
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2013 – 2018

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, March 17, 2016

RESUMPTION

ORDER No. 21 (RESUMED)

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon, Honourable Member this Sitting is resumed.

Before we begin just let me make a note of something which occurred yesterday which I understand might have been causing a bit of consternation. It has to do with the seating and so on. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West was permitted to deliver his speech from a seat other than his own and I did not think it was a big problem but, as you know, the assignments are made at the beginning of the term and the rule is that you are expected to address the Chair from your seat. You also know that in circumstances where a given Honourable Member has decided that they are no longer supporting Either Side then that Honourable Member usually sits as an Independent behind the Opposition and in recent times given the seniority of the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter we would have taken his particular wishes into consideration.

I have received no indicated from either the Leader of the Opposition or Dr. Agard, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, that the relationship between them had change. This Parliament does not have to be bound by what it reads in the media and we have not receive any official word therefore, no action had been taken with respect the seating, however, I did receive some indication that two Honourable Member of the Opposition Benches desired to be seated elsewhere and based on that, arrangements were made to accommodate them at the back. I was therefore surprise to hear that there was some concern about the Honourable Member addressing from a seat other than his own but all that happened really was that it did not occur to me that he was not in his right seat until

he was part way through his speech. Although it may look so, I am not perfect and where you notice that some infraction has taken place you simply have to draw it to my attention. I did not see the need to disturb the Honourable Member yesterday after he was part way through his speech but the rules still apply that you should address the Chair from you assigned seat. If you see an infraction bring it to my attention and let us deal with it rather than grumbling and let it be a new issue because to my mind it is not a big thing. The seating orders are arranged and we are asking you to do that to help us keep some order in the Chamber, that is really what it is all about.

Having said that let me say that yesterday when the suspension was taken we were on Order Number 21 and we had just come to the end of the Second Reading of that particular Bill and now we will proceed from there. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

On the motion of Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, seconded by Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. J. D. PAUL in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

HEAD 40

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

\$102 169 129

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

Hon M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, first let me say from the outset that I want to thank my workers from the ministry for contributing greatly to the performance of the ministry in the financial year and of course to their contribution in terms of the preparation for these Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, second I want to state that the mission statement of this ministry speaks to the provision efficient, effective, safe, reliable transport and infrastructure for the social and economic development of this nation. Mr. Chairman, before I go into the provisions I just want to outline the achievements in the past year in the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW), I will not go through all of them but I want to speak mainly to some of the achieve and of course, some of those achievements was the launch and implementation of the Transport Authority Service Integration Project, that was a pilot project and it is still going, the start and construction of the new River Terminal Redevelopment, the commencement of the legislative review of the Transport Authority Act and draft Transport Authority Regulations and, of course, the other tenantry roads that we have done in relation to ministry.

I Mr. Chairman, I want to speak on the proposed capital works programme for the ministry. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, we have outlined in our capital works for this year, the loan from CAF, the Latin American Development Bank. This was a sector loan which was signed on November 30, 2015 with the aim of developing key infrastructure development as required in relation to the sustainability and improvement of the tourism sector of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, part of the proceeds, as I mentioned some time ago, \$2.5 million, goes towards the development of the Electronic Vehicle Registration (EVR) system. I just want to state that the ministry has satisfied all of the conditions precedent to the first disbursement of this loan. When I speak to the Licensing Authority in relation to what it would have to put in place and the status of the EVR, I will go into the details of it.

Mr. Chairman, further to our capital works programme, only recently the Ministry of Finance signed an Inter-American Development Bank loan on February 19, 2016. Again, this speaks to improving connectivity of the road infrastructure in Barbados and rehabilitation of roads. The cost of this project is estimated to be \$25 million.

Mr. Chairman, there are three components to this loan: civil works, institutional strengthening and implementation support. The Ministry of Transport and Works Project Unit will be responsible for the execution of projects and roads under this loan.

Further, Mr. Chairman, the other part of our capital works programme is the loan from the Caribbean

Development Bank, the provision of technical assistance the road and bridge improvement studies consisting of three components: the engineering study for the Ronald Mapp Highway upgrade, the feasibility study and the IRAP programme which goes hand in hand with our road safety programme and remit as a result of our programmes within the ministry.

Mr. Chairman, I used the term IRAP, the International Road Assessment Programme. This project will run for six months. I am informed, all things being equal, that this project will be formally launched on March 30, 2016.

Further, Mr. Chairman, we have continued our road safety approach. The National Road Safety Council which was established some time in 2010 is chaired by the Right Honourable Prime Minister and the Deputy Chair is the Minister of Transport and Works. We have had several meetings with stakeholders. The mandate of the Barbados Road Safety Council includes: to develop and implement road safety promotional activities and conduct public educational programme - we have done that throughout the year - to advise the Government on road safety issues and act as a lobby group for the promotion of road safety, to reduce the number and severity of collisions and hence the mortality rate on Barbados roadways as well as lowering the financial emotional and social cost to society. All of these components go hand in hand in our approach to our legislative programme, that is, amendments to the Road Traffic Act and amendments to the other pieces of legislation that touch on safety on our road.

Mr. Chairman, the ministry is also charged with the responsibility of the operation of the Transport Authority. I mentioned at the outset that the Transport Authority which was established some time in 2006 or thereabout was established really to regulate the PSVs and obviously to provide that legal framework into which the private sector operators should operate.

We have to look at ways and means and how we are going to strengthen the Transport Authority legislation, which is part of our remit for this financial year. I have done some comparisons in relation to other jurisdictions. I know that on the lips of many Barbadians we hear about the recklessness on the road, I am not saying the majority, the behaviour of PSV owners and what not. Suffice it to say, the Act was passed but without the regulations and we are working on the draft regulations. We examined other jurisdictions particularly the Jamaican legislation which is similar to the Transport Authority Act which gives the Transport Inspectors or what we call the inspectorate very wide powers in terms of bringing order and discipline because as I have said time and time again, although the Road Traffic Act is there, there is the issue of enforcement.

Yes members of the Royal Barbados Police Force would be stretched but it is an issue of enforcement particularly.

For example, Mr. Chairman, we hear a lot of complaints about loud music and the playing of music on the vans, but if you look at the Road Traffic Act, Section 34 speaks to the prohibition of music on the vehicles, but it is a question of enforcement.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to go into all of that but I guess during the course of the debate we would have a discussion on how are we going to regulate and properly enforce the provisions under the law that regulate private sector vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, in relation to the Transport Board, it was established by an Act of Parliament 1955 basically to provide public transport, provide transportation to vulnerable groups and persons who could not afford private transport. Time and time again I have mentioned the challenges that we have at the Transport Board. I could speak to reports after reports that questioned the reliability of service and the fact that we need some specialists at the Transport Board to help us in terms of fleet maintenance support in terms of management.

Mr. Chairman, we have been able to keep expenditure down at the Transport Board in the financial year. We have done what is necessary within the organisation to keep the expenditure down. Juxtaposed to that, Mr. Chairman, we have been able to increase and look at increased ways of revenue.

Mr. Chairman, I have mentioned routes and I have mentioned the fact that we have looked at areas particularly our tourism network that so that we can capitalize and optimize our revenue from our assets. It is a fact, Mr. Chairman, that the reliability of our service has been questioned and it is a fact that we have to look to replacement units. (S3) The reliability of our service is in question and it is a fact that we have to look to replacement units. Mr. Chairman, we have to encourage, as is being done in the pilot projects, to engage the private sector in assisting and bringing about a more reliable service to public transport in this country.

Further, Mr. Chairman, , the Transport Board when we do an analysis of the routing and an analysis of our scheduled services we have not been able to meet some of times which goes back again to the fact that we have a very aged fleet of buses at the Transport Board. For some time I think the last fleet of buses were purchased was in 2006 and so we are now having challenges at the Transport Board and therefore we have to come with a programme of fleet maintenance and of course support in terms of the fleet maintenance programme.

Mr. Chairman, I want to move onto the fact that in spite of this we have been able to encourage the private sector not only in the Transport Board, we have come to this country and I must say I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who piloted this programme through Cabinet, which I implemented, that is the utilisation of the private sector in the cleaning up of our highways. Mr. Chairman, the Adopt-a- Kilometer is now in its fourth phase and the reports that we have gotten the first phase of that programme was launched in April 2014, a beautification programme to maintain and beautify the verges along the highway.

Mr. Chairman, the aim of the programme is that we see or go out there to ask companies to sponsor stretches of the verges and of course with the understanding that they will place with names and logos on the signs erected along the highway. So far sponsors participating in this programme amount to about 70 to 80 companies. I have been informed to this date that just about 100 persons have been employed, and that there are small landscaping companies that are also involved.

Mr. Chairman, what is also outstanding is that the Adopt-a-Kilometer programme support the Government renewable energy initiatives because since some of the signs that have the sponsors' names are equipped with solar panels which provide illumination at night, so that they have actually partnered with us in that regard and of course I would like...in fact we have to get together at some time in the Ministry to see how we could expand this approach, because it is only recently as I said, going forward in this year we want to encourage the private sector particularly in adopting roundabouts, particularly in terms of pedestrian crossings.

Mr. Chairman, only recently my Team has a meeting with a Team from Harris Paints in terms of painting pedestrian crossings and all those other signs that show a state of disrepair.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: We are actually encouraging them and they are coming forward to assist us and that saves us some money and I really thank them for their effort and for coming forward as good corporate citizens to be involved in matters of road safety and beautifying the infrastructure of Barbados.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I am also excited by the fact that we will be implementing the first phase of the Electronic Vehicle Registration System and we are at this very moment developing a clean transport policy for Barbados, given the fact that the Ministry of the Environment and Drainage has made contact with us, we have said to let us put together the key components of a

future clean transport policy for Barbados. I really want to congratulate my Team for getting together in a very short space of time. I think what they have to do now is to meet with the other stakeholders so that we can flesh out these components and can have a good and national discussion on what type of clean transport policy we really need for this country. Sir, that is the way we want to move forward.

Further, Mr. Chairman, as I speak again to the Electronic Vehicle Registration System, the implementation of this programme will mean again we have to go back to the Road Traffic Act to make the necessary amendment so that a system like this would be recognised.

Mr. Chairman, the first phase of this project includes the changeover from the current licence plates to plates that are compatible with the technology that we are seeking to bring to this country, it involves the installation of reader sites, because our information speaks to the fact that we have a number of non-compliant persons out there on the road who are in breach of their obligations under the Road Traffic Act. The fact too is that the system we have at the Licensing Authority even something as simple as the demerit point system that the Honourable Member for St. George North likes to trumpet, the Ministry was not able to have the best of systems in place to properly administer that system. The fact that in the information that the Licensing Authority would wish to have, we have issued in getting that information.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the Electronic Vehicle Registration System would increase our revenue stream. In fact, the percentage of non-compliance is about 25 per cent. I believe the utilisation of \$2.5 million... I have been informed that expressions of interest went out from the Ministry, companies have expressed an interest which is now within the remit of the Tenders Committee and we hope that we can have phase one worked in as soon as possible. I know that my learned friend the Honourable Attorney-General has spoken to me in terms of ticketing which will take some of the load off the Magistrate's Court in terms of traffic offences. Hopefully, this machinery would assist and bring about the ticketing aspect of our Road Traffic Act regulations. (Seq4) Mr. Chairman, again I know that Members would speak in relation to their constituencies in terms of tenantry roads. Yes, we have had complaints time and time again. We had to work within our budget. We were able to do what we can afford and what is necessary, and we are not about electioneering. Once we have those complaints, we speak to the relevant departments and depots. What we have to do in going forward, I believe, is that apart from having our regular meetings with persons in charge of the depots, in some way we might have to think about having a centralised depot where we have all the materials, have control and custody of those materials and farm them out to the respective

depots so that each and every parish and constituency would benefit from what we offer as a ministry in relation to road rehabilitation in those constituencies.

Mr. Chairman, the other part of our capital works programme I would finally mention would be the construction of the River Terminal. We are now going through the phase of making it formally a terminal. It has not been recognised in our laws as a terminal. We had had complaints over time about the River Terminal, and this will tickle the fancies of the Member for the City because he likes to speak about urban renewal and urban rehabilitation. I believe that this is the right step forward if you are speaking about incentives to the public service vehicles (PSVs). The Minister of Finance spoke yesterday in relation to incentives to PSVs, and this is an incentive to those public service vehicle operators simply because it is an improvement in their place of work, not only in terms of the conditions but in the utilisation of technology. We were hoping to utilise some technology in the construction and after the construction. As you know Mr. Chairman, in terms of information, we receive information but the accuracy of the information is always a challenge and is always questioned because of the non-utilisation of technology. This information would be provided so that we can properly schedule routes and monitor what is happening on our routes.

Mr. Chairman, this is not an attempt by this Government to move any stall owners out there from making money. We are going to include them in the construction. We will have consultation with them very shortly. It will be constructed in a way to bring order to that sector, and of course, they are on board with the construction of this new terminal out there. In fact, hopefully in the second phase of the CAF (Development Bank of Latin America) funds, we should move over to the Fairchild Street Terminal, once again providing better conditions and offering employment opportunities for those who can get a stall or booth to ply their trade. Cabinet has actually agreed to the construction of Seaview Terminal, and that is something which is also part of our vision toward building out terminals, offering better conditions, and looking at ways and means of bringing technology to public transport in Barbados.

Some day, hopefully, with the utilisation of technology, we should have the use of smart cards so that we have a cashless platform for public transport in Barbados. Yes, we have done our research on it, and we have met with some local persons in Barbados. You would be amazed, Mr. Chairman, at the fact that we have young persons who were able to come and demonstrate to us and in fact give presentations to us on the use of technology in public transport systems and also the use of GPS tracking so that we can monitor our assets properly. Mr. Chairman, I know that I will have the chance to come back with details

in relation to the revenue that we will achieve from the electronic vehicle registration system. I hope the Opposition supports this initiative. It is needed. We need to be forward-thinking. We need to be progressive. The Licensing Authority needs a system like this so that we can properly monitor. It is not only a transport issue but it is also a law and order issue, because what happens, as I said many times, is that we do not have a proper system of monitoring what is happening out there on the roads in terms of the registration of vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one last pint in relation to the issue of whether we should have a full tank of gas in terms of the weighing of vehicles. Mr. Chairman, that is within the Road Traffic Act. It is being enforced because of the issues we have in the Licensing Authority relative to a particular case. I will not mention the case because that matter is sub judice. We had to put systems in place to ensure that we comply with the provisions of the Road Traffic Act in terms of the registration of vehicles. It is nothing illegal that the Licensing Authority is doing. They are acting within their powers under the Road Traffic Act, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, you have signalled to me but I want to move that Head 40 stand part and I will come back.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask for some more enlightenment on how we are going forward in the Ministry of Transport and Works. I am looking at it from the perspective of a commuter. I do not know when last you drove on one of those buses, but I am also looking at it from the perspective of the average Barbadian who travels every day. Minister, these are not harsh word but almost everywhere you go, people are complaining about the poor service of the Transport Board. I know that arguments have been advanced about the shortage of buses. I know that arguments have been advanced about not having access to parts. Those things are very much out in the public domain, and I would love to be able to just let you say what you have to say and do not speak anymore on it. The Estimates for 2016-2017 have shown an increment of \$20 303 490. (S5) That is up from the approved figure last year from \$18 865 639 and it now at \$102 million. When people hear these figures they believe you have a lot of money and they expect you to do a lot of work and a lot of high quality work. Three of the main areas that I am concerned about is the work network services. I guess other members here might speak to the issues relating to the Scotland District and public transport. I also recognise in the Estimates that it is about \$12 million which is coming from a Latin American bank but a search across the Estimates I found it difficult to see exactly how you intend to spend this money. Sir, I am going to insinuate in any way that there is a

reason why you are not going to say it but there are views out there and in here as well that you have good intentions of making sure that you secure yourself for the future. I know you sent a message to me that you do not expect to see me here again but I want you to know that this man from obscurity in the company of all the big boys and big ladies, I am now doing my third term and also the fourth term if you add the Senate it, so the small people on the ground, they have a different understanding of the value of my worth in terms of representing the interest of the people. Sir, I would hope that you would be able to shed some light on that \$12 million. There is \$20 million which is supposed to be utilized for rehabilitation construction and it speaks about milling and paving. It indicates that there are 13 roads that will be done. I guess that also requires a proper explanation. When you do not explain these things in the explanatory notes, sometimes the imagination runs away with everybody. I know that man is not so pure and I would love just to hear the words express even if there are not exhibited in action. Also how that money would be spent because the trajectory of these strange designs speak about Fustic Village somewhere in St. Lucy and I think that is represented by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. It speaks about Checker Hall, Clinketts, Long Bay to Cove Bay ...

Asides.

Mr. T. PRESCOD: It supports the view that explanatory notes are not clear. I do not think you need to expose that aspect of exactly what I am trying to say to the Minister. I will just tell him that some strange patterns are emerging. I guess if you want me to go through the other roads listed, you would probably be able to see the glaring example I am talking about. Sir, I am not going to dwell on those things today for sure. Sir, we see some signs in places like South Central. It is a constituency but sometimes people need clarity. Sir, I am not talking about roads. I am talking about where the roads are located. I am about the geography in which the roads are located and the trajectory is clear. I do not know if it is the intention of the persons who did it but I am saying that there is a trajectory that is clear, and that it is a symbol for suspicion in the circumstances - South Philip West, St. Philip South are all of these areas of concern.

