is there. But one of the things, sir, that I think we need to emphasise, certainly, is the fact that we cannot encourage the misuse of cell phones in schools to the point where it becomes detrimental to the learning environment. And again, it is heartening to note that the ministry is actually going to have a policy as far as that is concerned. Because when you look and see what is happening - if we went by the adage that by just the mere possession of technology you become bright, sir, a lot of us would be bright, a lot of us would be able to succeed and make a lot of money. But that does not ring true. The fact of the matter is, sir, what we have noticed is that a lot of these instruments are being used for the wrong purpose. And we need, sir, to deal with that issue. And a lot of it, sir, arises from the fact that a lot of persons who are given these instruments are not told from the very start that they have to use them in a responsible manner.

And, sir, this instruction cannot just come from the school in itself, because, you know, sir, I watch what is happening around us sometimes. And we see persons being given cell phones and they sometimes are not given the type of guidance that will allow them as young people to be able to use them properly. And not only that, sir, we need to monitor that. And even as parents, we need to watch and see what our young people are doing with the technology that we happen to afford them. Because certainly if we don't do that, what we are doing, sir, is at the same time creating problems for the teachers in the schools. That is what we are doing. So we must not at least deceive ourselves with the notion that because my child has a cell phone, as a result of that my child should be able to be a student and come up pretty well - because the fact that he has a cell phone might be the reason why they are not able to be an A student.

The other point I wish to make when it comes to that too, sir, is this: that by and large, what we are trying today to do - again, I want to emphasise - is to create a better society. And sometimes when you look at the promotion of certain things, again on our social media in terms of deviance in the schools, you get the impression that that is the only thing that happens in the schools. But I want to say, sir, that by and large, we can say that generally we have a number of very good young people in the schools who are doing extremely positive work. And I really want to say to our news media, in a sense, that there is no need to promote the fact that you have negative behaviour in

schools. There are also some positive things that are happening in the schools that sometimes we as a society fail to promote. But unless at the same time our news media give importance to those things - which they might not feel sell papers - at the same time, sir, they might highlight the positive things that students are doing in schools.

It will not happen because somehow I get the impression today, sir, that students seem to feel that the only time you can make any headlines is when you do something negative in the school. And that is an issue, sir, that I think our news media need to take a look at, to see whether or not instead of going into schools to find negative things, how can we portray our school system in a more positive way? How do we use the social media? And again, that comes down to us as adults. Because again, I make the point: if somebody sends me something on my cell phone which I consider to be something negative, as far as I am concerned, it is deleted. But what do most of us do? We send it from person to person, so it makes the rounds. And as we know, bad news always goes around. But the point is, we can change that.

And not only that, I want to say that sometimes we do not understand the damage to the lives of some of those young people that we make when we popularise their bad behaviour. Because all of us went to school, all of us at some point in time might have gotten into trouble at school to varying degrees. The point is, though, that at that point in time, at least we had an opportunity to recover from the mistake as far as that is concerned.

The point is, though, Mr. Speaker, is that we need to be able at least to ensure that we promote the positive things that are happening in our schools and on a constant basis. And therefore, it means that even in the management of our social media, we need to highlight those positive things more and that we as a society need to at least show up the positive things that are happening, not the negative things. Because in many cases, the families of those persons who are portrayed on social media in the way in which they are portrayed, they themselves are affected as a result. And what happens is that the family sometimes becomes tarnished. And one of the sad things about our country, sir, today is that in many cases - let us admit it - there is not a value in our society in which those persons who people might consider from families that they think do not come from the right sections of society are the ones themselves who get tarnished and they do not get protected as much as other persons who come from other families. And in that regard, again, that is why we need to examine what we are doing and understand that all of us have an individual responsibility to ensure that we exercise the type of responsibility in terms of how we manage our social media.

The press, sir, also has a responsibility in terms of trying to go into the schools and promote things that are positive that happen in our schools. And the other thing, sir, is that we need to recognise that we need not promote negative values and negative behaviours in the way in which we are promoting them in the schools that we see today. And I think that in that way, sir, we can get the investment that we are making in our education - I think that we can get a student coming out of the school system that basically has a better value system.

Because, you know, one has to question how it is that even we notice that in Barbados today we see a lot of private schools coming up. And I have heard some comments coming from people, especially in the primary section, where some people will say that in terms of attitudes, you find that the private primary schools tend to apparently, in some cases, impart a different mindset or value set to students. That comment has been made. But I am saying that this does not have to be different in our government primary schools, either, or even in any government school. Because in a sense, we all have to recognise that every school has a value system. And it is the extent to which the persons who are responsible for the management of that school are able to impart that value system to the students who attend the school that will, by and large, produce the kind of student or the kind of citizen that can make a contribution to the society of which they are part.

And I think that we need to recognise that, so we need not think that just pushing money is sufficient. And I think that in that regard, the Minister of Education has shown faith in the education system that whatever resources that can be found to be available to improve, we are putting them inside there. But the other issue that we need to address is the value system. The type of person that is coming out of our schools - are we making sure that the type of person that is coming out of the schools themselves, sir, is the best individual that we can get? Do we have everyone on board in the school system in terms of helping to work with students to get the best attitudes from the students who are actually graduating out of those schools? These are some of the hard questions, sir, that we need to answer.

And I really hope, sir, that as we continue to expand this nation's education plan, that we recognise that the investment that we are making, sir, is one for the future in which we are trying to shape the minds and attitudes of young people. And we do not only measure, sir, from the academic success that comes, but also too, sir, in terms of the value set, the set of values that we are able to impart to those students that will enable them to make a constructive contribution, sir, to the society as we know it today, sir. And with that, sir, I thank you very much, sir, for allowing me to make that contribution.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member. All right.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to conclude this particular matter just by thanking all colleagues for their presentations, for their words in relation to this particular area. I don't think we had any divide or contention on the given issue. Just to clarify some points. As the Honourable Member for St. James North is wont to do, he tends to be a bit extensive in his pronouncements. The Challenge School receives on an annual basis \$1.6 million from the Ministry of Education. \$1.6 million. And they receive this, you know, in respect of the 50 students they have there. There are issues there which we have to work through in relation to management, leadership and things of that nature. But that does not deny the fact that the Challenge School has made and continues to make an outstanding contribution to those persons who are there. And they have in place a good programme because they are all inclusive and go from early years right through to what some people might consider to be young adults. And I was only reading the minutes recently to realise the kind of vocational programmes that they do - horticulture, agriculture, all kinds of activities at that institution. And they have been deserving of support and in fact they have received support. So the figure is \$1.6 million annually, rather than, as the member says, that we should give them support. But we do provide that.

The second point: the Children's Development Centre also receives support, to the tune of \$500 000. And there are students who are sponsored with full bursaries or full scholarships to the Children's Development Centre. This also happens at the Early Sunshine Stimulation Centre and the Derek Smith School. So funds are provided at two levels - the direct grant and contribution, and then support for the children. Not all - the Learning Centre. That's the one at Orange Hill. Yes, the Learning Centre. Sorry. When I called the Children's Development Centre, it is the Learning Centre we are speaking about. Sorry. Because the Children's Development Centre is under the Ministry of Health. It is the Learning Centre at Orange Hill - \$500 000 a year, as well as support for children and parents who attend that school.

The special needs policy that they are talking about is being substantially revised in a programme under the Human Resource Development Strategy. We have just submitted to the EU and to the HRDS strategy to have a consultant look at the whole area of special needs education in Barbados, because we thought that we needed to move from the old strategy, the old policy, to have a more enlightened and more reinvigorated policy. So you have, as usual, been peeping over our shoulders, but not a quarrel. I am glad that you recognise that there is a need for that.

You spoke to the need for curriculum reformation. Curriculum 2000, as it was called, was an important document in the annals of the history of education in Barbados. But curriculum is not static. And somehow I always get this feeling or this view that when some non-educators speak, they do not truly understand the broader scope of curriculum development. It is not only that which is prescribed in a document that is termed curriculum. It is that which is produced by the teacher in the exercise of pedagogy. So contributions to true tests, assessments, scripts - all of that forms part of the wider basket of curriculum development. When teachers write books they add to the whole curriculum pool of material that becomes available for the school system. There are efforts to look further at that.

I don't even think the member recognises that beyond the criterion reference test, which has been in place for quite a long time, over the last three to four years we introduced an assessment in social studies and science across the school system at Class 3 level - which would be a 9 to 10 age cohort - to bring them into an understanding of both science and civics or social studies, so they can understand in social studies the country, the dynamics of the country, governance models, the economy, all of these things that make up that hybrid subject at that early age. And in science, I congratulate all of those schools. There are so many schools that actually do these scientific displays as part of their programme. But in secondary schools we are talking about school-based assessment in that process, while in primary schools we are talking about project-based work, project-based learning. So when they come together in groups or as individuals working on specific projects, bringing them and showcasing them to the public, that is also part of the wider efforts within the school system.

Now, there are two or three niggling points which I want to clarify. The first comes from an understanding of the use of statistics. And I am speaking to a comment made by the Honourable Member for St. James North. You can say that only one in every two students leaves school with a certificate - at least one certificate - and we are currently examining whether that is in fact true. Our cursory understanding says it is not. But because there are some students, we tend to use that statistic, and that in itself is not 100 per cent accurate. Because there are students who, having reached the age of 16, tend to say, well, I am not coming back. Or I know that in some schools, some parents say, you have reached 16 - which is in fact contrary to the law - you can go. That is not true. The law states that if you

Even if you approach 16 on the 1st of September, you must spend the entire period until you are 17 in the school system. It is a breach of the Education Act and the appropriate regulations. If the child is 16 on the 1st of

September in the year, they should spend the entire year in a learning environment. But some people say, well, you are 16, you can go. And they say that basically because they might have encountered some issues with the children. But the law is quite clear.

If I can share with the Honourable Member a few facts. We use subject entries as the basis of the number of students or the numbers that would enter an examination and the statistics would work out in that way. So, as I said, in the year 2000, of the students doing the examination, which was 16 241, 68.1 per cent successfully transitioned for subsidy between one and upward. In 2001, 16 832 students, 70.54 per cent - or 70 and a half percent - would have been successful, either one subject and whatever else goes right up. Some students do 9, some students do 10. And in 2002, 17 858 subject entries, 70.3 per cent. In the year 2003, 17 701 - 17.76 per cent. In the year 2004, 17 508 subject entries, 69.78 per cent. In the year 2005, 18 783 subject entries - that is at CSEC - 67.02 per cent. In the year 2006, subject entries 19 888, 64.89 per cent. 2007, 19 548, 69.42 per cent. In 2008, the numbers went up to 20 183, 68.37 per cent. And 2009, 19 856, 70 per cent. 2010, 72.1 per cent. 2011, 18 554, 70.07 per cent. 2012, 18 678, 66 per cent. 2013, 20 004 subject entries, 72.37 per cent. I do not have the statistics for 2014 and 2015, but in 2014 it was about 71.9 per cent - they would call it 72 per cent. And this year there was a slight decline to 70 per cent, 69.9 per cent, 70 per cent. But that is based on subject entries. We also have the statistics on every single school - the number of students who enter, the number of Grade One passes, Grade Two passes, Grade Three passes, the cumulative passes at the higher profile level. All of those statistics are in fact available.