Mr. Chairman, I would hope that during the discussions that we will have some clarity on that.

Mr. Chairman, another area of concern is the amalgam between the PSVs and the transport service. This, in my view, sounds like a very noble and important paradigm that is worthy of consideration and that is also worthy of trial but it is not resonating that I can tell you that I am fully aware of where we are with that experiment at present. I have been hearing as well that there is one aspect of it and that is the Martin Bay that is abandoned. I

am sure that you would not have any problems speaking about the causalities in relation to what the challenges are that has caused us to abandon such a route. The route was also to go from the Princess Alice terminal to Sturges and the Fairchild Street bus terminal to Martins Bay and one to Edey Village as well. I do not know if you have been able to sustain these and if you have been able to measure the outcome of these two specific areas with any great success but I think we are worthy of some consideration when it comes to that.

Mr. Chairman, I believe this one really demands urgency. I am not going to talk about who build it and that kind of trivial discussion. Sir, the River Bus terminal has sub-human or sub-standard conditions. I do not know how we can observe it for such a long time and we have not made any major attempt to address that issue there. You have the sugar shacks all around there, all different sizes and all different shapes, everything and out there look like a ghost town from about six o'clock in the evening. I do not know after six o'clock where the commuters go or anything like that. I know not know but from what I have heard, there is no proper toilet facilities in that location whatsoever.

Mr. Chairman, a proposal was made some time ago, and I think you made reference to it in the address that we were going to start some work on that old Queen's College building near the River Bus stand. It was also mentioned but I do not know if the building, the old Queen's College building was sound enough for the construction.

Asides.

Mr. T. PRESCOD: It is sound? I am glad to hear that. Well, therefore, we can move ahead and hopefully rapidly with the renovation or reconstruction of that building expeditiously. I would hope that we would be able to move those people out of the unsanitary and unhygienic conditions as soon as possible.(S6)Mr. Chairman, through you, Sir, I would just like to hear from the Minister how swiftly... you know we make commitments but we need deadlines. We are not saying anything is cast in stone and it must happen. The reality is, you try and unforeseeable things can occur. When the unforeseeable things occur we will come back and address those things, but we need to get an idea since the funds are now available to you, how swiftly you can move to address the problems we have at the terminal bus stand.

In addition to that, when you have those kinds of parasites and you have young people especially in that environment, it looks like a true Ghetto. It is just that people do not reside there. When you have young people socialising in that environment, all of us will be able to see the revelations coming out of the experiences within that environment, not only young men, who are drivers, getting

excited, whatever motivate them to get excited, but also the young women inside the back bus stand in particular, because based on what I have been hearing, I see in the newspaper that there is a lot of activities inside that bus stand. Some of them are not wholesome that I can openly reveal on the Floor of the House, unless you want a graphical picture. I certainly would not do it. I just said that as an aside. I want us to move on these issues.

I know Honourable Minister you do not like me to touch on this one, UCAL. I do not have any personal relationship with anybody, but I am very concerned about UCAL's survival as an institution, and I hope that everybody could appreciate why I would be concerned about UCAL. I know the Minister does not always want to have a direct hand on managing because everybody would say that you are micro managing the enterprise.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member you have three minutes.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: I think you need to at least see if some of the things that are being said are true. They are saying that work is allocated to other mechanical shops across Barbados, and UCAL which ought to have had the protection of the corporation, UCAL is not enjoying that good company. They are also saying a promise was given that they were entering a new contractual arrangement with them since last year, and it is now three months and they are actually operating in limbo, unclear on what the relationship is between UCAL and the Transport Board.

Of course, Honourable Minister, the arrears at UCAL is substantial. It is up to the sum of probably over \$22 million. I think we ought to take that into consideration. Whatever the challenges are, at least try to ... I also remember at one specific time the intention was to forward small allocations so at least they could sustain the staff over a period of time, but apparently they are in a difficult situation at present where they cannot even do that based on the allocations from the Transport Board, and UCAL is forced to have overdraft facilities. I am only informed. I do not work with the accounting system there. They said they are now working on the basis of an overdraft which is being threatened at present, because they have to keep the staff of over 120 persons. This is no personal thing. If these things are true and if there are not, just make it very clear.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the minutes to at least say a few words. We will talk as we continue.

Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for

St. Michael South Central.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to say that the Minister is working extremely hard, him and his team.

Asides.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: No, no, no. He just wanted to clarify a few points to the last speaker, which she can do. I think for information purposes, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East will be happy to hear that the work on his retirement has actually begun. I think that the MTW team is a very capable team. I think I should start out by saluting the work that they do. They do good quality work and we know that firsthand. Much of the work done here in this building, the West Wing that was retrofitted. Yes, they take their time but it is done properly, and I think we need to salute them. Indeed, we did some work through the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., in the St. Lawrence Gap area, again, good work was done. We are always very quick to point out when Government workers do anything that is substandard, so I think if they do something good you should also salute them. The staff of the Ministry of Transport and Works have done some good work, but I think the direction that the Ministry is going in embracing technology, website and so on, and dealing with some of the regulatory issues, the Transport Authority, the Road Traffic Act, getting the regulations in place, little bits and pieces that have been lingering, that we came and found, loose ends that we found that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for St. Philip are dealing with. That is good and is indeed a very good thing.

The Honourable Member for St. George South is getting excited. Do not worry. We are committed. Rock Hard Cement will get a lot of work from the Ministry of Transport and Works. So you can relax.

Asides.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: I do believe the issue of road maintenance is always intensely political, for fairly obvious reasons. You will no doubt hear in here for the rest of the evening and possibly into tomorrow when this Head is called, historically we usually spend a long time on it. That has been my experience sitting on either side of the House. Whenever this Head is called everyone gets up, usually with a shopping list of almost every pothole in their constituency demanding that it received immediate attention, but I usually like to remind the House, and again I have done this when I was sitting over there as well, that we need to keep something in mind.

We have about 1 200 miles of paved roads in Barbados, a very small country with about 1 200 miles. I think about 1 100 to 1 200 miles of paved roads. That is a lot. For a small country to have so many paved roads, 7 Highways radiating out of Bridgetown and then we have a

couple that cut across those 7 Highways. It is an aging network. The last time we built any new road would probably be Highway 2A in the 1900s. So we do not have a new network of roads. We have an extensive one. We have to recognise the fact that our road network is good. Sir, 70 percent of it, I am told is in good working order.

Now I know Honourable Members may howl at hearing that fact, particularly MPs for rural constituencies that have extensive areas of roads that need attention. They should get attention, and we should try to move that 70 percent up into the 80s and, of course, as close to 100 as we could possibly get it. (S7) The reality is, we have constraints and we have limitations. It is only obvious that the Ministry will have to prioritise this work as much as possible. So when we bring our shopping list in here of every little trace that has a pothole, for which we would like to get immediate attention, we should reflect on the fact that Barbados has done extremely well, in my view, and I am prepared to be magnanimous enough to say both Governments, generally speaking, have done well to keep the road network in Barbados in relatively good working order. Yes, areas need more attention and invariably some areas get an excessive amount of attention for whatever reason, and we would like to see that minimized. It is true we would get accused of that, but it is still remarkable that close to where I reside and the Golf Club Road, a constituency that was never held by the Democratic Labour Party, since it was created, of course, it is no longer held by the Barbados Labour Party now because the MP they had is now gone. While Christ Church West a Barbados Labour Party held constituency, a major artery was completely redone by this Government. Work in St. Andrew, even though that has not been held by a Democratic Labour Party MP for some time. I do not think that cap of being partisan in terms of our road repair programme is not one that fits this Government and we are not going to wear it.

Now, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East pointed out the fact that he noticed some areas in St. Philip and St. Lucy, and so on had featured prominently in the present programme. That is only those areas that were ignored for 14 years. Between 1994 and 2008, St. Lucy especially suffered. We all know we have that famous road by Colleton. The St. Peter section is paved and as soon as you go past the sign "Now Entering the Parish of St. Lucy" the paving stops. That is there for all to see.

The Honourable Member mentioned St. Michael South Central, drawing me out. I believe that is the Flagstaff main road. That is an interesting story. Flagstaff main road does not have a whole lot of houses on it, but the residents in that area suffer because it is a very convenient shortcut between Highway 6 and Highway 7. So that it is traversed heavily on mornings and evenings. Residents are suffering because everybody who lives in Christ Church

and St. Philip wants a shortcut in and out of the City and so on. I have told the Ministry officials to fix Flagstaff.

The truth is, I have roads in Halls Road and other areas that are more densely populated and need attention, but in the interest of looking at how priority should be accorded I made my recommendation, and I am happy to hear, thanks to the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, the document he has there... I do not have a copy of it, but he has the work programme from the technical department and is telling me that Flagstaff is on it. I am very happy to hear that. He mentioned St. Michael South Central. I am only taking my lead. I do not drive around behind trucks. So if that came off a truck and it has South Central on it, I am very happy to hear it.

Again, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East would know full well that unfortunately you will recognise the areas that have been ignored will require some attention. He remembers very well when he was instructed, because I know it was not his idea, that the urban MPs should meet in this building and because there was the only urban constituency that was not held by the then Government, I was not invited to that meeting. Those meetings were held right here in this building. He knows about it. I think you chaired one of those meetings. You would have had responsibility for the Urban Development Commission when you were Minister of Social Transformation, but again that was not your idea. You did not have any choice in the matter, because people would have howled out if I dared to walk into that meeting. Of course, I heard about the meeting afterwards. Those days are past us and we know where we are, and I would like to think that we can, of course, continue to take things to another level.

With respect to our road network, I am also pleased to see the effort by the Minister and the Ministry focus on the issue of road safety. We would never have a situation of perfection among man. It is only in the celestial realm where you can have perfection. We hate to see people being injured, or worse yet losing their lives on the roads. Of course, we all know the Honourable Member for St. Philip North had to deal with the personal tragedy of seeing some young flowers, four young women from his constituency who lost their lives on the road. We cannot avoid it. It may happen, but I think the effort to work with the Barbados Road Safety Association and other civil society elements to make our roads safer, to promote road safety, I think that is a very good thing. We have a 115 000 vehicles on our roads. That is a lot. We need to continue to promote those programmes and I encourage the Ministry to continue with that aspect of things.

Another thing that I want to speak to and in fact salute the Ministry for doing is approaching the whole issue of vending on the Highways and byways of

Barbados. As I understand it, plans are entrain to create the appropriate lay-bys where you can have proper facilities for this wayside vending. The current practice of setting up a shingle in the shoulder of the Highway is a positively dangerous one. By creating the facilities that such entrepreneurial enterprise can be accommodated in a way that is safe, in conditions that presumably would have improve public health considerations, things like running water, et cetera, being available for the patrons and, of course, those that are doing the selling is a wonderful thing.

I note that the traditional activity, there was a time when you could get a pack of nuts, or something you can stick through your car window, but we have gone into coconut water, or you can get eggs from by the side of the road. I saw somebody even selling fertilizer, bags of fertilizer. So this thing is really developing, but we need to get a grip on it, but at the same time we do not want to stifle the entrepreneurship. We do not want to discourage the vending activity, but we want it to be done in a way that it does not impair the safety of the use of our roads. I think the ministry's approach, or should I say ministries, because I know others are involved, makes a great deal of sense and I want to encourage that to continue.

I would hope however, that the plans to widen the ABC Highway also will be accelerated. I know that has been on the cards for a while. We are reaching that point or we have reached that point where larger elements of the ABC Highway need to have the dual carriage in either direction. It was always anticipated from the time the Highway was constructed. We are getting to the point which probably further necessitates the move to deal with the vending situation. Do not let us wait for a tragedy and then do it. (S8) Again the laybies are in trend and I am sure the Minister will brief us on that as we continue.

Mr. Chairman, as I conclude this initial contribution I want to, again, salute the ministry for the work they are doing and more specifically since the theme of my presentation has been about the whole question of our roads, salute the effort to source financing across the board. You have a CDB arrangement, you have an IDB arrangement and now you have CAF arrangement as well. It is all concessionary funding to try to improve a very, very critical element of our infrastructure and I hope they continue to do that. I will come back, Mr. Chairman, because I also want to talk about public transport as well but I cannot possibly get that in this particular session so I am obliged to you. Thank you.

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

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I sure the initial observations made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. This particular head

has historically, been one that attracts, and I think rightly so, very close scrutiny. There has been a tendency as what the even more senior members would call to prime the parish pump as it were because it gives you an excellent opportunity to highlight some of the difficulties that exist in individual Members constituencies. I do not intend to do that at this particular intervention, I am going to come there but I want to say this much. Where I disagree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is that, even if unintentionally so, this Government has not departed from the traditional approach which has been taken with respect to road rehabilitation and the way in which resources are distributed across the land with respect to where Honourable Members sit in terms of their politics. I have to say that, Sir, because although it is not the substance of this initial intervention, it is a bugbear in my constituency where, at Redman's Village, for example, we would have had a serious of roads which has begun to transform a situation where people would have been walking through lengthily dirt tracks throughout the history of the existence of that district and that process of transformation began in 2007 and as things go, you have to do your surveying, et cetera, all the preliminary work but, of course, election came along and between then and today not a fellow has looked back at that programme, it was abandoned. Obviously, Sir, there is another issue which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas could bear me out on as well and that is the fact that we were going to have a ZR terminal and hopefully, in addition to the terminal, some opportunity for commercial activity for people in the area, built at Redman's Village and the radical departure and change of plan, because obviously you have a medium now coming right across the road and mass confusion still continues to reign out there but the point is, Sir, the issue of provision of the terminal and the opportunities for vending, et cetera, has never come to past and it is really not a good thing because what we are talking about and what I really want to speak to in a few of these interventions I intend to make is the way in which we must now start to find a merger between this particular ministry and the overall challenge facing the Government of Barbados which is, to stimulate more economic activity, stimulate more commercial opportunities and yes, even helping the country move towards a growth trajectory rather than continue to limp along with the anaemic growth that we have existed under for the last eight or so year and it can be done and I am going to speak to it.

Sir, before we go there, I want to say to the Minister that I warmly embrace the revolutionary approach he is bringing to what I also consider to be a very weak Transport Authority Act. I know that is not shared necessarily with all of my colleagues but I personally feel so - I am talking about the Act being weak - and I also feel that though it was, for want of a better way of putting it, a virgin exercise when we introduced it into Barbados the reality is when you look at what is happening in Trinidad

and Jamaica you would see that there is a very direct and hands on approach being taken to reining in some of the "wutlessness" and lawlessness that transpires on the roads in those countries but which, we also have to face reality, transpires in Barbados. I want to urge the Minister to be a little bit more in-depth in what are his actually plans and to treat this as an exercise to engage the Opposition. Sir, certainly I feel that our duty is must be to share with him some of our concerns about what is happening on the roads and if he is planning to reform the legislation, so that when he brings the legislation it will be substantive and sufficient to deal with some of the difficulties.

To what do I speak in Jamaica, Sir? I hold before me the Transport Authority Act from Jamaica. The Act makes provision for an transportation inspector or even a constable of police to seize any vehicle which is licensed as a route taxi but is not being operated on the route for which it is licensed to operate. We all know that happens in Barbados everyday and we all know that the offense is treated as something of a revolving door and we have seen, Sir, certainly professionally I have seen, even if these things are not always published in the press, and I think the Honourable Member when he practiced at the Bar would have seen, instances where drivers of such ZRs may have 50 or more convictions. The highest I have ever witnessed was 99 and he was off route 99 time and the vehicle being not in route does not matter, it is the nature of the repeated offense. You are off route and you are back on again, you pass through the Court with a slap on the wrist. The other interesting thing is the power of seizures, Sir, where a vehicle is licensed as what they call here a hackney carriage but is being operated as a route taxi. I will go a little bit further, the vehicle can be seized if it is being operated or used as a public passenger vehicle without a license issued for such operation or use. I have heard of vehicles that are know as phantom taxis and also pirate vehicles, I think that is also another term that is used, where you are on the route without having any license to properly be there. You are plying the route as though you were a public passenger vehicle, authorised to be function as a public passenger vehicle but you really and truly are not lawfully on that rough and therefore you are exposing persons who are being induced to ride in your vehicle to substantial risk of not being compensated by the insurance if and when there is an accident. The way in which this legislation deals with it in Jamaica, it is the same phenomena, is to say look, we will take the vehicle from you, that is the power of seizure, of course, subsequently to that if you cannot demonstrate satisfactorily during a period of storage of the vehicle that you were actually acting with authorisation, there is power of eventual sale of the vehicle, so that if there is in law in CARICOM that power to rein in some of the lawless that is happening. I make that point, Sir, to share with us the extent to which he wants to embrace that coarse of action.

I also want to say, Mr. Chairman, that there is much benefit in my judgment in toughen up the approach which is taken to vehicles that are not insured. (S9) No insurance means in law no chance for recovery if there is property damage or personal injury to persons travelling in the vehicle. At the point of an accident, Mr. Chairman, or at a point of being stopped by the police, the practice in Barbados today is that you are going to be given 7 days within which to produce a licence. Again, I think we have to face the reality that that is unsatisfactory because if that person was not licensed during that period of time an accident may take place and what then happens to the individual who is driving in the vehicle that is unlicensed.

Sir, we have to understand how the legislation and how the ministry's thrust with respect to new legislation impacts on the commercial side of things in Barbados. Insurance companies are increasingly crying out about the difficulty they faced. Right now as I speak you, Mr. Chairman, insurance companies are unhappy about the state of affairs where the cap of \$10 million per person in an accident is views and perhaps too high and they would like to bring it down.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: It does not matter who passed it, the point is that we have to begin to bear the synergies between this particular ministry and what is happening in commercial activity in Barbados. To help with that, let us not therefore worry now about the cap, that is not the issue, the issue how do we deal more effectively with policing and enforcing a situation in which we know, I think the minister indicated, it might be as much as 25 per cent non-compliance by persons who are on the road but not insured.

Sir, I think again that a possible solution and certainly what takes place in the United Kingdom a jurisdiction in which the Minister is familiar is that the driver must carry vehicle insurance and road tax proof at all times and if in fact you do not have that with you then the vehicle that you are driving is seized and impounded until you can satisfy that you had a right to be on the road.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that what once you come into the Electronic Vehicle Registration system that is being contemplated and the utilization of our platform for electronic management of the process, then you are going in the right direction, so I embrace that. What I would want to make sure the ministry is thinking about is to make it as expansive as possible and to make sure that all persons behind a steering wheel in Barbados are held accountable on the spot because as I say to you there is a very strong relationship between what this ministry is doing and the difficulties that the insurance industry in Barbados is facing. Sir, their difficulty is felt by every single one of us

who drive a motorcar when premiums have to be paid on an annual basis in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, there is one other brief matter I want to raise, and that is, again in the context of helping to facilitate business. I believe that this ministry is still responsible for the creation of something that we hope to see the light of day and it is called a legislative building code. I have been in the precincts of the Parliament of Barbados, this would now be I think the 15th year that I would have either here or in the Other Place, and throughout that period of time and even before I have heard the repeated threats for there to be a building code brought to the Parliament of this country. What is worrying me is that even today as I speak to you we have the emergence of an unlawful body which is passing itself off as an authority to preside over building in Barbados. My information is that there is something called a Building Standards Authority not created under any Act of law that I know of, certainly it did not come through here, and it is being charged with the oversight of compliance issues with respect to building.

I want to say, Sir, that in these interventions I speak only for the Honourable Member for St. James Central because I think we are really on the cusps of doing great things in this country with respect to transforming some of the legislative and other things that come out of this ministry, so I will leave out the partisan politics.

My feeling, Mr. Chairman, is that there has to be certainty if engineers, architects and other persons who are seriously involved in buildings in Barbados and the construction sector because if they do not have certainty about what they are doing, about what standards they are expected to comply by, if they are forced to deal with arbitrary interventions that may from time to time, as I understand it from talking to people in the construction sector, be override guidelines that they traditionally follow but they do not know why these guidelines are being overridden or being told that they have to apply standards that they did not previously applied, there need to be certainty and if you do not have certainty then when we get to building the complexities of 16 storeys, because we do not have many of them down here like at the Hyatt, confusion will reign and business will ultimately suffer.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: What we want, Sir, is to avoid that instance. We want to have the certainty about what we are doing. I think therefore that again I want to draw out the Minister on the question of where he is at with the building code, if it is list of priorities and if so how far it got and if not why not.

I promise you, Sir, that there are other interventions that I want to make and I will obey your dictate that my 15 minutes is up and I am grateful for the opportunity thus far.

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

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head and to say from the outset that I have total respect for the Ministry of Transport and Works especially the depot in St. Lucy. I have said from the time I came to this Parliament that I honestly believe that they build the best roads in Barbados especially when it comes to tar and grits. I have always advocated that once they have the equipment and the material they would be able to satisfy the needs in rural Barbados, do not mind as I speak I still have over 120 tenantry roads to be done and of course many highways to be fixed, but I still have the faith workers in those depots. The only thing I believe they need is to get the equipment like patching trucks, backhoes and things like that.

We would have been in here when a lot of equipment was give to those depots. The only problem is that the equipment was the wrong equipment and they were also new to Barbados and not necessarily new to the Ministry of Transport and Works so the sprayers did not work and many of the trucks did not last for a long time, and that is why you see there is a large deficit in the depots in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, let me also make an apology because at this time I should have been in the constituency of St. Lucy at a funeral considering how close it is to me but as you know we had Cabinet today and then we also come and deal with a Head like the Ministry of Transport and Works which is a very important Head to the constituency of St. Lucy where there are many roads that need to be repaired and many roads that need to be constructed and also that in the public transportation system there are many things that can be adjusted and I look forward to the promise from the Minister of Transport and Works to look into the possibility where instead of having all of the buses travelling from Bridgetown to Speightstown that a hub be created in the north so that when the people of north want to get to the north instead of them having to look at individual buses to get home that wherever they are on that route, they do not even have to look to sew that bus it is, that they can easily catch that bus that is going to the north. This would save the Transport Board a lot of money which means that there would not duplication of services between Bridgetown and Speightstown and that the cost would be reduced on that particular route going north. (S10) I also want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael East for naming out the road and as I look through my documents I did not see the roads that the Honourable Member spoke about but I am glad the Honourable

Member said that there is a lot of work to be done, especially in the Fustic area.

Mr. Chairman, when you speak about the Fustic area, one must recognise also why that road is also important is that the National Housing Corporation is also having a housing development at Colleton and so it is important for that road to be completed, seeing for many years that a request was put in for that road to be dealt with.

Mr. Chairman, everybody knows that the roads to the east of Barbados, especially Josey Hill, Pie Corner, Coves Bay, Little Bay area that there are many roads up there to be repaired. I am happy to see that the work has started, the concrete works has already been completed, all being worked on by the Ministry of Transport and Works and I want to congratulate all the officers for doing some wonderful work in laying the foundation for this wonderful work to be completed.

Mr. Chairman, we also have problems in the Hope Road area. There is a piece of road in the Spring Garden area and a piece of road running from Fosters to St. Swithun's Church, going into the Hope Bridge, into Connell Bridgetown. Sir, that is easily the worst piece of road that you can find anywhere in Barbados or anywhere in the world. Sir, because it does not have houses on it, there are some people who believe that the road should not be repaired. Sir, I beg to differ and I also know that the Minister of Transport and Works begs to differ on that particular matter, for the simple reason, especially when you are speaking about road network, especially in a place like Barbados you cannot only think about road leading up to houses, you also have to think about houses that can create real development.

Mr. Chairman, that is why I have said to my Cabinet colleagues and everybody else that in Barbados we have to move away from the system where we are only prepared to build roads leading to houses, if we want true development and if we are serious about what we are doing, you will build a road beyond houses, for the simple reason that you are not only about what is there but you are not only building for what is there but you are also building for what can occur. That is why I have said to the officers at the Rural Development Commission that the days of going into a village and building roads to houses, that those days are over, once we get the funds to build roads, but we are here to ensure that not only we deal with consolidation but also with expansion of development.

Mr. Chairman, in other words, if you go into a village and there are five houses that are already there, you can easily take the road further in and can create another 10, 20 or more houses, and that has more economic impact than to build or to repair those roads leading to those particular houses.

Mr. Chairman, we have to understand that everything we do in this country we have to look at the opportunity cost of what we are doing, so that when we repair road and deprive other persons from having an opportunity of having that road going further so that they could build houses, we are actually impacting on the development of the country. Sir, I am saying that we need to understand that the opportunity cost of that is too great and that if we have to come back later to expand that road the cost of doing so would be much greater. Sir, we have to understand the efficiencies of these things.

Mr. Chairman, I do not have a problem with having asphalt on the highways and so on but I am a strong supporter of colesus and chips. If one looks at the history of the roads that were built in Barbados, one would recognised that roads that have been built for 50 years and so on, that all they need is sometimes just repairing or sand and sealing. Sometimes you do not even know that those roads are not paved the modern way because the work that is done by the depots is so good.

Mr. Chairman, for example, there is a road in the constituency of which I live, the Checker Hall Tenantry Road No. 2, and also the Farr's Well Road that was done by an officer from the Ministry of Transport and Works. Sir, if you see that road you would not believe it is colesus and chips that has been used on that road.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. George South would know that particular road because the Honourable Member has used that road on his way to work. The Honourable Member also used that road today, I am telling you. The Honourable Member is also accustomed to using the road to go to Farr's Well, so that the Honourable Member understands of what I speak and I want to congratulate those officers in that part of the vineyard.

Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt that the network of roads in St. Lucy that the numbers are great but that the work to be done is even greater. It is important so that the people in St. Lucy would not believe that the workers are not working, it is important for us to give them the material, the trucks, et cetera because once they are given those things, the citizens of St. Lucy will ensure that they will work, because when they do not see them working they will go and complain, but when they complain and they tell them that they do not have any material, then there is no need to complain.

Mr. Chairman, we have very fair people in the north of the island and that is why we have over 120 tenantry roads to be done, that is why we have the transportation sometimes the way it is because we are not violent people and we understand that we have to wait our turn. Mr. Chairman, let me say this, our turn has come and I expect

all of the promises that were given will now be delivered. I must say that I have already seen them being started. I want to congratulate the Ministry, the Minister and the Cabinet of Barbados for the work that is occurring in the Josey Hill areas. Sir, the repaving work has started, the foundation has started and I expect that all of those other roads as promised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, who had admitted on the Floor of this House today that they have neglected St. Lucy but that now he has a plan in his hands where he knows that those roads will be done in the constituency of St. Lucy.

Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Michael East for announcing the roads that will be done in St. Lucy. I expect that once the Honourable Member has announced them that it will happen. Sir, I want to thank the Honourable Member for appreciating that for 14 years you have suffered me and not the time is ripe for me to benefit for being in this House for over 22 years, when one considers that every cart road and car pit in this constituency was paved not once but twice and sometimes three times, because I remember when Ministers Don Blackman and Johnny Tudor were in here, he did some paving over the same road that Don Blackman would have paved.

Mr. Chairman, I am not so fortunate, I have to wait for 50-something years for the work to occur within the constituency and that is why I have the greatest faith in the Honourable Member for St. Philip North in delivering to the people of St. Lucy, considering what was said to him by the Leader of this great political party and by the Cabinet of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to see what is occurring within the constituency. I do not ask for much but I believe it is time for us to get equal because it does not make sense for somebody to come and tell me that I have 20 or 30 highways to be done, while somebody else has three, and somebody is going to tell me that I have to wait until that persons get their three done, while in have 20.

Mr. Chairman, in this House they complained and said that the Rural Development Commission is doing work in St. Lucy but nobody would have said that during Hurricane Tomas we had over 300 houses that were damaged. Some people only had three house damaged and they come in here and complained after many years when they would have been in Government and repairing every house in their constituencies, and none in the constituency which I represent. Mr. Chairman, as a fair Minister they cannot tell anybody that I am not doing any work in their constituency, for example, the Honourable Member for St. James Central spoke about since election there has been no work done in this constituency. Sir, that is not true, we did a road in St. James Central and we completed a road in St. James North, and with limited funds.

Mr. Chairman, I would agree that we did not have enough funds to do the ones in St. Thomas but when one considers the amount of money they spent in that constituency and they did not spend anything in St. Lucy, how could I go into those constituencies and spend money when I have not spent any in mine? (S11) When one considers the amount they spent in that constituency, and they did not spend any in St. Lucy, how could I go into those constituencies and spend money when I have not spent any in mine after they have had 14 years and more, and I am now having the opportunity to look at the possibility of catching up? I have always said in this House that I believe that all the social Heads should be divided, and that when we pick up these Estimates we should be able to go to each social Head so see how much money is spent or will be spent in a particular constituency. I still stand by that but I want you know I would be a fool to go and give you, when your belly is full and mine is empty, the same share as myself. I do not understand that maths, and I do not expect anybody to believe that is what I will do. I will do work in every constituency because that is my remit, but do not get out there and starve us and then when we have the opportunity to correct some of the wrongs, you then expect us to do all the work for you and ignore ourselves. We have to level the playing field and that is the job of this party. We will level the playing field and we will go to the social Heads and ensure that every constituency is represented. I have been here a long time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, wrap up please.

Hon. D.ST.E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for St. James Central said that \$10 million is too high. When they brought this amendment to this Parliament, Mr. Chairman, I told them about limiting the number of persons on the vehicles and having people on the vehicles not being covered in terms of the amount of compensation, but the problem was that you were paying it to a “too-few” and you were not covering everybody on the transportation system. I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that the problem is that they brought bad legislation, and if they are now admitting that they increased the coverage and did not increase it for everyone, then they have to admit that they were wrong and should have taken the advice. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: First, I just want to respond to the Member for St. Michael East in relation to the River Terminal facility. I do not know if he was not listening at the time but I said in the opening that one of the achievements of the Ministry is the fact that we have started the construction of the River Terminal. It was launched in December. It is being constructed by the work

force from the Ministry of Transport and Works. The building that he mentioned, we have got an engineering report on it in terms of its structural integrity, and that report is positive. What we have to do now is, in addition to that, to build the concourse, and the Ministry is currently looking at options as to whether we will continue to build out the concourse or utilise a private person to build it.

The estimated cost of the River Terminal is about \$3.5 million, because we recognise, as was said earlier, the subhuman conditions there. We recognise the disorder in the terminal. We also recognise that it is a health issue. There is a real serious health issue out there because of the number of stalls which are unregulated. In fact, I would say that on our tour of the River Terminal with the stakeholder agencies, some of the agencies’ representatives were actually surprised and concerned at the fact that when they asked some of the vendors whether they were in possession of the requisite legal documents giving them a standing out there, they could not produce any.

The other issue is that it is being utilised by some persons as residences. Some of the stalls. You go into one of the stalls and you will see a bed like a house. The concern for us is that we need to uplift that general area, and if you are speaking about urban renewal or urban rehabilitation, we have to look at those areas, particularly an area that is traversed by the public. The operators and workers complained to us about the conditions, and we met with them to make sure they were in agreement with what we are going to do out there, and we are on the course to bring a better facility for PSV operators. I just want to put that on the record.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, the Member for St. Michael East in relation to UCAL (United Commercial Autoworkers Limited), I would like him to take a look at Clause 12 of the agreement. It gives the Board discretion. It is not mandatory nor is it automatic that the Transport Board must provide all of their buses to UCAL. Clause 12 of the agreement gives the Board discretion to procure the services of other service providers. That is what you all put in the agreement. The Member for St. George is nodding his head. That is in Clause 12.

Thirdly, Mr. Chairman, in relation to the Member for St. James Central, in relation to the Jamaica and Trinidad jurisdictions, I have read the legislation of both. I have read them front to back. When we examine the regulation of traffic in Barbados, it is governed by the Road Traffic Act, road traffic regulations, and the Transport Authority Act. If you are looking to really control the recklessness and bring better standards, you cannot move forward with an Act that only speaks generally that the Minister may give powers or the Minister may seek to regulate traffic and set policy in place. The fact is that even the examiners and the inspectors that we have under the current Road Traffic Act

- the Chief Licensing Officer can tell us about it - all they do is stop and examine the vehicle but they have no other powers. It is a fact. That is why when you travel to Jamaica and Trinidad and several other jurisdictions, you see order because they give extremely large powers to the inspectorate. The Member for St. James Central I also want to let him know too that the Road Traffic Act gives power in terms of the authority to impound vehicles. Yes. The Member for St. George North is shaking his head. It is in the law, but the problem is in finding a particular location and there are issues of liability in terms of finding a place. Of course, custody and possession of one's vehicle makes the State liable in some instances if they cannot account for the vehicle or if it is damaged or there is some other issue related to it. It is within the Road Traffic Act. What the transport authority in Jamaica does is give power to the inspector to seize the vehicle. What we are doing with the draft regulations of the legislation is really to encapsulate Sections 13 and 18 of the Jamaica legislation, but we have not gone as far as seizing vehicles. (S12) Once we get the permission or the authority to employ inspectors and once we pass the regulations giving them the power because, as have said from the outset, the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force in terms of traffic regulations are stretched and once we provide other regime under the Transport Authority Act, giving an inspector powers similar to the power in the Jamaica legislation and, in fact, we want to incorporate Section 13, Section 8 of the Jamaica Act, giving them wide powers, then we will be able to have a body in place that can properly regulate the issue because the issue is one of enforcement and the fact is that the Transport Authority Act at this stage only speaks to the examiner and giving the examiner power is limited again in terms of the regulation of traffic, so we have to expand the legislation, bring the regulations and give power to the inspectorate. I just wanted to tell my learned friend that he is speaking about impounding but that there is also impounding under the Road Traffic Act.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. D. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make my contribution to this very important Head 40 -- Transport and Works. Sir, at the outset I want to offer my sympathy to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. I just came from St. Lucy at his family's house offering my sympathy to one of his cousins, who will be buried this afternoon but we are here fortunately, or unfortunately but nonetheless I think that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy could be at the funeral as I speech because he got up for 15 minutes and his presentation was lackluster, so I thought he could have been given the time by the Right Honourable Prime Minister to attend the funeral of his cousin.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, some comments I will not tolerate. I will have those comments struck from the record.