And therefore what we have also been doing is expanding the range of qualifications that have value within the society. Not all are as bright and luminous as you are, Member for St. James North. Not all of our students receive or learn at the same pace. We have this very silly notion in this country that if you put 30 students in a classroom with syllabi and curriculum, that every student would learn at the same pace. It is not possible. I do not want to ask the impossible. If that were possible, the world would be an extremely dull place. Because if everybody looks and acts and dresses and talks and quotes statistics the same way, then what a dull world that would be. There is diversity, but in that diversity there is immense talent. And sometimes these odious comparisons of John Brown and Mary Jane and Jack and Jill - it is really not important. I think what we need to do as a society is to really look at our society, to see what was my entry behaviour from the time of birth or even before birth. How did I transition into nursery, primary, into secondary school? What have I done? But it is even beyond your schooling. It is how do I contribute to my society? Even if I have two certificates, an LLM, an MBA, an LLB and an

LEC, how do I contribute to my society? In fact, one can argue that there are persons with the designations that I just placed before the Honourable House whose contribution is a lot less than the person who left school - as we would call it in the day - with school leaving certificates, in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, whose contribution to this society and economy is a lot less.

So we have got to stop this very hypocritical, snooty-nose behaviour - wanting to lord it over people we believe are less than we are, puffed chest, inflated, egotistical, maniacal individuals that do what they want. And at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day every individual makes his contribution to his society. Every individual makes that contribution out of his strengths. I agree. I really appreciate the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. She does not know how much she is appreciated. At least she demonstrates the qualities of a great educator - not the one who pretends that because he was educated he is an educator. The point is that each individual makes his own contribution to the society, and the kind of condemnation that sometimes we bring is really odious and should be looked at.

The other issue is that of technology and the use of technology in education. I am not going to be critical or condemn anybody who says that we should keep smartphones and tablets and all of these things out of the school system. Because when Henry Ford developed the motor car, there were people who were so accustomed to riding on mules and donkey backs who criticised that development as well. They said that with the advent of the motor car the use of donkeys and mules would be no more, that it is in fact safer to be on the back of a mule, horse or donkey than within the confines of a motor vehicle. Yet today we have hundreds upon hundreds of millions of cars across the world. They break down, people use them sometimes for nefarious means, they use them sometimes to do drive-by shootings. People get into accidents and people suffer as a result. So every one of man's inventions also has some downside to it. We cannot hide from the way man's mind is evolving and producing so much to enhance the quality of life of all human beings. Our world has become one small village as a result of 21st century technologies, as I would call them. We cannot say to Steve Jobs and Bill Gates and the fellows in Google and Alibaba and all of those - Zuckerberg and all of those - shut down. Those things do not allow your mind to be expansive and to come up with technologies in both firmware, hardware and software. Even Donald Trump now speaks of tweeting. He is a tweeter, would you believe it? But that is for another time and place. He is using the technology to communicate. There is a downside, there is a downside. And man has always also bent technology to nefarious ends. The bottom line is we will always have these contestations between proper good use and negative use.

In 1999 when the Government of the day rolled out Edutech and placed over a 10 or 11 year period technology in all schools - laptops, desktops, Internet connectivity, all of that - the ground was prepared for enhanced learning. But even then, even though we had filtering software, children were trained even then to get around the technology, to look at pornography, to do things that really should not be done. And it has been said by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central that you have to first teach ethical responsibility in the use of everything and anything - teachers, students, leaders, the society - ethical use.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, 1998 - still quite good. In 1998, I typed in a sentence that came from the Bible because I wanted to build a particular quotation. And what popped up before me was not anything connected to the phrase that I used. It was pornography. Because there are people out there looking to harvest minds. They were using a biblical quotation and creating a link on that biblical quotation to ensnare persons within the community and within the society. But as an adult, I can sift through that. It is those vulnerable minds of our young people who are being enticed. And it is not the technology itself. So when I hear this condemnation, it is not the technology itself. It is people. It is human beings. So are we going to shut away from our young people all of this technology because other people out there are trying to ensnare them? No. We have a draft policy that we will share with stakeholders. I saw it in one of the papers recently - I think it was this weekend - and an editorial came out in support of what we are trying to do. I was knocked off my feet. You are not going to be 100 per cent successful. Nobody says that if you bring to school a smartphone that one or two persons might not misuse it, because that is the nature of human beings. But by and large, even now we know that nearly every child in school in this country carries a cell phone to school. But because you say you do not display it, you do not bring it out, you do not show it - teachers have to be responsive as well. You should not be taking away a cell phone and using it in front of the class. If that is done, children watch and children do certain things. So it is a policy that will go through the various iterations. It will go before the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Governance. I have a joint meeting before Cabinet before it is sent out to schools. But we will engage the stakeholders - have no fear. Children want to be responsible. You give them the opportunity to do so, rather than the harsh condemnations that we bring.

I just wanted to tidy up those particular areas. And any time I said I do not mind having a discussion with the lead spokesperson on education from the other side. But you know, when you put particular tools in the hands of an individual who does not understand those tools, you are looking for havoc. And therefore that is why I sometimes act a bit restrained. I shared some statistics with the Member just now. These are public statistics - not a problem. But it is the interpretation that one gets.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, as I speak to this resolution, there is an issue amongst some of our students in relation to acts of indiscipline. Some people characterise it as violence, vandalism, misbehaviour, et cetera. And one cannot run away from truths or facts. They are there. The first statement I would make is that the majority of our young people, our students in school, behave like any other student over time in the evolution of their education. You can go back whatever period, whatever years - we have had some little scuffles, even between friends, and then the next day they forgot that they had a little scuffle. They are still sharing the same sugar cane, they are still sharing the salt bread. But we have also had, in the minority, some students who have gone beyond the pale. In other words, their behaviour has become a challenge to other students and to adequate learning taking place within the school environment.

In a normal school environment we have had, as we have seen, some vandalism to Transport Board vehicles - at least two, I am told, Minister, at least two. And that is a cost to the state. Because the Transport Board is an entity of the state, they have to replace that. That means that if you have to get it repaired by insurance, the insurance cost can go up. That is a greater cost to the state. But what I have been finding is that some of our young people have an anger in their bosoms. And we have to understand why this anger is. Is it as a result of what some people call social inequality? A whole lot of social dynamics taking place within their environment, within their domestic environment, within the wider environment. Is it as a result of the use of some mind-altering substances? We have had experiences when some children have been tested for the use of marijuana - ganja, weed, grass, herb, it has got all kinds of names - and the amount of the active ingredient is sometimes 200, 300, 400 times the regular amount. Not everybody can take a shot of rum. Not everybody can use coffee. People have got to understand this. There are persons who can smoke a split or two or three and go and sit down under a tree and go to sleep. There is another person who smokes one, two or three splits and wants to tear down the tree that they should be resting under. That is because of how we are made up. And if that is that incursion into some of our students, some will be okay, but some will also behave badly. There are some who we know within our social fabric who look on at what others have and become jealous of that because they too might not have what others have.

The one though that frightens me, Mr. Speaker, is what we have seen more recently on the social media - the young ladies who have been fighting. And that concerns me a lot. Not that boys fighting does not concern me, because all of it concerns me. The country invests too many resources in education to have some of it being inefficiently used because there is too much downtime trying to resolve conflicts in the classroom. The statistics

that I shared say that there are many, many, many of our students who are doing well. I am just going to use one statistic - even though it is at the top of the crop. This year, 56 students from several of our secondary schools gained exhibitions and scholarships. 56. This is the highest we have ever had in the history of giving out these exhibitions and scholarships. The previous high was 53. I am not going to go on to politicise that. But those results were achieved. In the last five to six years we had two 53s and a 56, and that means that our students - some of our students - are buckling down. We have seen excellent results at some of the newer schools. I would want to mention a school like Florence Springer Memorial in their areas of discipline, St. Leonard's and what they are doing, because we are working through and working. And I want to praise those young people who stay focused, who work hard, who are shining lights in this country - a pride to their families and their commitment to Barbados, both in its social and economic fabric. More has to be done.

Too many of our people are passing the chap who was beaten up by thieves on the road - the road to Damascus, on the road anyway. The Good Samaritan passed through. Too many of our people are passing by and not saying anything to young people. You think that I could have been behaving badly in 1965 and somebody would not grab me? I am not saying grab anybody's children, but say something to me: young man, behave yourself, try and go home to your parents. And sometimes before you get home, your parents already know that you were misbehaving. This society needs to have some of that character re-embodied into itself. That is what we have to do.

There have been adults who have seen children fighting and they have taken out their smartphones and they have been posting on Facebook and YouTube and all kinds of things like that. If there is an accident - I find it most despicable - a terrible accident takes place and there is no longer an inquiry as to the health and well-being of the individual, but a phone comes out and you take the blood and the gore and the wreckage, and sometimes the family does not even know, and you put it up on Facebook and other social media. Heartless individuals. Not only in Barbados but in other parts of the world. But we have to be concerned about Barbados. So these are things that are happening and being infiltrated into the hearts and bosoms and the minds of our young people as well. Take a turn, relook, re-emphasise, refocus on what is possible. And I am saying all of these things in the context of the monies we are putting into nursery education, trying to build out positive vibrations for our young people. But it spreads far and wide.

So I will not go on. There will be more time to talk about some of these other things. I just wish, Sir, to move that this resolution do now pass.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

RESOLUTION - LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP.
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COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND IN CHRIST
CHURCH FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: ... before this House. Honourable House seeks permission to compulsory acquire a parcel of land comprising 13 577 square metres or 3.35 acres of land at Kingville, Christ Church, the property of the estate of Mr. David Yard, for the purpose of providing recreational facilities, and it also will add to four other parcels of land previously acquired belonging to Mr. William Yard, Alexander Yard, Marcia Greenwich and Mrs. Vivianne Gittins.

Mr. Speaker, this when completed will allow the residents in the area in Kingville, Christ Church to have a playing field so that they can do the necessary activities, and the public purpose as stated previously is for recreational purposes. It is the continuation of government policy to ensure that the minds of the young people and other persons are catered for so that they can have active facilities to ensure that they can carry out their recreational activities.

It is hoped, Sir, that this might also be able to have a mini stadium constructed, because as you are aware that is government policy to look at constructing mini stadiums. And we are also hoping that this will be a continuation of what will be right across Barbados to ensure that we build out facilities to develop the young minds of our people. There is no doubt that as we develop the economy that we also will be developing the society. And this is one of the ways that we are seeking to do so. One only has to look and see that the football tournament that is occurring - that as soon as that has started, certain social ills that occurred previously are not occurring anymore. Which tells me that the government was right in its policy in ensuring that we bring young people together in a collective way and in a positive atmosphere so that we can account for them and to ensure that we deliver those social goods that are very good for young people and to keep their minds employed.

I have recognised over the years, Sir, that these activities also allow other professional organisations, not only in Barbados but outside of Barbados, to have an opportunity to see our young men and women and have an opportunity to send their scouts to ensure that what we see on television and what we hear about the earnings as it relates to the professional sportsmen in the world - that we

in Barbados have talented people and we as a government are providing the facilities to ensure that all young people have an opportunity to show off their sporting skills and be able to get one of those lucrative contracts that can be negotiated all across the world.

And Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the same way that there are people elsewhere who can play for Manchester United, etc., that we have people in Barbados with the capabilities of doing likewise. One day, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when we will not only focus on cricket and football, but we also recognise that there is a great demand in the world also for baseball. And as I have said to this House since the 1990s, I think the time is right now for us also to add baseball as one of those opportunities that all young people can also get involved in. When one considers the great demand for players and the type of money that can be earned - we are a country that has 366 days of sunshine and sometimes plus one. And we have to recognise that the majority of the countries that play baseball sometimes have to play in the winter season. And we must understand that we have an asset that we can expose to the world and, because of our location, that we must capitalise on that and use it as a source to earn some valuable foreign exchange and bring some revenue to Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the same way that the Cubans can do it, we can do it too. And it is regrettable that we have not capitalised on the opportunity when it was first proffered as far back as the 1970s and when the naval base facility had the playing field that we as a people could have utilised. So Mr. Speaker, with those few words I beg that this resolution do now pass.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for St. Michael -

Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC: – for the City. City. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing really about this resolution that we would want to quarrel about or object against. This resolution dealing with the compulsory acquisition of land in Christ Church for the purpose of providing recreational facilities is one that is supported by members on this side. We support it because that is indeed something that was under consideration for quite some time even when the Barbados Labour Party was in office. It is something that is needed. It is providing a service that we believe is required at this point in time.