Mr. D. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Chairman, I will proceed. I also want to recognise the presence of the technocrats in the Ministry of Public Works sitting here with us this afternoon on this very important Head. I also want to say to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North that his presentation was also lackluster. I expect more from the Minister in term of his presentation in terms of strategy for public works in this country. The Ministry of Public Works, Head 40 is indeed a very important Ministry and I want the Right Honourable Prime Minister for moving from one failure, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, he was a dismal failure in the Ministry and he has seen some wisdom in going to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North but he is still yet to demonstrate to me that he understand the intricacies of this Ministry and what should propel this Ministry in the 21 century. Sir, I will make a few interventions this afternoon because it is a Ministry that is dear to me and my first intervention here, I want to speak on what I have seen happening with respect to tenantry roads.

Mr. Chairman, I see understand Head 40 that we have some \$600 000 allocated to work network services under tenantry road, Subprogramme 0495 and our Revised Estimates for 2015/2016 was \$755 000. We can say without a shadow of doubt that we have seen no major road works with respect to tenantry roads in the last year. We had some, yes, and I would have credited you for some of the work that was done but I am speaking about a progressive Ministry, a Ministry that is critical to the tourism product. When we speak about rural Barbados and we speak about urban Barbados, I see some challenges with the tenantry roads and I am going to pick an example in St. George South, Waithe Road. The Government understand the Ministry of Public Works would have done repairs to Waithe Road in 2014 and if you travel to Waithe Road as I speak to you now -- I challenge the Minister to come and go with me to Waithe Roads and Greens in St. George and you would see that road is in need of repairs yet again after works that were done in 2014. Sir, I can be corrected probably in early 2015 because we had some rains that affected Waithe Road because some patching was done in Waithe Road. Sir, we need to look at cost benefits because we would go to these roads and patch these roads and in one year or two years, we have to go back to these roads and patch these roads. I am asking the Minister to relook the strategy for tenantry roads as we lay our asphalt because we can do better. It is more economical to us to lay a concrete road in a place like Waithe Road because I am certain that we would not have to go back at Waithe Road after three years.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. James South wants to know if Rock Hard Cement or Arawak Cement would help but I am not here debating that. We are discussing the quality of the roads and what is a cost benefit to our citizens and also to the Ministry because here we are now budgeting less for tenantry roads \$600 000 as opposed to \$755 000 that was our Revised Estimates last year and we are going back to Waithe Road probably to lay asphalt again. Sir, we are literally spinning top in mud. We need to relook our tenantry road strategy in this country and seriously, we have to get more synergies between public works, water works, the Barbados Light and Power, all of these key institutions because you would find that you would lay a tenantry road and then six months after the Barbados Water Authority comes and digs up the tenantry road. Sir, this is a cost to the taxpayers and these are some of the challenges that we have with our road infrastructure and how we build roads in our country. Sir, that is my point on tenantry roads. I would like the Minister to respond to that in his brief interventions like he just did.

Mr. Chairman, let us go to Warrens. Sir, like I said earlier, I make no apology in saying that the former Minister of Transport and Works was a dismal failure. He failed miserably because that was his project at Warrens. Sir, I am going to speak to it from two points. The number of road accidents that we would have seen at Warrens after the Warrens road improvement project. My colleague calls it a Warrens 'decanation' project as opposed to road improvement project. I see the Honourable Member for St. John looking at me but the Honourable Member for St. John do not like people to be looking at her or her family...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, if you are going to proceed in such a fashion, I will have to stop you. I would want you please to withdraw those remarks. It has nothing to do with the issue. Please withdraw those remarks.

Mr. D. SUTHERLAND: I withdraw them, Mr. Chairman. Sir, that was said in this Honourable House but I will move on. Sir, the Honourable Members of the Democratic Labour Party believe that they can come into this Honourable House and say anything they like and get away with it but once we, the member of the Barbados Labour Party say something, it is a problem, Mr. Chairman. Sir, nonetheless, let us move on. I have enough time to intervene again with the issues. I have about seven pages of issues that I wish to raise here but, Sir, let us get back to Warrens.(S13) I have enough time to intervene again with the issues. I have about seven pages of issues that I wish to raise here, Honourable Member for St. Michael North West but let us get back to Warrens because I can look at whomever I feel free to look at here in this Honourable House.

Mr. Chairman, the Warrens Road improvement project ... I know the Honourable Member for Christ Church South will comment because this project is a failure and I say is a failure and I cannot can say was a failure because the Honourable Member for Christ Church South came into this Honourable House within the last two weeks and he said that the Government needs to look at Warrens and see how they can improve traffic management at Warrens. This is a project that costed this country million but yet we heard from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in this Lower Chamber saying to us that we needed to re-look this project and see how we can improve it so that it is why I call it a failure, 1) it is not finished and we have had tremendous accidents in the Warrens roundabout area, and 2) when we look at the Warrens roundabout and how that roundabout was laid again I am putting the case for us to look at the way we are laying roads in this country. I am not one to say do not use asphalt, we have to use asphalt but I am one to say that we need to look at the cost benefit of how we lay roads in this country because Warrens roundabout is a roundabout that I strongly believe should be a concrete roundabout that is why I said we need to re-look our strategy because I strongly believe that the Minister, he has good intentions, should take his technocrats and go through how we construct roundabouts in this country, especially when they are roundabouts with a very high vehicular usage on a daily basis.

Mr. Chairman, let us journey north, let us go to our Bagatelle section. As we approach SOL Redman's heading north, we pass Shell Redman's and there is section between SOL Redman's and the roundabout at Bagatelle, I would like the Minister to tell this Honourable House what was done with respect to having two lanes there, that is a major challenge. I do not want to say failure because I know the Minister has been looking at it but the Honourable Member for Christ Church South messed it up and I am saying to you the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, I would like you to tell this Honourable House what will be done to that section because, I do not like to say that we will have accidents because I do not want to put anything negative on the citizens of this country, but it is an area of major concern for me. I travel on that road and I know a number of citizens travel on that road. You have to pick up the left lane, I do not know when, I would like the Minister, through his ministry to tell us how we should use that road as we leave SOL Redman's going to the Bagatelle roundabout, that is a major challenge. We have a section of land, someone's property or the road was built on someone's property but the property is part of one of the lanes as we move from SOL Redman's into the Bagatelle junction.

Mr. Chairman, we would have spent a lot of time in this Honourable Member and the Members on the Other Side would have spent a lot of time discussing flyovers and

how flyovers has been a waste of time and how 3S wasted a lot of money in this country and again, under the Honourable Member for Christ Church South he would have been the one challenged with addressing the congestion in this country. When we go to Wildey, let us journey from Chefette Wildey coming to Carter's General Stores, heading towards Christ Church, we are coming up Collymore Rock, there is a "V". I have never seen so much congestion from a road improvement project than that area within Wildey, from the Carter's General Stores area, from the BET Communications area, LIME or as we say FLOW now, in that general section, that little circle when you come off of the Wildey Hill and you go around, I have never seen so much congestion and it was worst that when it was basic two-way lanes. We have created one-way traffic and I have never seen so much congestion as a result of a road improvement project and I would ask the Minister to re-look that. In all honest, I am not here to really kill the Honourable Member for St. Philip North or to say that he is the worst thing out but I would call on him to re-look this in the interest of the people of this country because if we are addressing people getting to work late, if we are looking at productivity, people spending two hours between 7 o'clock and 9 o'clock getting to work, we really need to do better and the same way we are doing with our health financing, I am asking that the goodly Minister of Transport and Works can come to the people of this country and ask them for their advice. We have a number of technical people in the private sector who understand road works, road building and traffic management and we can have a general forum where we can sit and brainstorm but please do not conduct the business like how it was done in the Ministry of Health, let the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) see the document, what is the scope of works, whatever, and let us have a discussion. Do not do it like the health financing strategy that the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) would have started, yes, we need to look at health financing but how you did it was poorly done. The Barbados Labour Party (BLP) should have been consulted, we should have been given that privilege and that offer to attend the meetings.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your time has expired. Please. wrap up.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Alright, Mr. Chairman, I will come back because I have some other parochial matters that I wish to discuss under this Head 40. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I rise, of course, to give support to this matter before us in terms of the head regarding the Ministry of Transport and Works and I noted the comments of the Honourable

Member for St. George South and as usual, on this particular Head, for all the years I have been in Parliament and all the year I have been following Parliamentary debate, it is usually about getting roads fixed in your constituency, potholes, highways and byways, and I really think that we need to appreciate that there is a lot more to the work of this particular ministry ...

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. My brief intervention,...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: The Honourable Member for St. James South is misleading the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: How?

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: In my contribution, I in no way spoke about roads for St. George South ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have no point of order. Please sit down.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Chairman, my contribution was a national one.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the Member has not even spoken long enough for you to say anything. Please sit down.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Mr. Chairman, I was once 13 years old and had that same youthful exuberance ...

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: That is fine. I am not going to argue with the Honourable Member for St. George South, but you know there is the fundamental issue.

Mr. Chairman, as parliamentary representative for St. James South I want to say that there are roads in my constituency that need to be fixed, but I do not need to spend 15 minutes or half of an hour in Parliament constantly saying them over and over again every year. The Minister knows that I have written to him and I have spoken to him. I have toured Holders Hill Main Road. We have looked at Roads in Oxnards in Husbands Height and Husbands Gardens. I am appreciative that moneys is tight and therefore we will get in due course what ought to come our way.

As I say that, Mr. Chairman, I heard the Honourable Member for St. James South reflect upon the Warrens Road which is part of my constituency. Let me say that unlike the Honourable Member for St. George South I will never get up here in Parliament and pretend to be an expert on

infrastructural works, engineering or even to tell the technical officers in the Ministry of Transport and Works what to do. I have to have some faith that they know their job best. It is not for me as a politician to seek to be an authority on matters that I barely know little about.

Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that I want that Highway 2A stretch by Warrens between SOL Warrens and the Redman Village Gas Station completed. What we are not reminding taxpayers in this country is that stretch of road was originally estimated, I believe, to cost about \$42 million, and as a result of the need to acquire private lands to complete the road works it is not looking somewhere north of \$60 million. Mr. Chairman, I want the road completed but then in so doing, I may have to ask which one of our ministries would be slashed in half in terms of their budget to get all of these things completed in the time-frame that I would like to have it done.

Mr. Chairman, I think we have as parliamentarians to be very open with ourselves, with our colleagues and our constituents about these matters. I lived in the United States of America for a few years and I know that on most of the highways you drive on, whether it is in New York City or Florida, there are toll booths that you have to pay to help recover the cost of these roads. Here in Barbados you do not have that, so as we talk about these major infrastructural works to be done let us appreciate that it is coming from the same pot that is providing us with free medication, with education from primary school to university level, with a safe society through law and order and the Police Force and the judicial system. Mr. Chairman, I want all of the roads in my constituency fixed but I must do it and ask for it in a manner that does not compromise other things that perhaps are more important to my constituents as well.

Mr. Chairman, there are two issues that I want to reflect on quickly; one is this entity called United Commercial Autoworks Limited (UCAL). I speak to that because I have constantly said that we have to find ways in the public sector of Barbados to be more efficient. We have to look at the entities that are owned by Government or financed by Government and always say that we are not settling for mediocrity. I am deeply concerned that UCAL is an experiment gone bad. As a matter of fact I submit that it was a bad mistake from day one. What effectively happened, I do not care who writes about it or how they spin it, is that there was an agreement between the political directorate of the day and the trade union leader of the day to spin off the mechanical workshop of the Transport Board to fool workers into believing that they had some great stake in ownership of some great entity that would transform public transportation, that would make the Transport Board far more efficient and that also would go out there and compete like a private enterprise. It has been a dismal failure, Mr. Chairman.

I say this because when I hear people talk about Transport Board and finance and owing money to UCAL and paying more money to UCAL, understand that UCAL has not worked as a serious enterprise adhering to all of the fundamental principles of good business in this society, so effectively what we have had is the mechanical workshop of the Transport Board being spun off but certainly being totally financed, salaries, wages, spare parts, vacation leave, sick leave, even Board of Directors fees all still being paid by the taxpayers of Barbados. Yet still I have seen in the interim period private individuals and enterprises being created in Barbados that have gotten involved in the business of mechanical workshops and seemed to have succeeded whereas UCAL seemed to just be another drain on the taxpayers of this country.

Perhaps it is politics that is stopping it from moving forward, I do not know. I do not even know who is the Chairman of UCAL. Whoever he is I certainly would not consider him to be Chairman of any board I have responsibility for. I do not know who are the members of the Board of UCAL, but what I know from the documents that I have seen come before me as a Minister, I am not impressed with it at all and the State would have to determine whether it is an entity that can continue as it is currently structured and financed, is there a way in which it can be made to be more independent or are we going to simply accept that we would have to continue to find millions of dollars every year to keep that entity going while at the same time looking to get the buses fixed by others who may certainly have greater skills going forward.

Mr. Chairman, what impresses me most about the work of this ministry as explained in the documents for the upcoming fiscal year 2016-2017 relates to the Electronic Vehicle Registration system. I was quite taken aback when I saw the document state that approximately 25 per cent of the vehicles on our roads in Barbados are unregistered. I believe there are about 120 000 vehicles in the database of the Ministry of Transport and Works, Licensing Authority, which means that there are about 30 000 vehicles on the road in Barbados that are currently unregistered, so if you take a drive from here to the University of the West Indies one out of every four vehicles you see are likely not to be registered. Mr. Chairman, that is a very scary thing because it means that if an accident occurs involving one of these vehicles, I do not know who would be liable or where the liability would lie or who would pay the cost. There is a risk to the driver, there is the risk to the passengers and there is the risk to other road users.

Mr. Chairman, sometimes we have to ask ourselves as I said when I spoke earlier this week in the Second Reading Speech of the Appropriation Bill that sometimes it is inefficiencies of Government that frustrate individuals to the point where they do not get around to registering the vehicle. I am not making any excuse for people breaking

the law but I would be very frank and say that going to the Licensing Authority is not a walk in the park, let us be frank about that. It is something that has been a challenge to all Governments over the years. Taking a day off from work to go a register a vehicle is not easy. We talk about productivity in this country. To go and stand in a line in any Government department today for two to four hours is unacceptable.

What I admire about the Ministry of Transport and Works this Minister, his Permanent Secretary, his staff and his technical people is that they are not prepared to criticise and condemn, they are prepared to find solutions, and that is why I am so happy that we are getting to the point of the Electronic Vehicle Registration system in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, we need to ask ourselves what would that be. The Electronic Vehicle Registration is really noting new. It has been happening in many parts of the world for many years. Certainly, it basically means installing a radio frequency identification device on the windscreen. I know that in the United States of America they used to call them tags. (S15) In the United States of America we used to call them tags, tags on the windshield and tags on the back which will make it easy for the police or in our case the Licensing Authority to be able to tell by the device they carry in their hands whether your registration is paid up or not.

Mr. Chairman, the beauty about it is that it goes a step further and through that electronic mechanism it interfaces with contemporary ITC infrastructure and all the software and hardware that work with it behind the scenes, and within a matter of seconds they police can tell whether or not your vehicle is on the road legally; they can tell who is the legal owner of the vehicle; they can even go a bit further and see if there are any points outstanding, if there is a warrant out for the vehicle, if there are other infractions that have occurred. Mr. Chairman, , if they happen to stop you they can take action there and then.

Mr. Chairman, the other interesting thing about it and let me jump quickly ahead in terms of the Electronic Vehicle Registration System is that once implemented I believe it will go a long way in reducing the amount of time people have to spend in the court system in Barbados dealing with vehicular matters.

Mr. Chairman, it is almost embarrassing that in 2016 the police can stop you for minor traffic incident and then you have to go and spend sometimes two and three days down in the court system waiting on a magistrate to call a case, maybe to slap you with a \$50 fine and you would have wasted a whole day; if you work for \$100 a day that is probably \$300 that the society and economy would have lost because of the time. Sir, you then have to that the time tha the police officers who have to write up the reports and

the prosecutor who has to be in court to prosecute you. The time of the magistrate, the time of all the officers to the court, so that \$50 fine has effectively cost the State in excess of \$1 000.

Mr. Chairman, I just said what we are doing about it. Sir, I really miss Honourable Member for St. James North who up until two days ago sat obliquely opposite me, but now like an errant school boy has been slapped on the wrist and sent to the Back Bench to sit -- the dunce side. Mr. Chairman, this Electronic Vehicle Registration System certainly ought to help us in terms of the issue therein within the court system, assist in the fixing of fines and I think that we have to get to the point where fines are fixed, where the police or whoever stops you know that they can give you a ticket right there and then and that this is the fine that you have to pay.