Certainly we are trying to combat the problem surrounding chronic non-communicable diseases and the desire for us to have a society that is fit physically so that we would be able to reduce the cost of medical services in Barbados. It is something that is also part and parcel of the Barbados Labour Party thinking. Indeed you would recall, Mr. Speaker, that it was under the Barbados Labour Party

that the vast majority of playing fields, the vast majority of recreational facilities were provided with floodlights so that Barbadians were able to extend - or have extended - the period of time that they had available to them to recreate, to get physically fit. And so this is no different.

I would like to suggest to the Honourable Minister that in constructing this facility that some thought be given to the whole question of creating a resource centre. Since we also believe that going forward such facilities must also provide for training for the persons in the communities surrounding the facilities. And remember, we introduced the programmes across the length and breadth of this country within the community centres - information technology programmes and so on - which a lot of people have benefited from. And at this time, when we would like to provide more opportunities for our people, especially the young, a resource centre or facilities of that nature should be included in this facility as well. And especially for those persons who have the time during the day, the elderly also who may be at home with not much to do - I really would urge that you consider providing those facilities as well.

So with that I would say that we support this resolution. And that is the position from all of us on this side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this resolution, certainly not only as Minister with responsibility for sports, but also as the parliamentary representative for the constituency in which this land is situated, the constituency of Christ Church West Central. And I have to say that I want to first of all compliment the Ministry of Housing and Lands and Rural Development for proceeding with rapidity and consistency in completing this acquisition.

It is true, Mr. Speaker, that this land has in fact been used by the constituents of Christ Church West Central, namely the residents of Caneville and surrounding areas of Silver Hill and Gaul Hill, for many years for recreational sports, particularly football and cricket. It has also been used to some extent for various social and community cultural activities. Indeed, earlier this year we had a very well patronised football competition on the Caneville playing field.

I recall touring that facility some years ago with the former Minister of Housing and his team and trying to find a way to complete what seems to have been an impossible task when the Barbados Labour Party was in office. Indeed, I have to say that when I became the Member of Parliament for this constituency, prior to 2008, I recall seeing a very big sign on the field at Caneville displaying that it will be

acquired for a multi-purpose sporting facility. And I believe it had the signage of some contractors on it as well. And the residents of Caneville and surrounding areas were waiting with bated breath for this facility to be designed. Little did they know that the very vital step of acquiring the land was never within the contemplation of the Barbados Labour Party at the time. I believe that most people after a while dismissed it as propaganda and the only intention of that particular display of information was to somehow give the impression that the acquisition was really a serious intention.

On behalf of the Democratic Labour Party, I certainly, as the Member of Parliament, in listening to the residents, gave the undertaking that the Democratic Labour Party government will acquire the property. And further than that, it is our intention to transform that facility into a mini stadium. Initially, of course, what we will do - and the National Sports Council has already carried out some preliminary work on the field to correct some of the drainage problems. They have actually done work to address the drainage already. And one of the issues of course impacting that particular location was one of drainage. And that issue was addressed by this Democratic Labour Party government and of course was never even looked at by the Barbados Labour Party.

But this is really our plan. I certainly want to endorse not only what the Minister of Housing has said in terms of the overall need to improve facilities. This particular facility, this field, is located in a very densely populated part of the constituency of Christ Church West Central. In fact, it is neatly located in a catchment area that, once we proceed with the mini stadium, it will not only benefit the constituents of Christ Church West Central, but certainly it would benefit the constituents of Christ Church East Central as well and Christ Church East, and there is also a connection to the constituency of Christ Church itself. So it is a rather important facility and it is certainly the intention of the government, now that this acquisition process is reaching finality, to proceed with the plan to first of all outfit that field, ensure that proper drainage can be done. The field will be levelled by the National Sports Council and of course we will look to acquire the necessary funding to ensure that the mini stadium can be done. We will look to funding partners because I believe that it is a purposeful and needed social project and I hope that we can get the funding necessary to make sure that is done.

I also want to agree with the suggestion made by the Member for the City that this particular opportunity gives rise to the whole question of also including in this plan a resource centre. And I would say to him that certainly that idea will be taken on board and incorporated into whatever facility is completed at the Caneville field.

I want to say certainly that the residents of Caneville in particular are going to be very happy to know that the legal work, which is the acquisition process, has been taken to such a very advanced stage - to the point that we would have come to the House prior to this and acquired the other four parcels. And this is to complete the total acquisition that would allow for us to proceed to ensure that this facility can come under the ambit of the National Sports Council. And of course, by virtue of the plan to proceed to have a resource centre component, we are very aware that there are existing models across Barbados where the National Sports Council partners with the Community Development Department to have a combined usage of a sporting facility as well as a community development facility. I believe that the idea, which has been used very successfully across Barbados, of ensuring that resources are made available to the community for computers and other mechanisms will be made available as part of this facility.

I see the Member for St. Thomas agreeing with me that this is something that is desirable. We are working on that. We are working on Rock Hall. We have not abandoned Rock Hall. I give you the assurance that we have not. We are going to have a meeting very shortly to update the residents and I intend to invite the Member for St. Thomas to come to that meeting as well as the doctor as well. We have to ensure that we invite him as well.

But we are committed, Mr. Speaker, to this project in Caneville. And I am very happy that we have come to this stage of completing the acquisition process. And certainly I want to commend again the Minister and his team for completing what we all have been expecting for a very, very long time - that we in the Democratic Labour Party could actually complete the work that ought to have been done quite a while ago. I am obliged.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak briefly on this particular acquisition because I well recall this acquisition started years ago in that constituency of Christ Church, as the member said is a very densely populated area - an area which is deserving of a sporting facility. In fact, the residents of this area have been using this particular field for a number of years. For a number of years this field has been used as a playing facility. And in my time, and that is I believe over 12 years ago, I had gone to Cairnville with the residents, with the then MP, and we had identified this particular spot. But there were constant problems with the family. This here had a history behind it. And if the member, the Honourable Minister, could look at the file, you would notice that there were constant disagreements over this parcel. The parcel of land is shared between the Ministry of Housing and Lands. The land belongs to government lands there. But there are constant

problems in this development. And we at first wanted to do a private treaty. That was agreed. Then the acquisition process was started and there were constant problems with this thing. So I am glad to see that at least we are getting somewhere with this particular development.

But there are also, Mr. Speaker, a number of other parcels that I can speak about that are in the Ministry of Housing and Lands for sporting facility. I recall there is land at St. Martin's, St. Philip. St. Martin, St. Philip was to be acquired over 15 years ago and we definitely need to bring some of these matters to a closure. I believe the residents in St. Martin's have been asking - has it been fully acquired? I do not think it has been fully acquired. But we have to look carefully at whether the acquisition has been completed because I do not think the landowners have been paid for the land. I do not think they have been paid for the land and therefore I firmly feel that you cannot say a process has been completed if it is not completed - the land has not been paid for - just like the land in St. George. And I am going to talk about that too. That has not been completed because we acquired a parcel of land in St. George for housing in 2000. It has been acquired by the Parliament of Barbados. It passed through the three stages of this Parliament. It was passed by the Senate of Barbados, the other House. It was also, Mr. Speaker, signed by His Excellency the Governor General. But the landowners have not been compensated. The government has not - in fact it has a history. It has a history. And I am sure the Member for St. Philip North is aware of this. I know he has tried. But the process has taken too long and we need to look at this.

I also want to say too that we have several playing areas across Barbados that are in need of recreational facilities. And on top of that, the Glebe - I went to the Glebe only recently. The Glebe, St. George, and the residents of the Glebe - some young boys this weekend had to clear all the bush from around the Glebe. I want to ask the Member for Christ Church West Central, as Minister of Sports, he needs to send his team around to clear the bush from the Glebe. And also we have tried, but we do not have the weed whackers. You all started giving weed whackers to community groups. So we need to look at a number of playing facilities across Barbados that are in need of proper care. You have the Sweetvale community, you have the Glebe in my constituency, you have G. Hill in St. John, you have Prout in St. Thomas. You have a number of community areas across Barbados that are really in need of proper care when the time comes.

So I want the Minister of Housing to bring all these parcels that we have identified - whether it is in St. George, St. Philip, Christ Church - that has taken so long. His ministry needs to work on these things. If they have been properly acquired, then we need to see facilities set up on them. You have the Glebe up there. That ground has been

done - the ground was done before 2008. And we definitely need to bring that to completion. If you have indeed acquired the land at St. Martin's, St. Philip, then the pavilion should be built because I am aware that residents use that facility for playing for years. So we definitely need to look carefully at these things. I believe it should not cost a lot of money to put a small pavilion at St. Martin's. I do not believe it should cost a lot of money to put a small pavilion at the Glebe because the foundations are there. And that is a field that is used every day of the year. The Glebe is used - football, cricket. This weekend the police band will be playing at the Glebe. It is in the centre of Barbados.

So I call on the Minister to spend a few dollars at the Glebe, to spend a few dollars at St. Martin's. I am speaking because the Member for St. Philip South is not speaking today on his constituency. So I want to speak on his behalf, as well as on behalf of the Member for St. Joseph at Prout, as well as all Honourable Members in whose areas acquisitions have started but not completed. We definitely know it is going to cost some money and the Minister of Finance needs to put some money in the next Estimates in order to pay compensation to these landowners for all this land. Because I do not believe the process has been completed until people are paid for the parcel.

So I want to impress on - I know Cairnville will start next week. I know my friend, the Minister of Sport, is a very active man, a very active man. And we know that he is going to start this. But I want to tell him that there were others in the ARIF league long before this. So you have got to get working on the Glebe, the Prout, and also on St. Martin's - put them in line so that we can get some work done in these areas. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged. Yes, the Member for Christ Church East.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: I rise to support this resolution and to signal that I believe it is in keeping with the Government's effort to put in place the kind of social infrastructure that allows for the full development of communities and to allow for the broadest interaction among members of various and neighbouring communities where they can come together around common activities and common goals and realise some of their own ambitions as they move across the developmental lines in the society. I was part of the initial tour to this site in Cairnville and I remember the passion and enthusiasm of the Honourable representative of that area in seeking Government's assistance to obviate some of the existing problems and to move towards the full development of that particular site, which is indeed, as the Minister of Sport and the representative represented, a very beautiful area with tremendous potential - a community that has demonstrated its love affair with sporting activities and a community that

has moved across the various constituencies in the south, Christ Church South, Christ Church East, Christ Church East Central, and of course their own constituency - in participating in activities that would bring fulfilment, that important fulfilment, to their youthful lives.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the resolution is timely because we are currently living in a time when the young members of our society are searching for opportunities for positive outlets to their energies and are looking for community-based activities that will allow them to fully participate in the social and economic development of the country. And I am especially heartened because I know, as the MP for Christ Church East, that we do competitions every year. We have one of the biggest out-of-season football competitions in Barbados and it attracts any number of teams not only from the Christ Church area, but from the precincts of St. Philip and St. Peter, St. Michael and St. James and the like. And the truth is that every year, whether it is cricket - we do a number of cricket competitions as well - every year Cairnville's team performs exceptionally well in the competitions. And therefore it is my view that having a home where they can build out these skills, where they can encourage younger generations to become part and parcel of that whole developmental journey, is important. And I certainly laud the Ministry of Housing and Lands and certainly the Honourable Minister and MP for that area for bringing this to fruition.