Mr. Chairman, it is really costing the State too much money. The system is there already, it has been tried in other places, you do not have to reinvent the wheel but it will save taxpayers millions of dollars per year, that will now be diverted toward fixing Holders Hill Main Road, the roads in Husbands Garden, Husbands, Oxnard and around my constituency; providing street lights for those who continue to lament about that darkness in the areas and what-not.

Mr. Chairman, if we do not look at these inefficiencies in the system, grab them by the scruff of the neck and fix them once and for all in a sustainable manner, then we are going to come here every year asking for more and more dollars of taxpayers money to do all the things that we are asking for.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Hon. D.O'N. INNIS: Mr. Chairman, in closing on this point I want to say that this Ministry, I think, is moving in the right direction. I talked about Electronic Vehicle Registration System, I believe there is a lot more that can be done in Barbados to make our streets more pedestrian friendly. Sir, we talk about traffic jams, about congestions, we see all the challenges we have with chronic non-communicable diseases in Barbados, including lifestyle related diseases, but we make it so difficult to ride a bicycle on the road. We make it so difficult to go for a walk on mornings and evenings because we are all competing with so much traffic around the place.

Mr. Chairman, I am also grateful that the Ministry has fully embraced renewable energy and is certainly focusing quite a bit more on solar lights to light up our dark areas around the country. All of these things help to drive the cost of running Government down. Mr. Chairman, as I close I stand fully in support of this Bill before us,

particularly the Ministry of Transport and Works and I salute the officers for the work that they are doing, they will continue to be deeply criticised as each one of us as Members of Parliament want the very best for our constituents but I am very mindful of the challenging position and therefore we have to give priority to some areas but what elates me is the fact that they now fully embrace technology, we are going to see a far more efficient Licensing Authority. I look forward eagerly, not in terms of a year or two, but in a matter of months to the long lines at the Licensing Authority becoming something of the past, and of greater synergies between the Barbados Revenue Authority and the Licensing Authority. I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I want to enter this debate to speak on a few matters and like the speaker who just sat I would like to salute the introduction of the electronic vehicle tags because I think that it is past overdue and that we need to be able to ensure more aspect of our Government coming to the reality of a modern technological world.

Mr. Chairman, the reality is that all of us use Smartphones and I would have, as Honourable Attorney-General, introduced the Motorola project which would have allowed for the automated fingerprinting system in the police department, and a number of other initiatives.

I look forward to, and I thought we might have reached there already, where we would have been able to deploy every policeman with a Smartphone with a GPS, such that they would be able to record everything, whether it is road traffic crimes or whether it is any crime in the society and upon entering the information in the reports they would immediately going to the server and the appropriate officer.

I have made the point over and over in here that it takes too long to procure an accident report and when it takes that long to procure an accident report Mr. Chairman, what it means is that insurance companies have to tie up sums in a contingency fund such that they cannot ensure that they move forward with their balance sheet looking the way in which it should, simply because it takes six and nine months to do what out to take no more than a week or two, and we have old systems that need to be changed.

Mr. Chairman, I have spoken over and over about the deconstructing of rules and about the reconstructing of rules. I say to the Government that when we say there are things that do not require fiscal measures, additional financial resources, right now this is one of them. Right now if a police officer goes to an accident report, he then

writes up in a notebook, he comes back into the station, the station then has to have it written up into the station diary, the report then goes from the constable to the sergeant, then to the Station Sergeant, then to the Inspector, then to the Assistant Superintendent, then to the Superintendent and it is not going every day, it is going as long as they can take to get to it and as long as they can take to weigh through the files. They are then asked to come all the way back down again, but yet those same officers are using Smartphones immediately there are programme that will allow all the officers to see the report and within 48 or 72 hours they would sign off on it and then you allow persons to pay for those reports, because invariably it is the insurance companies who are paying for the reports, so that whatever cost it takes to automate that system then the insurance companies can bear it because it would be less money than they tying up reserves for six, twelve or eighteen months. Mr. Chairman, when we get to the Head of the Attorney-General I hope that we can understand the symbiotic cooperation that is absolutely needed.

Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed and there are those still in the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and persons still in the Ministry of Transport and Works who would have recalled that for at least three to four month I chaired a committee, just before we left Government, that led to the development of systems that allowed people to plead guilty, by post, for traffic offences. (S16) I chaired a committee just before we left Government that led to the development of systems to allow people to plead guilty by post for traffic offences. The majority of Barbadians lose hours upon hours having to go and stand up in the Magistrates' Courts just to say, "I am pleading guilty for driving at 55 or 60 kilometres, or whatever". In those days we said they should do it by post but the truth is they should be able to do it electronically now. Therefore, if you accept that you are guilty of this charge, plead guilty and pay the fixed fine. I, like the Minister who spoke just now, feel there should be fixed fines. If you feel you are not guilty, please appear at court on X date which is two to three weeks hence; and the amount of time, the amount of money, the improvement to cash flow that those things will bring about in this country will be significant. I ask both the Attorney General and the Minister of Transport and Works to pull the file. The work was done. The Acting Chief Parliamentary Council was one of those on the committee. She was not chief at the time. There were people from the Ministry of Transport and Works. I cannot remember the names of who were on that committee but we used to meet in the (NIS) National Insurance Scheme building when the Attorney General's Chambers were in there. All of that work has been done, and that was done six to eight years ago. You will find cooperation from this side, and if it needs to come back to a Select Committee, I give my word publicly that we will cooperate.

I want to come to United Commercial Autoworkers Limited (UCAL) because there is a genuine difference between the Democratic Labour Party Government's approach and the Barbados Labour Party Government's approach on UCAL. I speak with all sincerity on this matter. We cannot be talking about economic enfranchisement in this country and then leave one of the major entities that is dependent on resources from the Transport Board out to sea. I have taken the time to go and talk at all levels to mechanics and workmen and to find out what is going on. The UCAL is owed in excess now of \$22 million. All of us know Government has a difficulty with money. That is not the issue, but what they require is a bankable plan; a bankable plan that allows them to retire the debts that they have and allows the individual mechanics the assurance of work. I am not sure why the Transport Board is bringing in -- I read it in the paper like anybody else -- three engineers from Trinidad. I am not one of those xenophobic people but I am saying to you, in the absence of communication, in the absence of being satisfied that the work cannot be done locally, that is the only way and you would have to tell UCAL that up front. You should not tell UCAL at a meeting after a letter on March 8 that these three engineers are coming in and working from Mangrove. If the Minister is not aware of that, go and speak to them because that is what they have been told.

Here are the realities: Transport Board has 13 bays and eight ramps. Mangrove, where you are sending these three engineers, has one bay and one ramp. Then Transport Board would normally send its work to UCAL. Others have spoken about the diversion of work, and I certainly am not aware of a diminution of the quality of work from UCAL, but I know this: Everybody else who gives poor service you give them a chance, and if it is that UCAL is giving poor work then you need to have it recorded. As far as I know, UCAL has about 115 workers -- the Minister needs to hear this -- and for the last year almost, instead of 40 to 50 workers per shift, they are down to 10-15. These are 115 Barbadian families who are no longer getting the source of revenue as mechanics that they would previously have received.

There is a genuine concern about the difference in the cost of transmissions, with UCAL charging before \$6 000 to overhaul a transmission and outside providers charging \$35 000 and \$40 000. We have spoken to this already, and I believe that the Minister has a duty to be able to call for the records. I did not tell you to get up in here and make political speeches today. Call for the records and resolve it because if the workers believe that someone else is charging four to five times more than what they charge, and then they cannot get what is owed to them. What is owed to them as of March 15 this year is \$13.79 million with a final retroactive as calculated by UCAL of \$8.26 million, which is \$22 million. These are not big

businessmen, and rather than abandon and throw them out, governments successively in this country have done more for other companies with people that did not come up through us wanting them to come up the ladder of economic enfranchisement.

I am making a plea in this Parliament today. I could take a different posture politically, but I am making a plea in here for the workers of UCAL and for the whole experiment, because the same Government and successive governments are going to have to find themselves working with ordinary Barbadians to make the transition from tradesmen to businesspeople, and we cannot throw the bathwater out with the baby. In this House, a letter was already made a document of the House from Sir Roy Trotman, the former General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, and in his letter on July 14, 2011 - already a document of the House, Sir -- he makes the point that at that time UCAL was only owed \$5 million but that the wealthiest of the Transport Board's clients are being fully accommodated by the Ministry of Finance directly, rather than a better system of spreading the payments used by all of the people providing services and goods to the Transport Board. That is fair.

I have not come in here today to tell the Minister to go and find \$22 million, although I am conscious that tomorrow night we are voting another \$21 million for the Transport Board. I would like the Minister to tell us how much money because UCAL only got \$750 000 in December and they have not received a cent for the year. I know because a lot of the mechanics are my constituents and I know when they cannot go to the doctor and pay for a child in the middle of the night because they are barely surviving. I am saying to you that we accept that you cannot pay all at once, but put a payment plan in place. Then, with the statutory payments - because UCAL equally owes NIS, PAYE (pay as you earn), VAT (Value Added Tax), et cetera - I think it would all be fair for any punitive arrangements and interest to be wiped from them on that, because the reason why they have not been able to keep current is that they have not been paid.

They have been getting short-paid monthly, getting less work and then only getting \$750 000 last year and not a cent for this year, but if there were other businessmen in Barbados facing that plight, they would be talking to the Government and they would be talking to us ad nauseam. These are ordinary Barbadians who come to fulfill the promise of economic enfranchisement. The Barbados Workers' Union celebrates 75 years this year and it must not be said that in the effort to move their members from labour representatives to economic enfranchisement, we sat idly by as a Parliament in the 50th anniversary of Independence. It must not be said that as they celebrate 75 years, we allowed this experiment to fail. I do not feel that it can fail. The Minister of Business will make cases for

other businessmen in this country. What is it about UCAL that stops him from wanting to make the same case? I am saying to him there are other examples of incompetence in the private sector in this country,

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Hon. M.A. MOTTLEY: I believe that workers who are now to become businessmen ought to be given the chance and if he believes that there assistance his Ministry can render to them in terms of corporate administration, then it should be rendered but what must not happen is for them to be left floundering on their own in circumstances where other entities are not left floundering in Barbados. It is a case of equity.

Mr. Chairman, as I end, in the last paragraph, Sir Roy made this point. UCAL is made up of the workers who are the main shareholders. It is slowly being killed by our people's Government. Sir, this is Sir Roy. It seems that only the Prime Minister intervention would save us. Sir, five years later almost, I ask for us to do right by these people in the experiment of economic enfranchisement in this country. Sir, what is more, the diminution in the volume of work that is being sent to them can be corrected. You cannot bring in three engineers from Trinidad when there are 115 families depending on work at UCAL. Sir, that is the position of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip south.

Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I just thought I would enter the debate at this point in time in particular when I have heard some discussion about the number of road traffic offences and whether or not there is a better way of what presently obtains. Indeed, just a few weeks ago, I happen to be part of a meeting with my colleague from St. Philip North and officials at the Ministry of Public Works and this is one of the areas that I identified them, that we needed to find a solution that is more workable, more immediate and that would lead to significant returns to us as a Government. The Honourable Member for St. James South is correct that sometimes some very simple road traffic offences, what may appear to be a fine of \$100 or \$500 in fact probably cost the Government and the person more in terms of the time it takes. Sir, when I come down on mornings and I see call day at Boarded Hall and you see the number of cars and persons outside, I often wonder if this is not a waste of time, that there must indeed be a better way.

Mr. Chairman, indeed, my understanding from my colleague Minister is that they are going to look at ways to

see what we need to do both from the Attorney-General's end and from their end to see if we can move on to an electronic platform.

Mr. Chairman, just to give an example as to why this is urgent from my perspective and why this is urgent for us. Sir, last night the amount of traffic offences that appear in the Magistrate Courts alone were listed at 14 848 and the number of traffic offences that were actually adjudicated were 6 453, so you can see from that the sheer volume of traffic offences that are almost now manually addressed. Sir, my question to Madam Registrar was: Of the number of cases adjudicated can you tell me how many individuals were fines and how many fines were actually collected. Unfortunately, because of the time frame in which I ask the question, I do not know the answer and I will try to obtain it by the time we close tomorrow. What happens is that some magistrates, I can use the magistrate at District A Traffic Court. He tends to fine forthwith and, therefore, there is not such a problem of the collection of money. Other magistrates have a system where they will levy a fine and would give an individual three months or six months to pay. Then you have the issue of who then follows up to ensure that the individual returns to court and pay within three months or six months. If the person does not return, then it is a question of getting the court marshals to serve the process and we have some issues in terms of the volumes to work, the number of marshals and attitudes to work et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, the point is, it is clear to me that we need to have an electronic solution. It is clear to me that the time that persons spend waiting to plea guilty to be fined \$100, \$200 or \$300, that if you can have a system that enables them to pay the fine forthwith, where the fine can be mailed, enables Government to better track whether or not the person has paid the fine that this system will pay for itself. It is clear to me that it would pay for itself. Sir, as have said, the sheer volume of traffic matters that are now occupying the courts of Barbados, this is time that the court can use to do other matters.

Mr. Chairman, again, I say that my colleague Minister from St. Philip North will tell you that I often say to him that there is a business case for them. Let us go out to tender, see what is out there and it will pay for itself in terms of the collection of revenue, in terms of the saving of persons' time away from and in terms of having court marshals et cetera involved in the process.

Mr. Chairman, I support the call and as have said, I had this discussion with the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. I support the cause for us to find a solution because, as have said, it will pay for itself not only in terms of efficiency but in terms of the saving the courts' time, it will save in terms of individuals having to take time off from work, going to sit under the tree at Boarded Hall, for

example, and other parts around Barbados to be fined and stuff, so I fully support that.

Mr. Chairman, similarly, because we should not get confused with the electronic system presently being supported, that system also brings efficiency in that it would enable us at a glance to be able to identify whether or not an individual has paid his road tax, is properly licensed, et cetera. I believe that in a previous presentation the Honourable Member for St. Philip North said that they are probably as many as 30 000 vehicles on our roads that are not being properly licensed et cetera. Sir, that creates a significant difficult because that would tell you as was hinted to by the Honourable Member for St. James Central, the potential human cost whenever an individual who drives a vehicle without the requisite road tax an insurance collides and is at fault and that there are injuries whether it be personal injuries or damage to the third party's vehicle, that individual usually does not have the wherewithal to settle the claim, the insurance company does not settle the claim and then, Of course, you have a situation where someone is severely injured and causes not only the physical injury but then you have the financial loss and not the ability to recover. Sir, something has to be done about that and the \$2.5 million being voted here to let us have an electronic system, in many ways one might say it is long overdue but we are here now and it has to be done. I am glad to hear that we are having support from both sides because it makes a lot of sense. I am glad to note that my colleague Minister has seen the necessity to have this done with the kind of urgency that is required and I fully support that.

Mr. Chairman, similarly, from a law enforcement perspective, one of the issues that you would hear raised from time to time by the Royal Barbados Police Force is the issue of false licence plates being used in particular in the commission of criminal offences.(S18)

We are going in the right direction. We must have a system in place that regulates who manufactures licenses that enables us to go into John Browne's shop and ask: have you created plate number B 69? Do you have information in terms of who paid for it? Do you have a copy of a person's ID, et cetera, so that there is better tracking and tracing? It has to be done. This provision, based on my discussion with the ministry, is not at all intended to prevent existing business persons who are now in the manufacture of license plates. What is intended is to have a standard operating procedure so that we can trace the legitimacy of the license plates and that will go hand in hand with the electronic platform.

One other areas that we need to have better cooperation between the Ministry of Transport and Works, the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) and insurance companies is the area where vehicles are written off.

Presently, a vehicle is written-off by the insurance company. The insurance company makes a determination that it is not financially viable to repair the vehicle. We all know what happens then, either the owner makes a deal with the insurance company to reacquire the vehicle and repairs it him or herself, or the insurance company sells the vehicle to some third party who then repairs it. In between there, there is no notification to the licensing department or full proof process, because I am told that some companies do and some do not, so that licensing then knows that when this vehicle comes to be re-licensed that it was actually written of and that it should have a bit more scrutiny in terms of the integrity of the structure than previously. This is important because I am told of instances where these vehicles that were written-off were then put back on to the road, got into accidents again and because the integrity was not as sound, caused additional damage and/or cases where, because of the lack of information, there were written off again under circumstances that might suggest that it was deliberate because the individual found an avenue that they can make a few more dollars by insuring the vehicle for values beyond what they are truly worth.

The third area of cooperation is the area of theft of vehicles. Again my information is that the theft of a vehicle is reported to the police, but the Barbados Licensing Authority is not notified at all of that vehicle being stolen. An individual may very well then repaint the vehicle, take it into the Barbados Licensing Authority (BLA), change the chassis number as best as possible and is able then to license the vehicle all over again, but if there is a mechanism between the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) and the Barbados Licensing Authority (BLA) that every time a vehicle is stolen, and that information is transmitted to the Barbados Licensing Authority (BLA) I believe that we may be able to assist in the reduction of a persons ability to steal a vehicle in little Barbados, repaint it, et cetera, and able to have it licensed all over again. On that note, we all have a sense, in terms of the favourite type of vehicles that are stolen around Barbados, I think white Toyotas are a good example of vehicles that for some reason, people seem to have it easy in terms of stealing, maybe we can use this opportunity to encourage more individuals to get involve in having alarms on their vehicles. It is actually not as expensive as one might believe.