I remember when I toured there, there were some drainage challenges that community had experienced for a long time. And Mr. Speaker, sir, once it was brought to our attention, we dispatched the Drainage Division personnel there and I am happy to say that today that matter has been resolved and has now given way to the development of the sporting complex that is so proposed by the Government.

Now the reason why I think this is important is because there are any number of commentators who are persistently seeking to label the society as one that is full of youths that are lacking in ambition, that are involved in mischief, and that has no constructive elements to their lives. And the fact is that there have been incidents in our communities that have unfortunately been attached to youth activities. And therefore a government that is on top of its game must seek to find solutions that can divert the youth's attention from those negative activities and guide them into situations where they can have adequate outlet for their youthful energies. What we cannot deny is that part of the developmental cycle of a human being has to do with the search for identity, the development of a sense of self, the mobilisation of youthful energies and interests, and the search for communal activities where those young people can become entrenched in their own societies, in their own communities, around activities

that are embraced by the entire society. And I believe that a move like this is in keeping with the government's emphasis on sustainable development. As it relates to social development and social inclusion. I believe that a move like this is in keeping with the government's effort to distill certain types of psychosocial values in our youth. And not to throw our hands up and say that we've lost a generation of young people. Because constantly I see that there are young people who are ambitious, who are driven by positive involvement, and who are committed to helping to build the next generation a better society.

Only yesterday I observed in a daily print a young man by the name of Chester Yard who unfortunately spent most of his youthful years involved in activities that were not in keeping with the law. And fortunately for him, he was able to arrest the decline of his life. He was able to redirect his energies. He was able to be served in an environment that looked after his care and his interests. And now he's living a productive and positive life. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe that can be the story of every young man or every young woman out there who may have gone astray. I believe that it can be the story as long as the system, the psychosocial system of our country, lends itself to not only identifying those persons who have these dark markers on their lives, but also identifying systems that can remediate some of the dysfunctional thinking and some of the dysfunctional behaviours that they now display. And that is why creating this particular outlet in Caneville is a beautiful thing being done by this government under the Ministry of Housing.

The whole story on psychosocial development helps to explain what happens when that development is breached and when the systems that provide that support are not functioning as fully as they ought to. And those systems would reflect on the home, those systems would reflect on the school, those systems would reflect on the church, those systems would reflect on the informal gatherings in the communities, what we call blocks. And the notion of a block is nothing new. They have existed as long as we have existed. When I was a boy, I remember how the men who work the fields would come in the evenings and sit on the wall and engage themselves in happenings of the day, happenings of the country, happenings of their societies. And they would pass on that information to some of the younger generation when the conversation was suited for younger people to be a part of it. As I remember, Mr. Speaker, sir, when the conversation was not suited, they would hustle us off the block and send us home and tell us that it is a place for doctors and not dogs. You would remember that. But it was in love. They wanted us to get the best possible education. They wanted us to understand the rudiments of socialisation, but they did not want to expose us to material that we were not suited for at the time.

When you go to parks like the one at Briar Hall, like the one at Rice's, like the one at Silver Sands, it doesn't matter who built them. That is beside the point. What really matters is that there's a consciousness on the part of those who are empowered to develop the society, to get involved in those things that would help mobilise the energies of our society into a structured and into a positive vein. That's what it's about. And this Democratic Labour Party has always been of a mindset that part of our remit is to develop a balanced society. It has always been our mindset to ensure that it didn't matter where you came from in your community, whether you were from Spring Hall or Dark Hole or Hillaby among all, or Dukes or any one of those areas. It didn't matter where you came from. The point is that our youth - our youth - and they are the futures of our society, and that we must put our hands to the plough and create systems, even in these economic times, to ensure that the kind of social psychological interventions occur.

So this kind of development, Mr. Speaker, is timely. It has the capacity to address issues of not just sports and development of our physical attributes, but it has the opportunity to address issues of social dislocation. There are some young people who do not believe that they are feeling a rightful part of their communities. If they are academically inclined, once they have completed their academic choice, they don't feel like they are welcome in the informal settings and groupings in their community. There's a lot of social migration going on where young people move from one community to another community because they may feel more welcome and because the activities provided there are more suitable for their social appetites.

So the notion of creating a Haynesville pavilion, a Haynesville playing field with a mini stadium, really presents the opportunity for not only persons in Haynesville, persons in Silver Sands, persons in Fairy Valley, parish land, all of whom are given to sporting activities, that they can journey there. People from Deacon's Farm can come up, people from St. Philip can come down, as we notice when we do our out-of-season football. And let me make the point that every time there is a gathering of youth, we should not anticipate that there will be some turbulence, some trouble, some violence occurring. Because for example, the David Thompson competition that is happening now is happening incident-free, and it is not surrounded by any great throng of police officers. We did 16 nights of football at Silver Sands, what is lovingly called the San Siro of the East. And the truth is that 16 nights of football, the order that obtained, the fact that we had youths from all over the country - from St. Michael, from St. Philip, from all across Christ Church, from St. Peter, from St. Andrew, from St. James - who gathered there every single night, there was a football game played, enjoyed the atmosphere, and there was not a single incident of violence, not even a throwing of a pebble at that

competition. And it was top-notch, top-class football competition.

And I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, sir, that this is what the Democratic Labour Party's social agenda is all about. This is what our social mantra is all about. It is about engaging not only youths, but engaging families in general around common activities where they can share their love, they can play games from adults to toddlers who can be involved, where vendors, community vendors can come out and they can make an honest dollar and they can be involved. And these are the kind of things that a society is expected to do, especially when that society is going through a hard time as a national journey.

I am proud to be part of this. I believe that this kind of development not only addresses the issue of social dislocation, but I believe that the elements of social dysfunction that are now being experienced in the society can also find a place where it can be addressed and where it can be properly managed. And of course, we also believe that a facility like this, Mr. Speaker, sir, can allow for us to assist the Ministry of Health in its agenda of seeking to create a healthier society. Because many of the young people who gather and who get themselves involved in this are also addressing that area of their lives.

And in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me also note that when you create these entities in communities like the Haynesville Recreational Field and Mini Pavilion, that these also allow for what I call inter-community relations, where communities intermingle, where they interrelate, where they come together - not around rivalries, but they come together around positive activities. And we have to duplicate this around the country. And that is why the social programmes that this government has sought to put in place are so instrumental and so important to us achieving that plank on the social balance. Because, Mr. Speaker, sir, it is important for us to be able to create the opportunity where leaders of communities, grassroots politicians, where persons who have given themselves to supporting the upliftment of the society can work hand in hand with the Christian community, with the political community, with the economic community in building a base for development to occur.

Of course, there is not only the social and psychological opportunities, but there is also the economic opportunity. And I want to make it clear that the government must never lose track of its commitment to building a sustainable society, a sustainable nation, under the rubrics of social balance, environmental soundness, economic viability and good governance. And we believe, Mr. Speaker, sir, that once we continue to stay focused, the progenitors of distraction who consistently try to distract from the government's agenda will only be marked as detractors and will never be able to taste the sweetness of

victory and leadership in this country. We are on the right track, we know that. And we're not going to give way to the poor poisonous distractions of those who could only say things that are negative, whose motif has always been to try to trap productive, forward-moving people in a context of scandal and struggle because they do not have alternatives. They can't even get their own house in order. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the member for St. Thomas. She was getting it for you.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Oh, you say St. Thomas? Yes, sir, St. Thomas. Okay. Sorry.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I should. I shall be very brief, but I think it is only fitting that when the honourable sports member made mention of the administration of which I was a part, acquiring the land, or seeking to acquire the land and doing absolutely nothing since then. But he speaks soundly, that he seems to want to speak soundly of the performance of the Democratic Labour Party in such matters. I would just want to put for the record's purposes that a Barbados Labour Party government between 1994 and 2008 is the only government in the history of Barbados that has built pavilions, playing fields and resource centres across the length and breadth of Barbados. And that was the major intention of engaging not only the youth, but also senior citizens in being involved in activities where they will use up their various energies and of course develop skills and teach others in communities and so on.

And therefore I am happy to know that such a plan was in place. And the honourable member for St. George North would have spoken about some of those projects that were in tune. Also, sir, when it comes to social development of our people, the Barbados Labour Party can speak proudly of the Community Independence Department, the secretariat department, which has for almost 20 years been in the vanguard in communities engaging seniors and youth with the ambassadors and the attendants and so on and so forth. And the Honourable Minister has continued, and successfully so, because the platform was made for 13 or 14 years. And that is what I appreciate about continuity. I am not one who will get up here and talk all over the place and lose sight of the fact that where efforts are being made they must be commended or congratulated for the efforts of engaging people.

At the end of the day, you know, Mr. Speaker, I am in here because I am interested in Barbadians and not just the people of St. Thomas or the people of St. Andrew or anywhere else. And I think that should be the mantra of the Democratic Labour Party - to make sure that the equity, the transparency, the good governance and all the other aspects of development and management are displayed. And

therefore I want then, sir, to be able to refer to some challenges that I have been receiving in the same area of recreational activities and so on.

Perhaps I should interject now, sir, by saying that I was in Parish Land on Sunday evening when I saw the condition of the pavilion there. I believe the honourable sports member should make the activities reciprocal to promote the honourable member for Christ Church East. Because it is in the most deplorable state - that pavilion that I was at on Sunday evening. And the honourable member could get up and interrupt me if he chooses, sir, because I don't intend to be personal in the way that the honourable member seems to want to behave. The point I am making is when I was there on Sunday evening, the pavilion in Parish Land where there are thousands of residents living - no man, woman or child can play a game on that field. None. And therefore the Sports Council has a responsibility to make sure that field is properly tidied up so that those young people can vent their energies in physical activities and otherwise. And once they have the opportunity to do that, it lessens any interference when it comes to violence and getting mischievous and so on. I think that is really critical. That is the reason why the Labour Party built so many pavilions, so many playing fields, and of course the resource centres to engage young people and seniors and others in a meaningful way.

I have a tremendous difficulty, Mr. Speaker. I have written numerous letters. I am not going to write directly to ministers. I write to Permanent Secretaries. Because to write to the minister and then have it held up in this honourable chamber makes no sense to me. And therefore, Cane Garden Park - meaning the playing area in Cane Garden, when you go through Platinum Avenue, very near to the road that the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works has closed off with concrete blocks, barricading persons who live in there so that in case there is any incident they cannot get out - has only been cleaned by tremendous requests from myself and from the residents in October 2013. Now, Mr. Speaker, you know there are hundreds of houses in Cane Garden Development, meaning the one opposite Lester Vaughan School, to be exact. And the residents over the years had their neighbourhood watches going, and they would buy their own little lawnmower and do the cleaning. But we had a season where there was so much rain the residents just could not manage. And efforts had been made through written forms as well as letters and so on. And today the park at Cane Garden is in a worse state than what I saw at Parish Land on Sunday. And the residents are complaining forever, Mr. Speaker, about the centipedes, the rodents. I would have spoken, sir, before about houses being broken and entered because of the unkempt way in which that park is. And it is so close to houses. Persons walk there in the night. The buses don't go through that area, sir. And they are threatened by people who stay in the bushes waiting to rob and snatch bags.

And I think it is deplorable that if you are talking about developing people, that when requests are made for the people of St. Thomas, and indeed a lot of the constituencies in northern Barbados - perhaps except for St. Lucy - that we, the residents as well as the Members of Parliament, are not receiving that equity that we expect to be given to us. Because we are not asking for it for us, we are asking for it for the people of the constituencies and of the northern area in Barbados. And I think that it is really very important that we get some help in that area at Cane Garden to have that park cleaned up, because it runs on both sides of the streets. And when I spoke with the person working at the NCC last week, I was told we have to get a swipe. All efforts to call NTW - no swipe is working now. You can imagine, Mr. Speaker, why would a play park have to have a swipe unless the grass and the courage and the vines and so are so high in the air nobody can play in that park, sir. From since October 2013 - this is October 2015 - it has not been cut.

I also want to say that I support the effort, and that was the reason why the Barbados Labour Party sought to protect the billboard or signage or whatever in relation to the same area where the facility now is being planned for. And I think that it is a good thing and the residents in those areas deserve to have some place where they can recreate. And I support the comments made by the honourable member for the City who spoke about provision also, not for the youth alone, but for the seniors. And it is an interesting thing that we have so many thousands of seniors in Barbados and we keep talking about Barbados becoming an ageing society. But there is limited activity in which our seniors can engage. And I know at one point in time the Ministry now of Social Care would have had some programmes going where seniors would leave home some days in the week and go to a recreational area or to a resource centre or a pavilion and be engaged in craft and other aspects of skills development that help them to keep alive and alert, open up their minds and let them teach.

And it is really very important that that happens because a lot of our people are coming down with early dementia and a lot of others now are into full-blown Alzheimer's. And we all know that once those persons can carry out their craft and use their hands and do a little sewing and embroidery and put on buttons and so on, that is important. And I hope that when that recreational centre is completed that seniors will get a chance, whether it be once or twice a week in a community way, to come together and to sing their hymns and to recite the psalms that they did as children and go back down memory lane. That is critical to helping the minds to remain active. And I trust that this will not be the only one that the government will come with, but that they will look at other constituencies.

Now, I am saying in the north because the constituencies that are managed by many of the honourable members on the other side do have recreational facilities and other aspects of development for recreation or for people to go and do things. We have limited facilities in the north and therefore I am asking that when the plans are being made at the Cabinet level or whichever level, that we in the north get an opportunity to get our playing fields cleaned up adequately, to get our play parks sorted out, to get our pavilions well sorted out, or for new structures to be put in place to make a difference in our lives. Since at the end of the day we are all taxpayers, we are one Barbados, and we cannot be talking or boasting about 50 years of independence and then have the kind of cross-cutting and the kind of resentment and the kind of pushing aside - the shunting away, as you would want to call it - of us in the north. Because the people in the north, the majority of them would have voted for the Barbados Labour Party except two constituencies, St. Lucy and St. James South. We too require some of whatever is being offered to the rest of Barbados because we are people too and we help with nation building. Our children are young, they need help too. Our seniors are there, they need help, and the only way some of them can get it is through the government offering it. The government has a social responsibility to look after the needs of residents.

And therefore I encourage the government to continue to do what is good. And if you have to carry out every single project the Labour Party started, that is what good living is about, that is what continuity is for - to carry on projects. Because at the end of the day, who benefits? If it is the politician, it might only be for a 5 or 10 year period, but if it is for the people, it can be for 50 years, a hundred years. And I think that is really the critical point that we need to look at when we are doing the planning in a cohesive way to engage everybody. And despite whichever politician would have been at the helm of putting the project in place, at the end of the day the people who will benefit also matter.

And that is my five cents worth, Mr. Speaker, sir. And as I said, I too lend my support because I believe that wherever you are, whoever you are, you deserve the best of what is being offered to help people to develop physically, socially, financially, spiritually and in any other form of development that is necessary to make the difference in our lives and for us to continue on the path of developing a just and safe society. I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, honourable member for Christ Church East Central.

Hon. R. D. JONES: No, I am speaking, I am not wrapping up, thank you very much. Yes, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to make a brief intervention on this acquisition. Because it is an area I know well. It was one of the areas

where historically you can say we had cane cultivation that was part of the plantation economy of Barbados. And there was in fact a plantation known as Caneville going back centuries. But almost a redistribution took place and housing developed all around that part of Christ Church, just over the first ridge coming over from Austin, where Southern Plaza is located. And if you took a straight line, you will go straight onto the area that is being discussed for recreational purposes.

The residents of Caneville have in fact used that plot of land for many, many years. They cut the grass, they rolled part of it out. And they used to do a lot of cricket in that area - softball cricket. They would invite teams from all around other parts of Barbados, other parts of Christ Church. And they used to play there. I know the idea that first developed was to have what they called a mini stadium in that location. Because Gall Hill Football Club, a well-known football club from that area, used to play where Gall Hill development is now located. But that land was taken up for housing, I believe, in the late 1970s or early 1980s. And Gall Hill was displaced from playing football in that area. Just at the four-cross, the line to the left, and then Gall Hill started to play utilising the facilities of Foundation School and then Wharton Plains. So the idea that was first touted was that you would have found a home for Gall Hill Football Club just down the hill as it would be called, which would be on the second ridge just down the hill. So I can see the development of recreational facilities that would incorporate the residents of that total area - Caneville, Gall Hill, Lower Gall Hill, particularly even Osteen. Because you just have to come over the hill from Osteen.

and Welch's to utilise the field, to utilise the recreational facilities. I know with the Brewster's Trust that area was discussed some few years ago - as a place in which they could have made some investment and giving the clubs an opportunity to collect some fees at the gates to help with the management of those clubs. Because sporting organisations need money to bring off the sports, to ensure that the organisation as well as the development of the sport or sports can take place en masse.

So the area is well known. I remember in the 2003-2008 period two things happened to the previous representative for Christ Church West Central. The first one is that he was persuaded that land was made available for the construction of lower income houses on land just above where Transtec is now located, to find out, in fact, that the Ministry of Housing and Lands had not, in fact, paid for the land. So the cost moved from about \$800 000 to about \$18 million or so dollars because of the years that the land was not paid for, not utilised. And the second misfortune was that his own party had promised him that the land at Caneville was in fact acquired. And he was shocked to find out that what he was told was not, in fact,

correct. And I remember that led to some contestation in the yard of Parliament on this matter, when the nose of an honourable member felt a lash on it arising out of that pledge - almost a betrayal. So, in fact, land that was supposed to have been acquired all of that time is now being acquired for recreational purposes under the leadership of the Democratic Labour Party, because we recognise the developmental effect of providing recreational space well utilised for all of our peoples.

Because the Honourable Member for St. Thomas spoke to the issue of providing something for older people or senior citizens, I support that 100 per cent. But really, as a recreational space, it does not say that all the citizens cannot leisurely walk around the perimeter as part of the exercise regime. It does not say that under a good Tai Chi master that those same persons in their 50s, 60s, and even 70s cannot do Tai Chi out on that space within their community. We just have to think of what we can do with the facilities that we have and facilities to come. We just have to think - yes, there is nothing wrong with that. You can have an under-20 over-50 game even if you bowl underhand. I mean, you can create so many different things to make it possible for young people and senior citizens to enjoy each other's company and to enjoy each other's space.

The land brings into sharp focus the need for other areas for recreation within the society. We have said to developers, and it is part of the law, that once you do this amount of housing in a given area, that you should create green space. But one of the things that have been left out is that you did not specify that the developer should properly landscape the area. It is just left in bush and things like that - it should be properly landscaped, making it possible then for the state to help our residents to come by to develop the facility. They are normally left with grass and bush and stone and things like that. Sometimes we end up in that kind of scenario. So we have to ensure that these things are in fact carried out and in fact done.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke to this idea of when young people gather that one expects a level of indiscipline or a level of violence. We have had in the past instances where sportspersons have gathered and we have had some violence - not among the sportspersons themselves, but among elements that, knowing that a sport like football is an extremely popular sport, more than likely the person with whom they have some conflict will gather near where that space is. The same thing can happen with the now emerging area of road tennis. If you go to Silver Hill - it was just a few nights ago, I must confess - you are looking at 3 000, near 4 000 people. That is a lot of people in a small space, and I am a bit claustrophobic, but I pass and I see these massive amounts of people, and from what is true from where you are standing - young people, persons who have been

playing the sport before - all gathering and in a wholesome manner displaying their athleticism, because playing road tennis is not for the faint of heart.

The Honourable Member for [Inaudible.] is a spectator just like myself because our knees can no longer carry the stress and the strain of bending. I believe the only members - the only two members on this side and none on the other - whose ability can be questioned are the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central. All of the others - yes, yes - nonetheless fall upon their face in terrible disgrace, really. But I know the Honourable Member for St. Philip North goes around the GAR especially on the hill most of the time. That is what he just told me.

But it is important that we find those spaces both on the hard surface where netball, volleyball, road tennis and other games - even badminton - can be played in the open air, even though it is better in an indoor, enclosed facility. I am not going to discuss baseball, but that would be an area that can be looked at, or runners, or any of those other things. But football and cricket, netball, basketball and volleyball are the major mass-based sports played among teams. I would mention motorsport, where there is a massive following, because that is a more expensive and selective group that would be involved in motorsport.

When one looks at Barbados and the number of sports that are in fact played in Barbados - including clay pigeon shooting and things of that nature - Barbados per capita has more sports in it than any other country in the world. That is because our people are sports-oriented and our people want to have the expression and the adulation of others when they do well on the field of play or in the other areas of activity such as motorsport and rally, et cetera. So this move is an important one for the residents of that area.

But I would want to put in my piece for - I do not know how we are going to achieve it - the pavilion that was promised to the residents of Lodge Road and Kingsland. It is an area of 5 000-plus residents. 5 000-plus. And the last one was burnt down. It was a wooden structure. It was burnt down. And since that period we have not been able to have a facility replaced there. But we continue to explore. I can tell you that we have plans already approved by the Chief Town Planner. So the plans are already there. So in other words you almost have a shovel-ready facility that can be utilised. So I am looking forward that in the very, very near future that we can have that to cater to the people of Lodge Road and Kingsland. As I said, it is a massive area without a current space for a pavilion, a constituency empowerment centre and things of that nature. The plans are there, so I will continue the conversation to build the thing out and make it a lot cheaper from its current \$1.5 million budget. Once we can utilise the workers and things like that, we can do that. But that is needed as well to

complement Wharton, which is heavily used; Bradhall, which is also heavily used; now Caneville on the other side. And when that is built out - where you have that quartet of sporting facilities - then you can say that we have achieved in that area of Christ Church, including what happens in Smarillo and Silver Sands with the sporting facilities there and at Fairy Valley as well.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas spoke of keeping the facility, particularly the outfield, clean. She made that statement. I said but there was a time, maybe about 20 years or so ago, when on Saturday morning at 6 o'clock Trail Valley - it didn't have the pavilion then, the Trailville wasn't there, it was just the open field; well, I should say there was an old wooden facility there - when about 20 young men and women used to come out with their lawnmowers that they either borrowed or whatever, and in two to three hours they used to have that playing field spick and span. They did not wait on Government to send a motorised lawnmower or a swiper. They came out with their lawnmowers and rakes and the entire area in two to three hours was ready, and then the field was marked. We used to borrow the marker from the National Sports Council. You put down the string and you mark out the field. All of that was done by the community.