Mr. Chairman, these three areas as I said are areas where I believe that the Office of the Attorney General (AG), in particular, the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF), the Courts and Barbados Licensing Authority (BLA) can coordinate better for the benefit of users of roads in Barbados. Moreover, as I said previously, in terms of a revenue collection ability. Presently, based on what I am told, we are losing revenue opportunities. Let us spend the money now because it will pay for itself if we move

away from this system of persons going into Court and pleading guilty and spending a whole day on that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: I will come back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I wish to add my contribution to this debate and at the outset to lend support to my neighbour and colleague the Honourable Member for St. James Central when he spoke about the Redman's Vendors' Mall where I know that it was a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW) and the Rural Development Commission (RDC) and it sought to bring a number of young people from in the around who want to display their skills and they were entrepreneurs who wanted to be able to ply their trade and be able to look after their families and improve themselves generally and that vendors' mall had a special aspect of it where the ZRs that would come through from the Wanstead Route would come right through to Redman's Village and to avoid the bad behaviour that we now witness, three of them were allowed to park in the stand that was a part of that project and then to move on to Bridgetown in an orderly fashion.

Unfortunately, we have heard nothing about it since the change of Government in January 2008 but I think it is a very necessary exercise because some of those young men and women, they are a little older now, but they are waiting for opportunities, particularly now in this difficult time when persons do not have jobs anymore, they are people who are skilled people. There is a young man who is a Barber, there were young women who were doing cosmetology, there were persons who were already in the village selling fruits and vegetables, and I believe that it would be a good effort to help those people to be able to make a little more of themselves and I am sure it would reduce any bill in the Welfare Department or it would take some of those young men and women off the block and give them that opportunity to empower themselves. I am sadden, Mr. Chairman, at how Barbados has turned.

Everybody knows that I am from the old school, but the old school worked well for most of us, if not all of us, in this Honourable Chamber and it is really a very heart wrenching experience to see how many Barbadians at all levels - and that is what disturbs me more than anything else - seem to think that they can find a way of circumventing the law. There are many people who are still driving around their cars and I can understand that some of those persons who would have lost their employment, or it

had been reduced, or they have incurred more debt and circumstances are not good but they still must not breach the law. Park the old car and take the Government transportation. Too many people, hundreds of them, Mr. Chairman, and I support what the Minister said, they are not renewing their licenses, they are not paying their Road Tax, they are not renewing the firearm licenses, those who have, and anybody who has a firearm license should be somebody who can pay that \$200 annually to be able to keep that license legitimate. There are many who are not paying their insurance policies, many are not maintaining the vehicles they are driving and we know of these businesses in Barbados - some of them, not all, some are very legitimate and the ministry is aware of that through you, Sir, - are printing licensing are not requesting or following - I believe that is the rule of law - persons bringing the insurance paper, the driver's license and the Road Tax receipt to show these are all covered. (S19) The most recent thing I have heard is that there are persons now who are making stickers for their vehicles but they have not been issued by the Licensing Authority, so where is my country going and what can we do as a people to change it or to turn it around.

Mr. Chairman, I am a person who do not like to breach the law. Every day we see people who run the red lights, ordinary people, PSV drivers, even sometimes the Transport Board bus drivers and persons with trucks. When you breach that rule or that road sign you are endangering the lives of others or their property, but somehow some people think it is okay so when you have to say you have just ran a red light you get all the 'blister blinding' in the world, if you know that expression, Sir, coming from them which really bothers me a lot.

I am tired of an unruly public. I really am tired. I believe that regular ordinary citizens even Justices of the Peace have got to be called upon to assist the police officers and the various ministries and other agencies to be able to get the work done. I got a blessing. It is a good thing that my mother had many of us because I thought I was going to die when the ZR driver who was picking up someone on the pedestrian crossing by the Barbados Community College last week when I said to him you know you are breaching the law and he did not hesitate to 'blister blind' me. Well I really was not in the mood either to respond. I would not have cursed him either, I do not curse like that, but I would have called the Transport Authority... I want to take this opportunity and break here to say that I am happy that the Transport Authority has been started. I understand from the Honourable Minister that they have got to be changes that would give them the authority and the strength to be able to treat to matters but I am happy that on the tip of a finger even on Whatsapp I can make contact with the Transport Authority and I want to thank them sincerely. I want to thank the other agencies even the member of staff at Central Public Works

Department because they are sometimes just a phone call away and I think that is really very critical, sometimes there are very urgent matters with flooding and so on in villages and there is somebody that you can get on the line to be able to get them to say well traffic has to be diverted or the roads have to be closed, so there Chief Technical Officer, the Permanent Secretary and his deputy and so on, I want to tip my hat off to them because I consider them to be humane and understandable and they follow what instructions they get. I do not always agree with some of the things that they do but they get other instructions and therefore to keep their work and their years service they would have to conform, so I am not questioning that but I thank them sincerely because I have had an excellent relationship with them over the years and I look forward to continuing working with them for the time I am here and even beyond.

My only concern is when I mention just now, the unruly disrespectful behaviour on the streets, I want to ask what message are we sending to the youth for when children are sitting in a car and parents run a red light or the drivers or when they are in the ZRs, and these PSVs drivers not even the ZRs even a few of the Transport Board buses are doing a lot of foolishness on the road as well, and they are not all young people, it says that there is a measure of decay in our society. I do not know who we are emulating but what we are doing is really not right and it is destroying the fabric of our society. Sir, that part I would leave there.

Mr. Chairman, I want for those who breach the laws to be prosecuted. I got a ticket for parking in Roebuck Street. Among seven or eight cars, mine was the only one that police officer put a ticket on, and when I came back and I saw it I went straight to my workplace and I made sure that I paid my bill so any constituent, and they can hear I love them dearly or any individual who is my friend who gets a ticket, do not ask C. Y. F. to ask a police officer to have it squashed, I am sorry. The \$50 must help to maintain the roads and to put systems in place to make our life better, and that is as clear and crystal as anything else.

Mr. Chairman, I have a tremendous challenge, the Honourable Minister is aware - I am not going to deal with the project now I will deal with project after - in seeing what has happened on the Jackson route over the last five years. Mr. Chairman, the road was already saturated with B minibuses and then all of a sudden nine ZRs turned up out of the night. Now, I knew that for years I would have been writing because there were so many pirates on the Bibby's Lane route going all the way through Exchange and into Clifton Hill... Of course, Mr. Speaker, you would appreciate that when people want to get to work to school, to church, to recreate and so they will take transportation, but when you see the dangers of persons travelling in pirate vehicles, then individuals understand what the

consequences will be. Mr. Chairman, having written and written and then I saw these ZRs I was most astounded because I could not understand why Jackson route had so many B minibuses on it and then these ZRs would come.

Sir, I am not prepared to use this Chamber to say who owns those ZRs but the person who owns them is just as disorderly as the persons who are driving them. I was told that those ZRs were to come through Jackson, so you come through from One Accord and when you get by what we call the Steel Donkey Roundabout do not go on to the left to go to Arthur Seat or Shop Hill or any of those communities, go on to Canewood Road, Cane Garden Park, on to the junction at Lears, make the left turn, go Bibby's Lane and fulfil the needs of those commuters. They do not go there, so I have written, I have called and I have expressed my confusion and my anger and those ZRs are all through Jackson, they are parking in corners especially near the pedestrian crossing in Jackson where Sharon Primary and the Lester Vaughan school children would congregate to get home and it is extremely dangerous.

The other thing about many of them is that they are drinking alcohol and driving, some of them are driving and texting and some of them are even smoking contraband when they are behind the wheel. What hurts me even more than anything else they target the young girls and possibly the boys too from the Lester Vaughan School and the other communities where children come from that have to commute on those buses.

I would like to see the ZRs on the Jackson route go unless they could go Bibby's Lane and follow the route. It is very disconcerting when person who are working in Canewood Road, Cane Garden Park and the other communities, janitors, general workers and so on, have to get off on Jackman Main Road by the steel donkey and walk for 15 minutes to get to work. Some of the ZRs would come by Warrens Polyclinic and parked on the layby and then the other vehicles that are on the road cannot past. Sometimes it is two and three buses and they are waiting for ten minutes and persons what to get to work, to school and to go about their business.

It is a culture that needs to be stamped out and every Honourable Member in this Chamber and any right-thinking Barbadian should be able to work... You do not want to put them out of employment because we want them to work. A lot of them owe child maintenance I must tell you. A lot of them owe the court for all kinds of infringements that they would have been engaged in and they have families and I expect that they would want to work to feed their families, but there has to be a respect for law and order that is different. When persons who own those minibuses will go in front of members of the constabulary to say my man just got reported I want you to

clear it, he or she should be dismissed because they are adding to the confusion and the indiscipline in this society.

If good men and women sit idly by and let this society falls through the cracks, we are doomed as a people. There is nothing worse in the world than for good men and women to stand idly by and see the society go. We have to be strong enough as leaders to say you have done wrong, enough is enough. I have absolutely no problem, Mr. Chairman, in making that clear.

The other comment, as I come closer to the end, has to do what link roads. There are many link roads across Barbados and almost all of them are in a state of disrepair. Hangman's Hill is an excellent link road. When people are coming from the West Coast and they use Hangman's Hill it put them on to Hopewell and into Jack-in-the-Box another excellent link road all the way through to St. George and St. Philip. You should see, Mr. Chairman, the volume of traffic on those roads in the early morning and particularly on evening rush hour. It is a good escape from having to use those dangerous highways. It really is an excellent route. (S20) Bloomsbury will take you through St. Andrew, St. Joseph, sections of St. John and St. Philip. This is another road that is in really bad state of disrepair. When I speak to Hillaby I am referring to the road that takes you through Hillaby, onto Apes Hill and links you back up onto the Highway 2A near Sion Hill, that is another excellent link road.

Mr. Chairman, the one that bring you through from Hometown through Halcion Heights, Seaview, St. Thomas Church, Content, Dukes Tenantry, onto Stoney Gully by the Post Office in Welchman Hall and within ten minutes you have already reached your destination or you could even go further.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I think that there is need for special attention to be given to those roads and to any other similar roads in Barbados because there is one leading through Market Hill/Flat Rock and so on that will carry you farther because that was the road tht we used to use before there was a Highway 2A to take us to the airport.

I want to thank the staff at the Bagatelle Depot for the excellent work they have done, under very trying circumstances at this time and I will take the opportunity again to be able to refer to some other aspects of concern and of course giving any ideas that I can as to road infrastructure can be enhanced. I thank you.

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

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for recognising me and for allowing me to speak very briefly to Head 40, Ministry of Transport and Works. I have to be brief, Sir, because as I was coming back into the Honourable Chamber earlier I heard the Honourable Member for St. George South referring to the fact that I am a failed Minister of Transport and Works.

Mr. Chairman, the truth is, I do not seriously take many of the things that the Honourable Member says because the Honourable Member has been described to me as a person who has entered this Honourable Chamber, not to learn but to teach, so we will wait on the Honourable Member to advise all of us as to what is the best thing to do in transport, construction and in health, so I will be a careful student in that regard.

Mr. Chairman, I want to start with the Warrens Traffic Safety Improvement Project because I think that sometimes our memories are so short that we do not remember what prevailed prior to the implementation of this project. Sir, I want to join in the congratulations being laid at the feet of the staff of the Ministry of Transport and Works in respect to the success of that project.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member who just sat referred to that roundabout and I want to start in that corner, up by One Accord Plaza, Jackson. Mr. Chairman, before the creation of this easement you could not get in or out of One Accord Plaza. Today this is one of the thriving business centers of our country and small business people who largely own this have benefitted tremendously from this project.

Mr. Chairman, yes when we implemented the large roundabout, what is called the Darcy Scott Roundabout, there were instances, as Barbadians became familiar with the signage at this roundabout, with so many entries and exists, there were instances of fender-benders. As Minister I got many calls from owners of vehicles, friends of owners of vehicles, drivers, et cetera about the confusion.

Mr. Chairman, today even in a state where one would wish for better marking of the Darcy Scott Roundabout, even in this condition I must say that Barbadians have become largely accustomed of the traffic interchanges that are required for the smooth operation of the roundabout and I must appeal to them to continue to be vigilant so as to make this area safer and safer as we continue to roll out a solution in a very dense vehicular area in Barbados. Mr. Chairman, a few week ago while speaking in this Honourable Chamber, I made the point that there are not many areas of Barbados that are not highly trafficked today and so we need to be fair to each other.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. James South made the point, though I did not agree with

everything the Honourable Member said this evening, but he made the point about the stalling of that project because there has been a collision of two authorities, the land owners who have a right to their land and the authority of the Chief Technical Officer of the Ministry of Transport and Works to utilise lands for the road improvement, once the proper authority is followed under the Land Acquisition Act.

Mr. Speaker, we are working out these things and the Honourable Member for St. James South is correct, there is a cost attached to that solution and that is why Mr. Chairman, there is a pause in that project, it has affected the Redman junction and it has severely affected what I would call the PriceSmart junction. I do not know if that would be the term you would use but those are the two major areas of the project that have not been completed and I trust that provision will be made very soon for these acquisitions to take place and that that entire project can roll out. When that is done, of course, we will still have to start looking at what next do we do in terms of easing that density of traffic on the now four-lane ABC Highway.

Mr. Chairman, when the Honourable Members on that side were last in Government, that was a two-lane highway. We came to office, and I keep photographs of my projects so I know what is going on. I know what we inherited by way of Highway 2A, we inherited a discussion about where do we...

Mr. Chairman, we had spent \$107 million on what was famously known as the SSS Project. The Honourable Member for St. George North knows this, I have photographs of him and other Members of Cabinet at the time, shaking hands with proprietors of ABC Highway Project. Mr. Chairman, there is nothing wrong with that but there was a stalling point where we start to talk about flyovers, 'fly-unders' and whatever and that is where we are at.

Mr. Chairman, I know one project that was presented to me in respect to the easement of traffic on the ABC Highway, which I support fully, that is the creation of another highway from about St. Thomas Church into either St. David's or further up the coast so as to get us into Christ Church because essentially that is where the bypass is required so that everybody who would be travelling to the airport would not have to go through Warrens and then plough through Bussa Roundabout, so that we would have that clear run. Mr. Chairman, then of course we have the what I would call the 'triangle-about' and I think there is an officer in the Ministry of Transport and Works who I think name should be affixed to that solution. It is not a solution that found favour with a lot of people at the time but we dusted it off in the Ministry of Transport and Works, polished it and created that triangular solution. The officer was amazed at my support for his idea but we got in there,

we argued about it, we sorted it out and we put it in place. Sir, I dare say, within the constraints of what funds we had, we have a lot to be thankful for. Mr. Chairman, we have got to stop hanging our hats so high that we cannot reach them when we want to. We want solutions that are so perfect, we want 10-storeyed buildings, we want bus terminals that are air-conditioned, fully sheltered that no drip of rain, no matter how heavy the rain, that nothing must get in. (S21) Sir, there is sometimes within our grasp easy and simple solutions which may not satisfy our every need but will certainly go a long way toward ensuring that the purpose for which they are created is fulfilled. I want to refer to what I call my two most successful roundabouts: One that I had responsibility for, in a way, and one that I had nothing to do with in terms of its creation. That is the one up by myself and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East in Sayes Court. We have a little roundabout up there where we manoeuvre. If your vehicle is large enough that you cannot necessarily make the circle, you can roll over it and you can get where you are going. It is safe. The same rules of a roundabout are observed at that junction, so that people coming up the Enterprise Road who are heading up to Chancery Lane know that once they approach that junction, they stop, the signage is there, they look left and right, and they proceed into the roundabout. Wonderful solution.

At Combermere School, we put one in place about three years ago. Yes, Sir, I recognise the Honourable Member for St. Andrew wagging his finger at me, not because he wants me to know he is present but because he is the representative for Combermere School in this Chamber. I want to congratulate the team for the simple, low-cost solution which I think we need to roll out on so many other areas in Barbados; low-cost solutions that make sense and that work. Driving to Combermere from the Codrington Junction and entering into Bush Hall, or going left into Waterford, is now a walk in the park, as they say. Of course, you leave behind the traffic sign which the Honourable Member for St. Andrew has to get credit for. I can never forget the day the Honourable Member for St. Andrew opened those traffic lights or turned them on. He told Barbados that this was the first time they would have a singing traffic light. Coo coo. Coo coo. Coo coo. Of course, about a week later, the audio on the traffic light disappeared and that was the end of the Honourable Member's project. Those singing traffic lights sing no more but they still work, Mr. Chairman.

On a serious topic, I want to turn my attention to the electronic vehicular registration system, Sir, and join in congratulating the Ministry of Transport for reaching this point. I urge that the Minister, however, apply tremendous effort to make sure that this project rolls out. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East spoke to the fact, and I agree. This has been hanging around in the Ministry of Transport for too long. It is a solution which

we need to put in place, Sir, but I do find that in Barbados we have tended to get to these electronic solutions too slowly. We are too guarded. Again, yes, you cannot fault the officers or the administrators for wanting to get it right. If you get it wrong, you will be in a lot of trouble, and it is better sometimes that you leave it as it is rather than get it wrong. Yes, I understand that but at the same time we really need to move to next stage of this electronic vehicular registration. I am fully in support of the \$2.5 million that is allocated in these Estimates for this project, and certainly will be fully behind the Minister of Transport and Works to ensure that we get this project up and rolling.