I wonder what is happening now when you simply sit down and say, well, the Government sends somebody to do it - when you have within your community all of the tools to assist in your own recreation and your own development. This notion of sitting and waiting is a dangerous notion for social upliftment and social enhancement. Dangerous dependence on the Government. It is awful. You will see growing right next to you, where you have to exit onto the road, a massive - let us call it a dumpster. I am not saying destroy fruit trees, but it is obliterating, it is blocking your exit point, and you allow it to block your exit point saying you are waiting on the Ministry of Transport and Works to cut it down, when you yourself have all the tools at your disposal to trim the tree so that you can exit safely onto the road. We have to get our community, our society, back to thinking about community volunteerism. Helping me to help you, helping you to help me. All of these things have to be part of the social dynamic of our society.

But when some politicians - and I do not use the word politicians pejoratively, I use it embracingly - simply get up and say the Government should do it, the Government must do this, rather than say together in partnerships. I have been known, Mr. Speaker, to contribute to the purchase of a motorised lawnmower for Lodge Road Sports Club. And I never drove it. The fellows themselves were going to cut the entire pasture and mark it out, roll the cricket pitch and go there and play cricket. We need more of that in our community. We need more of that

in our society, rather than asking all the time, where is Government?

I do not understand this - or some person going and posing. I see a lot of posing taking place recently. Stand up by a scoreboard and pose - a sheet of plywood from any lumber company, \$87, \$88, \$99; a pint of paint, \$36; and some markings costing less than \$150 - and you stand up and pose about what you contributed. You contributed a scoreboard to some cricket club. I mean, this is the kind of foolishness you see taking place by some politicians on the other side, posing. I want to repeat it: with an \$88-\$99 piece of plywood, \$36 in paint, a quart of paint, a paint roller and some markings, and they are posing, calling some newspaper down to come and take their photograph as they are donating. I am donating the scoreboard to the fellas. I mean, we have got to stop this exploitation of people in our society and making a lot of noise and licking our lips as though we have contributed something great. Or picking cotton for a day and saying how they are helping out with persons in entrepreneurial development. All of these things amaze me.

You know, I am known to be a community worker. I started that in secondary school and have not stopped, because it is bred into you - voluntarism, volunteering - and posing for anything. I mean, this five minutes of glory is supposed to last in the hearts of voters for 15, 20, 30 years. It is noted. If you want the five minutes in the sun, go and get it. What I want to see happen is more persons who can do so give up their time to the young people in your communities. Give up the time. You do not have to go and cut the lawn - I mean the pasture or the field. You might be able to help a child who cannot read well for one hour a week, and you will find over time how that child improves in his reading. This is giving, this is caring, this is volunteering to help lift others within their society up to a level and a standard that is absolutely important.

The notion of building out sports - there is a youngster who lives at Waterford, Brian King. I do not know if you have been following his exploits in the area of lawn tennis, but he has been proving to be a giant killer. He is coming along well. He needs the help and support of all Barbados, because once we recognise the talent, we have to promote the talent. We have to put the resources behind the talent as we have to do with any of our sportspeople. I am recognising Mr. Speaker - Brian - because he comes from the constituency of Christ Church West Central and I know the family quite well and the commitment to Brian as a young man. And it is fine. In between that we get young lawn tennis talent arising. There have been a few before - Sidney Lopez and others who have developed that talent. Lionel - yes, you remember the names. But now you have young Brian King, well supported, being well supported by the Lawn Tennis Association of Barbados and others within the community. But where did they develop their

talent? They developed their talent in the spaces in Barbados and further honed it off those spaces.

We as a nation - and I saw recently in social media where persons were saying, well, the Minister of Sport was not here to welcome back one or two persons who did well for Barbados overseas. The Honourable Member was overseas at the time and I remember putting out a statement. But come on, we have to not just simply jump on and say, well, this body did one thing, but we have to allow that capacity to build where adulation can be continuously given, rather than you do something now and then the next minute a person is not doing something for the next 10, 15, 20 or 30 years because they cannot deal with the pressure that the society places on them to constantly achieve. We have to build them slowly. We have to build them up to receive the kind of growth and development and maturation of their mind as their skills mature as well, so that they can continue to compete for quite a long time.

I believe it was one of the junior games where - I do not know if it was Rivaldo [Inaudible.] who won the 400 or the 400 hurdles. All right, so I compliment him. Outstanding youngster. Running a 400 hurdles is not easy. I do not think I can make it past the first hurdle even when I was young, because that was not my talent. No, I can play road tennis, but I am not going to use my knees at this age to do that. I prefer to do it the way the Honourable Member for St. George North now uses it - he plays marble cricket, the bat with the balls. But I am making that point to say that there is this great enthusiasm in a society for sportspersons, for its academics. And that is why I made the point - and it should be coming soon to the place where those decisions are taken - to reward that kind of talent as well in a developmental way, to put that kind of support behind our young people in track and field, in lawn tennis. We cannot do everything because we do not have the resources to do everything. But those that have been outstanding and can also stand the rigour of studying within a university space or college space, we can further enhance their development by the provision of scholarships that will help them to reach the peak and the height.

There was a time - in other words, right now, young Barbadians go to what we call CARIFTA Games and if we look at their performance, they are just as good as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas. But somewhere along the line, at 19 or 20, we see it tapering off, and it is not because they have lost their talent.

I remember - you have five minutes - in which I conclude: it is because they need the support, they need the help, they need the assistance. And it cannot only come from the state. But it must come from the collective society that respects its young people and what they are trying to do. What we do is that as a nation we do not contribute, but

after success is achieved, we simply come out, run behind the vehicle, listen to the music and the fanfare and say, that is my boy or that is my girl. My boy or my girl needs all the help to get to that point and to go beyond that point. That is what they need, rather than just the talk. The society is caught up with too much talk and too little action.

I commend this acquisition. I commend what it is trying to do for young people not only at Caneville, but in the surrounding areas. And even though the land is located at Caneville, it is a facility for the young people of Barbados, for the people of Barbados. I know sometimes some people say, well, that is our pavilion and you are playing there. That is our pavilion and it is shut when it should be used on a constant basis. We cannot shut up such expensive pieces of hardware, of infrastructure, that can be used by our young people. So I look forward to seeing what facility emerges in that context and hope that it is a facility that would be pleasing not only to the eye, but for those who use it. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, I really wish to also comment on this resolution. I want to compliment the Minister for this particular initiative. But I also want to focus on my own constituency and the fact that I do agree that sports play a very integral role in terms of the society and having to develop young people. And, you know, when you look and you examine what has happened in other societies, in other parts of our communities, sometimes you can trace a link between deterioration of physical facilities in the community and also the development of elements that you would prefer not to see.

And I want to compliment this particular initiative in Christ Church, but I really want to speak to St. Michael West Central and note that there is a particular facility in the Grazettes area of St. Michael West Central. I know that I have spoken to the Minister of Youth and Sports on this issue already and I think he has promised that there will be some assistance coming soon. And we see especially the Grazettes pasture, that there is a drainage problem there. And certainly we find that what has happened is that an area of Grazettes that in the past was a vibrant community that was well known for its sports teams in terms of volleyball, basketball, football - they had an extremely good football team - and that area now, Mr. Speaker, because of the fact that the field has been compromised somewhat, because of the fact that there has been an amount of settling and the drainage in the area needs addressing, that we find that facility in itself needs some work being done on it.

The other aspect I want to refer to also is the community centre that also needs some work being done

on it. But the point essentially I am making is that I believe that if we - and I think the residents have responsibility in this regard - if we do not take care of the facilities that are there and we have the eroding of those facilities, we will have a problem. And the erosion of that facility actually started sometime before we came to power. But I think we have a responsibility to try to do something about it, to try to bring back that community to where it was. Because we need to see it as a means of tackling some of the problems that we are seeing in our urban communities; we need to look to see how we can start to use sports as a way of doing so.

And I do agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church East about the fact that because we have a situation where people constantly look to the Government as a means of arriving at a solution, many times, especially in these times where Government resources are scarce, we can mobilise action in the community in order to address some of the core problems that we are seeing. And one has to wonder what has happened as a community that when in the past we would engage in actions where we helped ourselves, where we organised competitions for ourselves, where if there was something to be done, we actually got together, pooled resources and labour and we did it ourselves - to the point where now everybody looks to someone else in order to do it.

And as a matter of fact, I can cite instances even in the Grazzettes Western community where the actions of a few individuals actually determine whether or not something is done. And what has happened in our communities today is that too much pressure is being placed on too few individuals in order to get it done. And I think that is a mistake that we are making - that instead of trying to mobilise the whole community, we have situations where too few people have to make that commitment. And I think that we have to work to see how we can address it. And I do believe that by encouraging community action,

by encouraging people to use the resources that they have to address the issues that they face in their community, that we can actually resolve the issues that we face. And that is why I think it is integral that we start in communities like Grazzettes, which I intend to look at, to see how we can start to mobilise again activities in our area. But we need to do certainly some work on the facilities. And it is not only the football field. I think when you look at the state of the basketball court up there - and, you know, Grazzettes had an extremely good volleyball team - that too has not helped.

And you know, one of the issues too, I think that we need to recognise is that we need also to have a way of getting even those persons who had experience in the community to start to come back out, to start to play their

role. Because by and large, a lot of the younger people in the community do need guidance. And sometimes that guidance is lacking because of the fact that we do not have the older people coming out to play a role in those communities. We cannot leave young people to their own devices. And to that extent, we need to see that kind of involvement.

But I really think that it could begin if we address the issue of the physical facilities, and that once we can get that addressed, I believe we can look then to use sports as a way of trying to emphasise certain behavioural aspects that we would like to see in our young people in the communities of which they are part. And that serves as the contribution I would like to make. Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, given the topic under consideration, it would be remiss of me if I did not join in supporting the Christ Church team in this honourable chamber this evening as we contemplate the acquisition of these lands at Cairnville for the purposes of recreation, for the provision of recreation facilities. I think most of the critical, important points have already been made, but it is worth - I want to take up where the honourable member for Christ Church East Central left off. He mentioned the question of how do we develop a sustainable facility within our recreational range. And I think he touched on the very important fact that one of the features of all our developments so far in these community facilities has been the inability to collect any form of payment for attendance to the events. And this is a matter which I think we really need to consider in the future. And I must explain this is not at the exclusion of the community, but there are times when events that are taking place are of such a calibre, of such an interest in the community, of such an interest nationally, that I am sure patrons would be willing to make a small contribution to the activity. And I draw reference especially to the activities at the Dover site - for instance, Dover playing field - where we have benefited tremendously. And we continue to benefit from a community and visitors who really make that facility worthwhile.

It has already been mentioned - I think the honourable member for St. Lucy went as far as to recommend that we may want to consider looking at baseball as a sport very soon, given the way that the interest in cricket generally has not been developing in the way that we are accustomed to in Barbados. And any Saturday afternoon drive around Barbados today will tell you that the keen interest, that community interest in cricket that used to exist - whether it be BCA cricket, BCL cricket, whether it be second division, intermediate,

whatever, softball - that interest has changed. And we are fighting a battle which I believe we need, as a sporting community, to look at carefully.

I want to commend the Barbados Cricket Association, all the other associations who seek to promote cricket in Barbados, because they have a very worthy cause to follow. They have to fight with a community which has been accustomed to tremendous successes in the cricketing world, both at the level of Barbados - Barbados as a territory in the 1960s and 70s dominated the region in terms of cricket. Today we struggle, of course, to stay on par at the international level. I need not relate the woes of the West Indies cricket team, even as they fight in Sri Lanka today. We are at the losing end to Sri Lanka. So we understand as a people the struggle which we are in. But I want to commend the efforts of the associations, the leadership, despite their problems, and indeed of the young men who play our cricket.

It is noteworthy, however, that the lady cricketers in the region are doing very well, are doing very, very well indeed. And it is almost a reflection of a society - certainly in Barbados - where the women in our society have in large measure taken over the leadership of our communities, the leadership of our households, as we struggle with a generation which we need to work hard at getting back on focus. And speaker after speaker has spoken to that reality.