As the learned Attorney General made the point, these solutions pay for themselves, but sometimes we have to look fully through the scheme because certainly, in the case of parking metres - and I trust that I do not go too far with that - there were issues related to their introduction, so we have to look at our legislation and make sure our legislation allows for the participation of other private sector agencies, for instance in collecting fees on behalf of Government and so on. Or else we are in trouble.

I want to move to the next point, and that is that the licensing department for vehicles needs to move to the stage -- I made this point, I believe, when I was Minister of Transport, on numerous occasions in here -- where the private sector gets involved in some of this inspection of our vehicles. It is about the kind of money we have in infrastructure. We have got about ten garages in Barbados fully equipped with scales and measuring systems and so on, but we are going to fight and push and put money into the Barbados Licensing Authority, as it was then, to make sure that their equipment is up to date and that they have the technology, when you can go into the private sector and find several garages with the capability of doing these inspections. We can continue to regulate. I need to rush to that point, because we get scared sometimes that we may be handing over all the rights and the authority of the Government to the private sector. We can engage our minds in regulating these facilities. We can use our experience and our expertise within the Licensing Authority to make sure that these entities are properly and effectively regulated, so that revenues owed to the Government are achieved. Indeed, with the new amalgam under the Barbados Revenue Authority, this should become a project that we can look forward to see executed in the very near future.

I want to end with the Transport Board. Yes, I said I disagreed with some of the comments of my colleague from St. James South, and I certainly think that the approach to the UCAL problem was a little too harsh. I want to associate somewhat with the solution proffered by the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for St. Michael North East. I believe that, yes, this is an experiment which we supported back in the early 1990s but we never fully

participated in making sure they earned the monies. Yes, there are ten ramps at the Transport Board which UCAL operate but they are in a state. They are not the kinds of ramps that one works on vehicles with anymore. There is no hoist, so you are still climbing into a valley. You call it a grease pit and that is a harsh way of describing it, but it is true. This is not fair, and therefore they may be seeking funds which, according to the agreement, may be justifiable or can be negotiated, but at the same time they are not really tooled up to do the job in a modern garage that we would expect to be done, so it is a fact of life.

We need again to examine, therefore, the Memorandum of Understanding that created UCAL and be prepared to carry out that institutional upgrade that is required to ensure that the entity either survives as a viable option, useful to themselves and to the Transport Board, and take us to the next step in terms of repairing our Transport Board vehicles. I am obliged to you for the opportunity to share a few words, my experience at the Ministry of Transport, my knowledge now that I am five years older, and having learnt so much more about how things work properly. I am grateful to you, Sir, for the opportunity and I will return.

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

Mr. G. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head. Sir, I must say from the outset that the Honourable Member who has just taken his seat reminds me of a batsman who goes out to back where there is perfect condition, the weather is good, the wicket is good but yet he cannot score. He goes back to the pavilion and says that if he has the chance again, he would do it all over again or do better. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is now regretting that he did not have enough time in the Ministry of Public Works. I want to say from the outset that it is true that this Chamber can boast today of having three or four members who have been Ministers at the Ministry of Public Works. I must say that I inherited a nice wicket from the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, who did very well in his time. Sir, in his time, he published a White Paper on public transport that I believe the present Minister would do well to read. Of course, Mr. Chairman, it is important to note that despite the change in the political atmosphere at the time and throughout. You have great persons at the Ministry of Public Works, the staff who have worked extremely well and I want to single out a number of persons. It is not derogatory. I want to single out persons like Mr. Lovell, Mr. Tudor and especially Mr. Trotman. I remember because the Honourable Member who just sat down talked about the one success that he had at the Ministry of Public Works, that is, the One Accord Plaza roundabout. Sir, the first time I came to Ministry, I went to that same site and we were doing a steel man roundabout there at the time, a three

legged roundabout and at that time the staff went to the site and the engineers were arguing if the three legged roundabout would work and in the end, I must say Mr. Trotman and Mr. Nash argued that this roundabout would not work. Mr. Trotman felt it could not work but Mr. Nash felt that it would work and it is still there today. I want to say that just less than 10 metres down the road is the roundabout at One Accord Plaza and that is what the Honourable Member says he is famous for.

Mr. Chairman, it is true that the roundabout at Warrens has a lot of problems and I hope it could be corrected. I am aware of the roundabout at Wildey and, Of course, that had tremendous attention at the time. I hope and prayer that someday, the name as the Minister suggested, would be applied to the roundabout because that particular junctions had a number of interventions not only by the Ministry itself but by Cabinet and the special Committee that was named at the time.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say too that the Ministry of Public Works has performed a number of outstanding service to the public of Barbados and the Minister has a lot of work that he inherited. He inherited the Road Traffic Act that was done in 2006 that he failed to bring the regulations. The Transport Authority Act that should have been amended and, Of course, the Ministry of Public Works is now trying to mend it now and, Of course, the Electronics Vehicle Regulation system that the Government is now putting \$2.5 million in the Estimates for. I believe that the Government should put more money in that and, Sir, I will talk about that.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South just mentioned the fact that in last year's Report that 14 848 traffic offences occurred of which 6 000 were adjudicated. This points to a problem within the system that more than 60 per cent of the road traffic offences that we have on our streets today are actually heard by the Magistrates Court and, Sir, this is a problem. It is a problem because we fail to bring the regulations here and the Road Traffic Regulations Section 79(1) speaks about the demerit point system but you cannot introduce the demerit point system unless we have the regulations.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Honourable Member would look not only at this particular section, Section 79(1), but would also look at Section 83(1). Now Section 83(1) is important and I want the Attorney-General to look at Section 83(1) of the Road Traffic Act, which speaks to driving without due care and attention.

Mr. Chairman, the police when they turn up to an accident usually give both parties this particular certificate, the driving without due care certificate and that has caused tremendous confusion over time. Sir, many parties do not

want to take the claim, especially the insurance company, because both parties have been charged with driving without due care and attention. This coupled with the fact that the Police Report takes about six months or longer. I am asking the Attorney-General if it would not be wise not only to use the electronic system within the Ministry of Transport and Public Works but also within the police because it is my understanding that the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act of 2006 pointed to the fact that the police and the Transport Ministry were supposed to work hand in hand in order to get this thing done. I believe that the Government has been doing the job within the last eight years and it is taking a long time to do this but we have to do better. These matters have to come swifter.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister must understand that if he looks at the White Paper that I referred to earlier, it will show that you have to do the work within a timely manner. I believe that the Ministry means well but you need to appoint one or two persons in order to push this programme fast. Sir, when we introduced the plastic licences, in order for us to get that done, you have to appoint a special Committee in order to move forward on this. I also feel that the police, the Ministry of Transport and Public Works and, of course, the Transport Authority needs to work hand in hand.

Mr. Chairman, if you look at the Transport Authority Act, I notice that Section 24(1) speaks to the suspension of permits. Sir, after eight years there must be amendments. This Act was introduced in 2007 and I hear the Honourable Member for St. James Central says there is a need for a further amendment to bring it in line with what is happening in Jamaica and what is happening in other parts of the Caribbean, in Trinidad, for example, but I am not sure if you need to have a situation where the police can impound vehicles without looking at the situation carefully. Sir, we do not want to have a police state. Sir, in some jurisdictions the police can do certain things instantly but you have to be very cautious on this matter. Whereas at Section 24, within the Transport Authority Act, it gives the officers the right to suspend the permit until there is a hearing. I believe at the time we felt that you still need to give due consideration to those persons who are driving on the road (S23) and owners of the permits and vehicles. I would ask the Minister to look at this and let us have a discussion on it and we are all in favour of the amendment and I hope that we can do something about it as soon as is possible because sometimes ... A few years ago we heard about this and today we are hearing about it again, but it is a fact that there are a number of persons who would prefer to pay the \$50 find if you are parking illegally in Bridgetown or if you are driving a vehicle over the speed limit, and you say you want to pay but the persons sometimes cannot pay and we need to do something about this as well.

Mr. Chairman, I always want to say that in terms of traffic management, when I left the ministry at the end of 2007/2008 we were going towards a four lane highway from Warrens right through to Graham Hall and the next phase was to be from Graham Hall to the Airport and then we were going to look to Redman's Village down cross that highway so that the ministry at the time was spending over \$200 million at the time. This ministry has very little money to do anything and when I look at what this paltry sum of an addition \$20 million for road works, we are spending that alone in St. Philip.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: We had the money. We had a programme in place with Rayside Construction, C. O. Williams and we were giving \$70 million in direct financing and that has nothing to do, Mr. Chairman, with the financing from Government. That was a programme with the private sector where finance was coming. In fact, the then Prime Minister said that he wanted to do over 30 or 40 roads in St. Philip and the Honourable Member for St. Philip West is aware of these things too. He is aware that he was getting a lot of road in St. Patrick, down through Highway 5, and now you come here with a paltry sum of \$20 million and you want us to go on the house top and praise you. I am saying that it is not enough. I have said to the Minister that the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW) is an important ministry and if you want to put the country back to work you have to be spending \$200 million in the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW). You have to involve the private sector because if you look across Barbados now, it is not the fault of the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW), it is the fault of the Government. The Government needs to put money in public works, there are too many bad roads. Mr. Chairman, I will tell you this now, that we have a lot of roads in St. George that were once roads and are now going back to mud tracks. I have Bridgecot, St. Judes, roads from Sweet Bottom right up and I am not talking about these roads because I know the Ministry does not have enough money and if you look at the amount of tenantry roads they have done. We have a lot of road that need funds.

Mr. Chairman, I have spoken to the Minister about Highway 5 already but let me explain what Highway 5 is because I know the Honourable Member for St. Philip West does not know where is Highway 5.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Highway 5 comes right through his constituency from Six Roads right down to Bussa and that was supposed to be a three lane highway and the Ministry had the funds and the equipment to bring in a new highway because we recognised that we were taking a new set ... the population shift was going to Six

Roads, St. Philip. A lot of people travel that Highway so it needs to be opened up and we had started to open up the highway but you have not continued it. You have the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, you have three ministers in St. Philip and they do not recognise that Highway 5 is in need of revisiting. I want to hear the Honourable Member for St. Philip West on this. He has to keep noise to let them know that he needs that highway because only recently ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your time is going to expire.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Only recently, Mr. Chairman, we had several deaths on that road. We had to put a new roundabout at District B and between Bussa and District B, there is a need for the opening of that highway. Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 6.15 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be now suspended until 6.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee of Supply. Yes, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I certainly enter this debate of the Estimates in Committee of Supply first of all to congratulate the Minister of Transport and Works and his team for

continuing to focus on the very important objective of managing this very key sector of the Barbados economy.

It was interesting, Mr. Chairman, to hear some of the contributions from the other side, and I do take note of one such observation made by the Honourable Member for St. George South who indicated that the Government should be spending more money on the very important aspect of road repairs and maintenance, and I certainly would not want to differ in that regard because I think that across Administrations, and given the experience of road usage and so on, that there is always the need to have road repairs.

What I can say though, Mr. Chairman, is that when we examine the current Estimates before the House, I really believe that the Honourable Member should have also congratulated the Government for certainly providing in the Estimates in a real way for the same thing that the Honourable Member was talking about. I am happy to say that I feel comfortable that the Minister and certainly the Cabinet of Barbados have taken practical steps towards ensuring that we could make adequate provision for the repairs of our road network.

Mr. Chairman, if we examine the actual Estimates which are before the House, certainly there is provision for the maintenance of tenantry roads, residential road construction and maintenance and also bridge construction. One of the contentions in this debate so far is that there has been a finger pointed at the Government in relation to governance issues and I keep hearing that theme coming up over and over again. There has also been the allegation that the Government has been partisan in relation to its allocation of the Estimates in relation to constituencies.

What I would like to say and make the make the point when one examines the Estimates under this Head is that we have in stark terms specific provisions for road infrastructural upkeep and repair. I believe that all Honourable Members including myself can lay claim to needing to have more attention paid to the roads in our constituencies, but what I do not believe is that you could accuse the Government of being guilty of any governance issues as it relate to the approach to roads.

Mr. Chairman, I therefore want to draw attention to that because I want to make the point that if you were to look under subprogramme 0511 and certainly under programme 510, you would see that there is specific provision for road works not only in St. Lucy but in St. Thomas as well. There is provision for the Hangman Hill Road to Vault Road and the construction of sidewalks from Cane Garden to Sharon. That is not all, Mr. Chairman, there is also provision for improvement of roads in St. James and Proute to the Exchange St. Thomas and there is also St. Andrew because I do recall that the Government

has been criticised in my view wrongfully by the Barbados Labour Party for not paying attention to the road network also in St. Thomas and in St. Andrew.

Mr. Chairman, I raise this as a governance issue because it puts the lie to the allegation that the Government is not being fair in the allocation of the public funds of Barbados. In the Estimates we have provision for road network improvement in St. Thomas, in St. Andrew and St. Joseph under subprogramme 514. Of course, we also have in St. Thomas Proute to Exchange. The point I am making to you Honourable Member for St. Thomas is that we are dealing also with both St. Thomas and St. Joseph because these are the two constituencies that we had been hearing that the Government is not paying any attention to, so when we allocate funds in the Estimates and the Members of the Opposition do not want to pay attention to them, then it is my duty to pay attention to this. Usually when I begin to speak you hear the rattling on the Benches of the Opposition which tells me that I am saying something which is not only purposeful but true, and therefore one can understand the anxiety. They do not want this information to come out but it has to come out.

I also go further, Mr. Chairman, to say that we have heard a lot of concerns in relation to the infrastructure in St. Andrew. We do know that St. Andrew falls within the Scotland District and for years St. Andrew has had a number of problems of an infrastructural nature in terms of the road slippage, but all of that is of a typographical challenge. It is the natural way in which this has happened over the years.

What has been the response of the Ministry of Transport and Works in the Estimates. We have not ignored the issue in St. Andrew neither have we ignored the issue in St. Thomas. These two constituencies are held by Honourable Members of the Barbados Labour Party Opposition, and here it is that we have in these Estimates made provision to deal with these issues. Under subprogramme 785, the Government is providing for upgrades to bridges at Joes River...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a moment, please. Honourable Members we need to hear the contributions. We cannot have this. Proceed Honourable Member.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I do not think that the Opposition likes to hear the truth and therefore we can hear the clamour each time the truth comes out in the House, but I am not surprised about that.

I am making the point that on the issue of governance that this is a clear example of the Government taking its governance very seriously and ensuring that it makes provision in the Estimates broadly across Barbados.

I want to compliment the Minister for this, and I am happy to be able to speak to this in this Committee.

We have had issues in St. Andrew in relation to the management of bridge maintenance and we have had a number of problems in the White Hill Area as well and we still have these problems (27) We have had in the White Hill area a number of problems. We still have those problems, but in St. Joseph in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure provision is made for the upgrades to bridges at Joes River. We also have provision of maintenance of bridges at Tent Bay, St. John; Rock Hall bridge, St. Andrew. Those are specific interventions that are being made in relation to the management of this critical aspect of our road network.

Mr. Chairman, I want to place it on record that this is an important aspect of how we manage our governance in this Government and want to credit the Minister and his Team for it. Mr. Chairman, I also want to say that although we have our challenges in some aspect to funding I believe that the Government should be credited for moving very rapidly ahead and security through a number of project financing avenues, essentially the loan with the Latin American Development Bank, as well as the loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. Those provisions have been made and are reflected also in relation to the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure and are tangible examples of the efforts of the Government to go out there and to make the necessary representation to the international funding agencies, to improve our road network.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot on the one hand level criticisms or even observations about the need to improve or road network, which we know has, to a large extent, particularly over the 14 years of the Barbados Labour Party Administration we have had a lot of neglect in our road network. Therefore we have had to retool ourselves, we have had to make provision to ensure that quite a lot of these roads that have been neglected are being done.

Mr. Chairman, I made reference to the loan of the Inter-American Development Bank, \$25 million, that Agreement was signed 19th February, 2016 and much of the civil and other works in relation to that will actually address quite a bit of the challenges facing our road network in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to say that to a large extent the Ministry of Transport and Works needs to be congratulated for being proactive as it relates to some of the issues that we complain about in this Honourable House from time to time. I feel that the debate in Committee, while examining the Heads, need also to speak to some of the real tangible alternatives and suggestions

which we should be discussing in the Honourable House as it relates to how we manage our road infrastructure.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I believe that we are managing our resources in a way that addresses the key areas that we have to confront in relation to managing our road infrastructure. I believe that platform has been set by previous Government, yes, and we are not taking all the kudos ourselves because the management of our roads is a continuous exercise which spans different Administrations, but we have to be able to plan out the development of our road network based on where we can see the development of Barbados going, not within a short term basis but generally-speaking, in terms of where Barbados is projecting to go in the long term.