Sir, the question of the usefulness of sporting facilities for the young and the elderly - I think the point was made. As a matter of fact, I may at this point indicate to the chamber that this evening, when we leave here, those members who are not too busy, I invite them to join me at the Dover Sports Club, where the John Boyce Paradise Masters semifinals will take place tonight. The finals of course are on Sunday evening. So again I am inviting the members to be mindful guests at those two activities. Now that is a Masters tournament - that is the point I want to make. And some of these footballers are over 40, in some cases over 50 years old, but they are enjoying themselves.

The honourable member for St. Michael East is going to join me - that is all right, that is all right. I will introduce him to a few people if you bring him along with you. The point is that these older players are making sure that it is a family event. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, sir, in terms of the Masters tournament - to each his own. We have need for activities for the very young. We have need for activities for the strong. We need to have activities created and managed for the older members of our community. And some commentators are of the view that the standards being displayed in some of these Masters tournaments - whether it is cricket or football or whatever - are even beyond the standards visible in the regular tournaments. So that is the wonderful thing about the multi-use facility: they make sure that the communities are

so mobilised that all members of the communities can partake.

And then of course one of the contributors to this session today made the point about the question of our health, and I need not repeat - but I will - the fact that we accept that physical activity is an integral part of a healthy community. And as we fight the battle with the Barbadian community - and I am sure that we have agreement on both sides of this chamber in this regard - as we fight the battle of non-communicable diseases and all the precursors to these diseases, we know that physical activity will play a very important part in terms of getting us to be able to manage these non-communicable diseases down the road. The statistics are telling us in the Ministry of Health that as much as 70 per cent of our people are suffering from non-communicable disease. This is a serious reality which we have to face. So encouraging people to get out into the open, or even in their homes to create a regime for exercise and for keeping fit, is an absolute essential part of the promotion of a healthy community. We must promote healthy activity, we must promote good nutrition. We need to battle with the reality of obesity.

For instance, I mentioned already that the Chancellor of the university on Saturday evening made the point about obesity and we need to face the reality. It was there in front of our eyes that as much as 30 to 35 per cent of our young people are obese. And we need to fight this reality. We need to fight this battle. So if in any way the creation of facilities like this one at Cairnville, and the maintenance and development of other facilities around Barbados, can help our people to engage in more physical activity, to engage in healthy exercise and healthy nutrition and healthy practices, then we would have won the battle for a Barbados for the future. We recognise that investment in a programme to improve the health of this nation is going to be a long battle. It is not a battle we can win overnight. Yes, we have taken measures in the Ministry of Finance to introduce a levy on our sweetened drinks. And we will maintain that policy. We will impose that policy, Mr. Speaker, sir, so that we will encourage our people - as in the case of the taxation - it is known that taxation will reduce the consumption of some of these products. In many cases it is a way of guaranteeing that people get the message and that there is utility in that kind of a move.

And then of course the programmes - the Ministry of Education - we have developed an inter-ministerial committee in the battle against non-communicable diseases. And that inter-ministerial committee will seek to present to the Cabinet of Barbados and eventually to this Parliament solutions which can help us bring about this more healthy nation.

So Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to go on record with my colleagues in Christ Church and indeed my

colleagues on this side, and those who have spoken from the benches of the opposition, in support of this resolution. Because the point is, when we create a planned facility at Cairnville it is not for Cairnville alone. And again the point was made - I think the member for Christ Church East made the point - these activities, these sports that we sponsor and we have in our communities, attract people from all over Barbados. And when the member for St. Michael East comes this evening, he will see people from St. Michael East at this football game. He will see people from St. Peter at this football game. So you are all welcome, sir. And I look forward certainly to entertaining the member for St. Michael East and whoever he brings in his party at that activity.

So Mr. Speaker, this is a serious part of any government's programme - the creation of sporting facilities, the management of the facilities. We can debate that the entire day, as far as the mixture of responsibility by government or by communities or by leaders in our communities. Where that management resides can vary. But I really think it has to be a joint effort with our young people, with our elderly people, with those who can help us with sponsorship, the private sector, sir, and indeed wherever possible the efforts of the government itself in providing that leadership. And sir, with those few comments, I beg to move to support this very noble resolution for the acquisition of this land at Cairnville for the provision of sporting facilities. I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the member for St. Lucy.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I want to thank all members who spoke on this resolution, especially the members on the other side. And I was very happy to see how delightful they were on the conclusion of this matter, considering that this matter started on June 29, 1998. And I was very happy to hear that they also want to have a resource centre at this facility, when one considers that at the time it was supposed to be a football field, hard court and a pavilion. So it shows the type of confidence that the other side has in this side, and how happy they are to see in a short space of time how this government has been able to close this particular file on the issue, considering that it has now been outstanding for 17 years - 17 and a third years. So we are happy that they are also happy and that they can appreciate that in difficult financial times we can not only deliver the goods, but also add to their requests.

And I have no doubt, sir, that the honourable member for Christ Church West Central will be making the request for the resource centre even in these difficult financial times. And it shows what a caring government - that the other side understands how caring we are, and that we were able, even though we are in these difficult financial times, to deliver.

I am also happy to hear the honourable member for St. Thomas who spoke about resource centres and who made the point that the only two constituencies that they do not control in the north are St. Lucy and St. James South. But I do not know if St. John was blessed to have a resource centre. But I know when they were giving out resource centres, they never gave one to St. Lucy. So I am happy to hear now that the opposition would like to see resource centres coming even to the north, and that they would support me in also requesting one in the north - or a couple - when one considers the density of St. Lucy and the vast area of St. Lucy. So I am glad to see that they can appreciate that in these difficult economic times we are managing so well that we can even squeeze out some money to allocate some resource centres.

Mr. Speaker, it is no doubt that I feel strongly about the baseball field. The honourable member for St. George North will tell you that as far back as the 90s I have always requested that I felt the time was right for baseball to come to Barbados. And I preferred to the government at the time, when they had the money, that the naval base in St. Lucy still had a baseball field. And that we should have capitalised on it. And you know what is rather interesting about it, Mr. Speaker, is that at this time the American tourists have increased to such a number that I believe they are now the largest number of tourists coming to Barbados. And we have to understand and need to appreciate that we cannot invite people to our shores and do not necessarily provide the sporting facilities and the other facilities to suit what they have in their country, so that they can use us as an alternative and believe that when they travel to Barbados we have the facilities and that they will be comfortable coming to Barbados.

So I ask the honourable member for Christ Church West Central, who is also the Minister of Sports, to appreciate the point being made and to speak to the Ministry of Housing, or the BTI, about the possibility of BTI acknowledging the point and adding or repairing or fixing the baseball field that is at the naval base in St. Lucy. And do not behave like others, because they believe once it is in St. Lucy there is no useful purpose. But recognise the point that is being made, and recognise that the point is in the interest of the people of Barbados. Because whatever you do in St. Lucy is for the people of Barbados, because we share what we have.

And you know, in the beginning is always the most important point - in the beginning. And if you want to ensure that the rest of our business is right, you have to correct your beginning, which happens to be St. Lucy. Because whether you come by boat or by plane, the first place you see is St. Lucy. And it shows that any measurement occurs from St. Lucy. And if you do not take measurements on St. Lucy, then you do not have

measurement. So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I beg that this resolution do now pass.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. CLERK: In the name of the Honourable Leader of the House, to move that the House resolve itself into the Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of this island.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 3, 2015 - 2016

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. Honourable member for Christ Church South.

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Mr. CLERK: In the name of the Honourable Leader of the House, to move the passing of a resolution to grant the sum of \$221 227 351 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 2015–2016 as shown in Supplementary Estimates Number 3, 2015–2016, which formed the schedule to the resolution. Head 76 - Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development - in the amount of \$227 351.

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. All Members would be aware of course of the Human Resource Development Strategy passed in debating this House on a resolution in 2011. And you would remember that the HRD Strategy was for a five-year period, 2011 to 2016. As part of that strategy you had to build out the personnel to service the strategy. And therefore this \$227 351 is required by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development to provide personal emoluments for three posts of Programme Officer and one new post of Administrative Research Officer. The funds are broken down as \$213 259 to pay the staff and the contribution of

\$14 000 as the employer's contribution to the National Insurance Scheme on behalf of those workers. You know of course that these are funds which come from, I think, the 10th EDF and EU support schemes for human resource development - human capital formation, as it is called in other places as well. We would have received financing over several tranches to support this strategy: 9.7 million euros in December of 2014, that is 21 million Barbados dollars; 16.1 million euros in March of 2015, that is 35 million Barbados dollars; and a more recent payment of 17.1 million Barbados dollars or 7 million euros as a third tranche.

Of course, you know, the Government of Barbados continues to provide large sums of money for its human resource development, again starting from its youngest citizen in nursery education, right through to all types and kinds and varieties of personnel enhancement programmes and strategies. So this small sum of \$227 351 is but a small drop in an extremely large pool of human resource development and the funds provided for that. It doesn't merit a lot of discussion outside of what one can consider as an update on how the strategy - the rollout of the strategy - has been going.

Members would remember that the strategy was established on five pillars. It is called an Enabling Environment and today various things have happened under that particular pillar. The Programme Implementation Unit was set up in 2011–2012 to start to coordinate and roll out the various activities across the strategy. An official logo was designed and launched. I have spoken to the money received thus far and if you can add properly 35, 21 and 17.5 you will get the appropriate total - that is about 73-point-something million dollars that have been received under the European Union for the Human Development activity, Human Capital Formation. We have done institutional assessments in several areas of the public sector - Personal Administration Division, Training Administration Division, et cetera. Over 1 700 public servants completed HRD-related professional development activities through the operationalising of the HRD Strategy locally, regionally and internationally, and more continues right until the conclusion of the programme.

The National Qualification Framework as Pillar 2 - this was entrusted to the Barbados Accreditation Council under the Ministry of Education. The final report was submitted in August of 2020 and then another consultancy was done for the National Qualification Register. Some legislation will be coming to this House for the creation of a National Qualification and Accreditation Authority. Rather than have two separate and distinct bodies, the proposal is for a National Accreditation and Qualification Authority - one body dealing with the specific functions of those two entities. We have in that NVQ and CVQ

programmes - NVQs being the National Vocational Qualification - a lot of them developed by BIMAP on behalf of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council of Barbados. We found as well that occupational standards were developed and validated by TVET. BIMAP is already responsible for a lot of the NVQs and then the Competency Based Training Fund which provides resources for businesses in the private sector to work with young people in developing their competencies. I believe we are at the third rollout of funds to develop those programmes. So far the first and second iterations were going quite successfully and you will find that in the third iteration that is expected to be just as good as the first two.

The third pillar was Demand Driven Educational System and work continues to go according to plan on that particular area of activity - the National Employment Board, BIMAP, Ministry of Education, counselling and employment services at the Community College and the Office of Student Services, University of the West Indies. I put on career planning and counselling services. All of this has been part of that exercise, the development of knowledge management systems. Because there are so many different technology operations across the wider public sector and also the private sector, many of these systems, as we say in the technical line, do not see one another. So you had to create a knowledge management system where interoperability becomes part of the functioning framework so that it can see and communicate and deposit information and statistics, harvest information and all of that kind of thing. So a consultancy was taken out on that to provide an implementation strategy.

Pillar five - research, innovation and entrepreneurship capacity. Over 400 people received training in entrepreneurship and a number of workshops on innovation were held to build the capacity to improve the economic growth and sustainable development of Barbados. We have also had a consultancy ongoing for the development of a blueprint for STEM education - that is, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. That was done at the end of March 2015 and that is ongoing. We have had the Ministry of Labour and Provost Caribbean to deliver the World of Work internship programme continue. We have also had a major study done on education as an export sector. That study has now been completed just about two weeks ago and first had to be dealt with again by social policy before it goes to Cabinet, showing what we can do to turn the educational framework of Barbados into a viable economic frontier - a viable economic programme for Barbados. And I am just encapsulating much of the work which has been done under the strategy.

Of course, the end result would be how the human capital of Barbados is formed and reformed over time to meet the needs of Barbados in the 21st century. The

Government of course remains fully committed to improving the international competitiveness of Barbados through the continued development of its human capital. And the HRD Strategy promotes the creation of an environment which fosters demand-driven education, training and lifelong learning. You know, we have several evening institutes attached to at least four or five of our secondary schools that provide post-school intervention in some of the known areas that are taught within the secondary school. So you have Queen's College, Daryl Jordan Foundation, Springer Memorial, Frederick Smith - some time ago the Daryl Jordan - providing centres where people can go and improve the acquisition of certificates and programmes across other areas. Because the hotel school also provides training in pastry making, Spanish, foreign language teaching. You have these general interest courses at the Barbados Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Erdiston Teachers' College and in many private educational facilities. So once a Barbadian wants to study, the opportunity is there to study, to be trained, to learn, to develop their various capacities, to be part of the educational knowledge hub that Barbados can truly become.

We have done a lot of work in education in this country, but we have not appreciated the value of what we have done over time. So this resolution is just basically to provide the funds to pay those four persons identified. But I thought that I should just give you a capsule of some of the ongoing work of the Human Resource Development Strategy and all the persons - the Human Resource Coordinator and all of those associated with that. One of the areas that will fall under the strategy, and very shortly, would be looking at the special needs and the impact of the 11-plus on the education environment of Barbados - that is coming out of this strategy through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development as well.

So great work continues. We must compliment the Minister, the Ministry and all of those associated with the strategy for what is being achieved. One hopes that as we go into Estimates this year, all of the departments, agencies and ministries of Government would include within their estimates some aspect of human capital formation which is part and parcel of the Human Resource Development Strategy. Lifelong learning, lifelong facilitation. The ability to - do not see yourself as a failure, but know that you have capacities that can be further enhanced over time. I have known of persons who were in education, finished at age 60 and then went and did a law degree. I have known of persons who have been in other parts of Barbados working, finished, went into theology and became pastors and reverends. So we have that knowledge base already. We just need to extract all of those potentials by the correct exposure in the institutes of learning right across Barbados to truly develop our human resource potential and our

human capital formation that would make Barbados a truly independent and fully developed country as we move forward. So, Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Head stand part.

The question that Head 76 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. R. D. JONES, Mr. Chairman reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting of this Assembly be adjourned until Tuesday, 27th October, at 10.00 in the morning.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

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MARSHALL, Mr. D. D. (St. Joseph)

PAUL, Mr. J. D. (St. Michael West Central)

SINCKLER, Hon. C. P. (St. Michael North West)

STUART, Rt. Hon. F. J. (St. Michael South)

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while correcting and preparing this report. Members are named as in the 2013–2018 Parliament.

Q1. Front matter. The source does not record the PRESENT list or the officiant at Prayers. The Members listed are those identified from the record; the time of meeting, 10.00 a.m., is as stated in the source. The prayer transcribed in the source is replaced by the formula ‘Prayers were read.’ Please supply from the Votes and Proceedings.

Q2. Throughout. The bracketed time-checks in the source are out of sequence (for example ‘[01.30 a.m.]’ and ‘[2.00 a.m.]’ during the morning and ‘[03.30 a.m.]’ in the afternoon) and have been omitted.

Q3. Minutes. Mr. SPEAKER refers to the minutes of ‘Tuesday, 20th January, 2015’ (confirmed as corrected) and of ‘Friday, 20th August, 2015’ (deferred). Please confirm the dates against the Votes and Proceedings.

Q4. Order No. 25. The Bill was read a first time, and called by the Clerk, as the ‘Latin American Development Bank Bill 2015’, and the heading follows that title; the Minister moved that it be cited as the Loans (Latin American Development Bank) Act, 2015. Please confirm the long title. The source heads Mr. G. A. Clarke (St. George South), but Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for St. George North.

Q5. Order No. 25, Hon. S. A. Lashley. The source twice reads ‘the Member from/for St. George South’. The Member who had just spoken for the Opposition was Mr. G. A. Clarke, Member for St. George North, as Hon. C. P. Sinckler confirms; corrected.

Q6. Committee (Order Nos. 25 and 24); Committee of Supply. Mr. CHAIRMAN is not named in the source; the Chairman of Committees, Mr. J. D. Paul, is presumed. The Committee stages are condensed to the Official Report formulae; both Bills passed without amendment.

Q7. Order No. 24, Madam Deputy Speaker. During the speech of Hon. D. O’N. Inniss Mr. SPEAKER broke off (‘Just a minute please’) and the next line is headed ‘DEPUTY SPEAKER’; the line ‘Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair’ has been supplied. The words ‘dynamic industry’ printed at the start of Mr. SPEAKER’s line complete Mr. Inniss’s sentence and have been moved to him. Mr. SPEAKER’s

return to the Chair is not recorded; he puts the question on second reading.

Q8. Order No. 24, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce (reply). After Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER called the Member for Christ Church South, the Minister’s reply has no speaker heading in the source; it is printed under Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE. The Minister gives the increase in the Council as ‘from 6 to 8’; Hon. D. O’N. Inniss speaks of ‘seven up to nine members’. Please check against the Bill.

Q9. Order No. 17. Mr. SPEAKER gives the land as ‘situated at Durance Village in the parish of St. James’; Hon. D. O’N. Inniss refers to the nursery school at ‘Hordes Hill’. The heading follows Mr. SPEAKER’s reading. Please confirm the place names.

Q10. Order No. 17, Mr. J. D. Paul. Headed ‘HON. G. P. IAN GOODING-EDGHILL, J.P., M.P.’ in the source here and on the later Resolution; he was not a Member of the 2013-2018 House. On both occasions Mr. SPEAKER called the Member for St. Michael West Central, and in the second speech the speaker refers to ‘my own constituency’ and to ‘the Grazettes area of St. Michael West Central’. Printed under Mr. J. D. PAUL. Please confirm.

Q11. Order No. 17, Hon. D. St.E. Kellman. After the point of order by Mr. D. D. Marshall and Mr. SPEAKER’s ruling, the rest of Hon. D. St.E. Kellman’s speech has no speaker heading in the source; it is printed under his name.

Q12. Order No. 17, Hon. R. D. Jones (reply). The source reads ‘I just wish, Sir, to move that this resolution do not pass’; corrected to ‘do now pass’. Mr. SPEAKER’s putting of the question is garbled in the source (‘...do now pass against pci. No, it takes the ice habit Resolution has been passed’) and is printed as the formula.

Q13. Resolution, land in Christ Church. The Order number and the Clerk’s reading of this Resolution are not in the source, and the Minister’s speech begins mid-sentence (‘- this House. Honourable House seeks permission ...’). Part of the record may be missing at this point. The location is given variously as ‘Kingville’ (the Minister), ‘Caneville’ (Hon. S. A. Lashley and Hon. R. D. Jones), ‘Cairnville’ (Mr. G. A. Clarke and Hon. J. D. E. Boyce) and ‘Haynesville’ (Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe); the heading therefore does not name the place. Please confirm.

Q14. Resolution, land in Christ Church, Hon. R. D. Jones. The Minister refers to a remark by ‘the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central’ on teaching ethical responsibility. The Member for St. Michael Central did not speak in the debate as recorded; Mr. J. D. Paul (St. Michael

West Central) spoke on values. Left as in the source; please check.

Q15. Committee of Supply. The Clerk reads ‘the sum of \$221,227,351’; Head 76 is given as \$227,351, which is the sum the Minister speaks to. Hon. R. D. Jones also says the final report on the National Qualification Framework ‘was submitted in August of 2020’, which cannot be right for a 2015 sitting. Please check both figures.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, with Mr. SPEAKER presiding. The Minutes of January 20, 2015 were confirmed as corrected and those of August 20, 2015 deferred. The Prime Minister laid the Barbados National Oil Company Limited Annual Report, later correcting the year to 2013; Hon. C. P. Sinckler laid the Land Tax Rate of Tax Order 2015, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce the National Conservation Commission Fees Regulation 2015, and Hon. A. D. Brathwaite the Police Complaints Authority and Barbados Prison Service Annual Reports for 2014. The Latin American Development Bank Bill, the National Conservation Commission Validation of Fees Bill and the Pharmacy Amendment Bill, 2015 were read a first time, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Under Order No. 25 Hon. C. P. Sinckler moved the second reading of the Latin American Development Bank Bill, 2015, which gives domestic effect to Barbados’ membership of CAF as a further source of development financing, with loans to be laid before the House; he said CAF loans usually cost about 2 per cent plus the six-month LIBOR. Mr. G. A. Clarke said the Opposition had no objection to joining CAF but asked the Government to identify the projects, consider interest rates and ensure accountability. Hon. S. A. Lashley said the Bill preserved Parliament’s control over borrowing. The Bill passed through Committee without amendment as the Loans (Latin American Development Bank) Act, 2015.

Under Order No. 24 Hon. J. D. E. Boyce moved the second reading of the Pharmacy Amendment Bill, 2015,

which enlarges the Pharmacy Council and allows the Minister to appoint its Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Dr. M. M. Agard questioned the urgency of the Bill and said ministerial appointment of the Chairman would politicise a professional body; she raised arrears owed to pharmacists, the use of antibiotics and generic drugs, and called for a discussion on marijuana. Hon. D. O’N. Inniss distinguished the Barbados Pharmaceutical Society from the Council and called for mandatory continuing professional education, and Hon. A. D. Brathwaite spoke on new psychotropic substances, prescription abuse and the sale of drugs over the Internet. Replying, the Minister noted the new four-year Bachelor’s in Pharmacy at the Community College. The Bill passed through Committee without amendment as the Pharmacy Amendment Act, 2015.

After the luncheon suspension Hon. R. D. Jones moved, under Order No. 17, a Resolution for the compulsory acquisition of 832.9 square metres in St. James for an access road to a nursery school at the old St. John the Baptist Boys’ School, and described the nursery programme with the Maria Holder Trust. Mr. E. G. Hinkson gave the Opposition’s support, called for policies on early childhood and special needs education and for speedy compensation, and withdrew a remark after Mr. SPEAKER’s ruling. Hon. D. O’N. Inniss welcomed the project in his constituency of St. James South; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman replied to Mr. Hinkson, drawing a point of order from Mr. D. D. Marshall; and Mr. J. D. Paul spoke on values in schools. The Resolution was passed.

Hon. D. St.E. Kellman then moved a Resolution to acquire 13 577 square metres, or 3.35 acres, in Christ Church from the estate of David Yard for recreational facilities. Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic proposed a resource centre; Hon. S. A. Lashley, as Member for Christ Church West Central and Minister of Sports, welcomed the acquisition; Mr. G. A. Clarke raised unpaid compensation for earlier acquisitions at St. Martin’s, St. Philip and in St. George; and Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe, Miss C. Y. Forde, Hon. R. D. Jones, Mr. J. D. Paul and Hon. J. D. E. Boyce also spoke. The Resolution was passed. In Committee of Supply Hon. R. D. Jones explained \$227 351 under Head 76 for four posts under the Human Resource Development Strategy, and the Resolution was agreed to. The House adjourned until Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 10.00 a.m.