I believe there are many possibilities along our main ABC Highway and one of the things I know the Ministry has been looking at is how we can provision, certainly along our highway, the activity of vending, that is a constant activity that is going on and I know that the Ministry will find a solution that not only encourages vending but can create the kind of safety mechanisms to ensure the safety of our roads.

Mr. Chairman, I want to allude to one problem which I feel, and I know that will have to be addressed within the pending amendments to the Road Traffic Act and the regulations, but there is trend in Barbados along many of our roads, of a certain measure of carelessness. Mr. Chairman, I have seen that, particularly in relation to certain road networks where we have what is called the stunt drivers and stunt cyclists wreaking havoc on some of our roads.

I have actually seen the practice and I was actually present on several evenings when I observe the stunt drivers and stunt cyclists encroaching on the Gymnasium property. I want to issue a warning to those persons who are now seeing the expanse of road network around the Gymnasium to be a place for them to display their stunts and so on, it is unsafe. As you know the roads around that facility are used by many of our fitness enthusiasts and I really want to appeal to those persons who believe that they can come onto the property of the Gymnasium and can engage in stunt activities with their vehicles and motorcycles to desist from this practice. The management of the Gymnasium has already made the necessary representation to the Royal Barbados Police Force because we intend to ensure that persons who continue that practice are appropriately prosecuted. I think it is dangerous and that if they want to engage in that kind of racing, they should have discussions with the operators of perhaps the Bushy Park facility and have that activity there.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make that very brief intervention. I think that, by and large, particularly when

our transport system is examined by persons who visit that they consider that we have a credible system, that it works and that of course yes with the right changes we can improve it but I believe we have a transport system that meets international standards and by and large we get kudos for it. Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Chairman, when last I had intervened in this debate, I had engaged the Honourable Member on a matter about which -- and I must apologise to the Honourable Member because there was a matter of some delicacy in my constituency that I had to attend to. I was not present for his response but I did hear his response on the radio as I drove.

The issue about which we had an exchange, Mr. Chairman, was the question arising from the difficulty on the roads in Barbados, of pirate vehicles continuing to ply their trade, ZRs and other PSVs which have the unfortunate tendency, while being full of passengers, to be off route and the way in which this matter has been tackled in our jurisdictions.

I sense that the Minister is on board with the need for us to be more firm in the way in which we treat to this matter, but what I clearly detected in his speech was that as he understands it, there is a difficulty and I sense that he is being guided in this regard by this technical staff, that the difficulty is that you have to have, first of all, the land within which to house the offending vehicle, if it is seized, and then obviously the security in place. (S28) Sir, I want to urge the Minister, through you, not to let the search or the quest for perfection become the enemy of the good. Let us not let an aspiration toward perfection become the enemy of the good.

Asides.

Mr. K.D. SYMMONDS: I was going to say that the reality is that it cannot be that expensive, and I am hearing, sotto voce, that there is money that will be budgeted for this. I will be very brief on the point, for even though the Minister apparently did not know this, money will become available. That alarms me, Sir. That alarms me but be that as it may, hope springs eternal and therefore I rely on the Attorney General to help the Minister of Public Works in this matter. Sir, the point is that it cannot be that difficult because there are really only three things that you need. You need to have the little real estate, obviously some security on a 24-hour basis, and, if it is an open-air thing, lighting. It is a practice that we have done even in the courts of Barbados, where vehicles have been kept on the compound of a court for purposes of an evidentiary nature, et cetera. Holding the vehicle for a period of time is really

not that difficult and should not become an encumbrance toward demonstrating. In this regard, I do not agree with my friend, the Honourable Member for St. George. I do not think we can vacillate about this. It has been happening in Barbados for too long. Too many people are placed at risk. It brings me to the second point I want to make. I need to elucidate for the benefit of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, but I do not have a problem, Sir, with the fact that there is an insurance cap of \$10 million per person in any one accident, or that it is a wider cap - if there are more than one person involved in an accident - that the most money an insurance company in Barbados will pay out is \$30 million. That is not the issue for me, and I want to make it clear that it is more of a concern for the insurance companies in Barbados who would rather see that go lower. Do not misinterpret me. They would rather see it go it lower.

What I am saying, Sir, is that we have, through the Ministry of Public Works and the necessary legislative infrastructure, to start to do the things that protect not only the commercial side of driving on the road in Barbados, which is the insurance industry, but also protect the people who are passengers in vehicles on the roads. You have touched the Lord's anointed when you touch my constituents. I have a constituent, Sir, who was recently medically boarded. She is a mother of four little children and she was on a ZR vehicle, but because there is no process in place of ticketing, once the ZR had to stop suddenly to avoid an accident and she was thrown from her seat, she did not develop the personal injury symptoms immediately. They were developed over a 36-to-48-hour period, but the challenge that she faced is to prove that she was on that vehicle at that period of time because there is no receipt in her hand. What we therefore have is a person, a mother of four, cast into the headline now because she is medically boarded through no fault of her own. She was not the driver. She was not the offending party that was about to cause the accident, but she was a passenger, fare-paying but in law not recognised because she cannot establish on an evidentiary basis of proof that she was the passenger in that vehicle. That puts a household into severe hardship and that is but one instance of many that I am sure the Honourable Minister is aware of, because he has practised at the Bar too.

In my judgement, Sir, the time has long come when we have to make sure that adjustments in law are made to ensure that passengers are protected, not only on the ZRs but also, as I started out by saying, that we deal decisively with the pirate vehicles. A man cannot be earning a business by putting people's lives at risk every morning and every evening, and does not care, and then you turn a blind eye to it. I cannot accept that.

I want to speak also to the question of commercial opportunities. Sir, a lot of people were sent home from the

National Conservation Commission (NCC) and Beautify Barbados who might otherwise have been involved in beautifying and maintaining the highway. Those persons, Sir, represent an income category in Barbados. It was not the elite that were sent home, Sir. It was not the well-to-do driving Land Rovers and so on up and down the place that were sent home. It was poor, humble, working class people. Sir, the circumstances of the economy may have dictated that, and that is not my purpose of debate now. What I am concerned about is the fact that if we are going to create commercial opportunity for maintaining the highway - and I have said to the Minister on the Floor of this House before -- I have no quarrel with the Adopt-A-Kilometre programme. Where I have a problem is when the Adopt-A-Kilometre programme is done exclusively by big business in Barbados. I know that there are young men who are connected to sports clubs, organisations and community clubs. I have spoken to the Minister about the one in Bagatelle, where those young men in Bagatelle have an excellent football team. They have their own little shop to help finance the purchase of equipment and so on for the team, but they would like to extend their business opportunity to adopt even a half-kilometre, and they would maintain it. I am sure that they are not unique and alone in this regard. This is a commercial opportunity that should be going to wider Barbados, developing the opportunities for the working class people of this country, sons and daughters of those who were dislocated during the Holocaust.

I do not believe, Sir, that it should be situation where the economic fortunes are uniquely and holistically manipulated. Mark you. Pardon the pun. The big fish in this society. It cannot only be about the big fish, Sir, and I ask the Minister. As I think about it, the blood boils. I remember the words of Jeremiah Chapter 8 verse 22, when the question is asked, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" Is there no physician there? The Minister does not answer but the point is, Mr. Chairman, why is there no healing of the wound? The people who were sent home were from one income category in Barbados, and they are replaced by the people who are the well-to-do. The reality is, Sir, that you...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I did not want to interrupt the Honourable Member but I am afraid I am going to have to, because I think that the Honourable Member is inadvertently misleading the House. I do not think he is doing it deliberately, but it stems from a lack of understanding about the Adopt-A-Kilometre programme. The programme is not a case of taking, as he puts it, big business and paying them or giving them some residual benefit for adopting or taking a kilometre of the highway and maintaining it. That is not what is happening. In fact, the people who have agreed on a voluntary basis to adopt

parts of that highway to maintain are doing so out of their own resources. They are not being paid a stipend by Government. They are not using Government equipment to do it. They are basically sponsoring the cleanup of a particular section of the highway. If you really look at it, Mr. Chairman, in addition to that, they are not maintaining in themselves cleanup operations in their business models. That is not their thing. They are retaining businesses, small businesspeople, to come and clean the highway on their behalf, and all they get out of is the opportunity to put up a sign that they have adopted that kilometre, and that they are sponsoring that particular area. (S29 Sir, it is costing Government nothing. I really think it should have been put on the table if it was not put.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. Sir, before you proceed I just want Honourable Members to know that you are really supposed to speak from your seat. I want us to respect the convention as we proceed.

Mr. K. SYMONDS: Mr. Chairman, I realise that the Minister was anxious to come to the assistance of his colleague but the point remains the same. I understood how the programme works but first of all that two issues arise (1) the placement of the billboard has a commercial value. It is called advertising and in this case it is free advertising. Sir, I go further because the thought process has been provoked. I do not know and I would be happy to discover whether the necessary regulations that are consistent with Section 31 of the Town and Country Planning Act have been passed so as to allow advertisements to be placed alongside the highway. I make no allegations, I make an enquiry. The Attorney-General can speak to the matter when he has the opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, the point is when in fact a company is doing the landscaping and is, as the Minister said, retaining the services of someone to provide that work, then again I urge the Minister, if a big business and I congratulate them wanting to volunteer to be of assistance, but if a big business is going to do it then, Mr. Minister I urge you to let them understand that as a condition of being able to do it, you have also to approach some of the community clubs and organization to give them an opportunity to be empowered a little bit in this country. This will help keep them off 'the block', that is all I am saying, so we are not going to fight over that.

Mr. Chairman, where there is also a concern in my mind and I know the Ministry would be responsive if only the Minister would get behind the Ministry and ensure that the resources are placed at the depots, is the power, Mr. Chairman, that you are in, in your own neighbourhood on a daily basis when you seek entry tonight or when you leave tomorrow morning. Sir, you cannot go into Bagatelle, Sir... Well, given where you are located geographically, it may be possible for you but many of your neighbours, Sir, cannot

enter Bagatelle without driving across the drains which are placed across the length of the road in order to alleviate the flooding that takes place whenever heavy rains fall in that district. Sir, you know, because I went to your house, that I have been doing a petition because of the disastrous state of the drains in Bagatelle. Sir, I say to the Minister from this place that right now there are drains in Bagatelle going across the main road that are collapse. The time will shortly be upon us where the Ministry of Public Works is going to have to replace substantially the value of somebody's motor car when half of a drain is collapse inside the guttering beneath it and cars and trucks are still allow to pass through and that state of affairs continues unabated and unaddressed and do not care how much you call the depot, they do not have at their disposal the wherewithal. There is a doctrine in law called nonfeasance where you know about it and you have been alerted to it. Sir, I am not in the process going house to house right through the district to ask everybody to apply their signature and may I say that thus far, your residents are the only ones who have not signed, so I am coming back to you to let you get on board because it is in your defence of the citizens of the district who, Sir, are being placed in physical peril. It is not Party politics now.

Mr. Chairman, a man cannot get to his if he has a motor car, he lives in that district, he works say in St. George or Christ Church somewhere and he cannot get to his house without driving over one of those drains and for the last two months or three months, those drains have been collapsing in themselves. We have on a daily basis heavy and, in fact, it has been worse by the recklessness that took place at Redman's Village where because you have that medium across the highway, people coming from the north and who would like to swing and go down to Queen's College on morning to drop off their children to school, not going all down to Cost U Less roundabout to turn and come back up and kill a half hour in traffic, so they bound through the short cut through the entrances of Bagatelle and Bagatelle yard gap and the consequences of that, Mr. Chairman, as you are well away is that the cars are hustling through there on a morning over the bad broken down drains and, as have said to you, it is only a matter of time before calamity visits the Ministry of Public Works that will now have to look for far more money that it costs to fix a guttering in order to replace somebody car or worse yet compensate them for personal injury and consequential losses and disability.

Mr. Chairman, those are the things that humbug you. I do not know because the Minister threw me off when he intervened. Sir, how much more time do I have.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am giving you compensatory time.

Mr. K. SYMMONDS: I am obliged to you, sir. In those five minutes available to me I want to make contact with the question of how this Ministry is adjusting itself. Sir, we passed a piece of legislation in this Parliament a few months ago, which is worthy commendatory in nature. It introduces the concept of a 24 hour business cycle in Barbados, a so-called 24 hour economy but sitting with an eye on the policy, I ask myself how does this come to pass if the workers who must fuel the business place on a 24 hour cycle have difficulties with transportation after certain hours at night. How does it come to pass if lighting is not substantively improved in certain areas of Barbados and I use my constituency again because half of it is rural and half of it is urban, so there needs to be considerable lighting and electrification being done in some districts of Barbados if workers are going to be safely make use of the commercial opportunity that the legislation contemplates. Sir, this is why I say that the synergies have to be built and the Ministry has to continue to see itself as one of those operational institutions which give life to the ideal of facilitating and empowering business in Barbados. We need to hear from the Minister how his Ministry intends to make the adjustment in terms of facilitating transportation in this country. I am happy to hear that working hand in hand with the Transport Board will be the partnership with the private sector vehicles but is part of that plan a condition that you would have to operate beyond certain hours and not just park it up when it suits you at eight o'clock or whatever time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You should wrap-up now Honourable Member.

Mr. K. SYMMONDS: Yes, Sir. Mr. Chairman, we need to have vehicles on the road in order to move the people back and forward in safety.

Mr. Chairman, I will return to these matters. I am obliged, Sir.

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

Hon., R. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make another contribution to this Head. On the last occasion that I spoke, I indicated that I wanted to speak to the situation with respect to public transport and the effort by the Ministry to try to get a handle on that situation, and in doing so I wanted to salute the Transport Authority Service integration pilot project. I believe that it is very practical because the truth is that the provision of those transportation services by the Government is at tremendous expense and it could only continue for so long. The reality is that last year I did the, well I think year before because we are doing a supplementary now this year but the year that was completed in 2015, the subsidy was in the vicinity of \$40 million, in fact, more than that \$50 million and you

understand that the reality is, if we are going to get a grip on that, we have to find a way to involve the private sector providers of transportation services.

I wanted to again salute this very significant initiative by this current minister and the ministry because no one has really decided to tackle this creature. We continue to talk about the subsidy to the Barbados Transport Board and how much it is costing us but who is really going to bell the cat, if you want to put it that way. It is clear that with so many providers of privately owned omnibuses, the so-called PSVs, et cetera, they provide a critical service. I know that very often when we make reference to these players in the transportation section like the speaker who just took his seat, in fact, in both of his interventions he referred to the menacing aspect of them, the overloading, the off route, speeding, all of the negative aspects. It is true and I am not condoning that in any way but there is a reality. With as many as 20 to 25 per cent of our workforce entirely reliant on public transportation, this country could not function if it was not for these players. I am not condoning the bad behaviours but the whole point is, they provide something that is essential and we need to accept that. It is only for the Honourable Member for St. James Central how bad behaved some of them are but it is not unique to minibus drivers, you have well-behaved lawyers and you have bad-behaved lawyers too, you have good doctors and bad doctors, you have good engineers and better engineers, ...

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Not really, I am saying that you have good and bad in everything. I am just simply saying that the particular pilot project that we have and the fact that these players opted to get involved in this exercise. I think and RFP was put out publicly inviting the players to come and participate and as I understand it in the pilot it was Edey Village, Martins Bay and Sturges and, in essence, bringing these players on board and studying things like the frequency, customer satisfaction, reliability of the service, in essence, that you can expand it out, hopefully or presumably, and Mr. Chairman, this is the only practical way to deal with public mass transportation in Barbados.

I remember, for example, the Barbados Drug Service when the Honourable Member for St. James South was Minister of Health and he put a handle on that and the subsidy went from \$50 million and was cut in half. There was a time when we were spending \$35 million on the drug service. Everyone took it for granted and it costed us more and more and more and the reality with public transportation is that the Barbados Transport Board situation is going to continue to cost us more and more, so this embrace of the private PSVs through the Transportation Authority, I think, is something that should

be encouraged. Let me make it clear, I am in no way condoning the legality and the bad behaviour but a strengthened Transportation Authority can deal with that or has to deal with that and we sincerely look forward to seeing that can continue and go from strength to strength. We can engage in day dreams about other forms of moving people around Barbados. We heard about the rail using some sort of rail system but that is not practical for so many reasons and even this question of water taxis, much, much, much easier said than done. What type of craft are you going to use? Is it going to be a hovercraft, some sort of ferry, whether it is a low speed or high speed, is it going to be propelled by diesel? There was a former Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown who used to be in here talking about water taxis all the time but the truth is ...

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member knows better and he is misleading the House. It is part of the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto of 2008 which talked about using water taxis, that is reduced into black and white by the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) and the Honourable Member paraded all across Barbados campaigning on the basis of that which he could not bring to life, so who can come now and blame the former Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown. He must know better.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, I understand the Honourable Member for St. James Central will muddle up his manifestos because he has had to study both parties' manifestos over the course of his career.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: I understand that. The 2008 Democratic Labour Party Manifesto spoke about trans-island ferries, that is what it spoke about.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: The lady that used to talk about water taxis was the lady that you used to work with, the one that put you out of her office. She put you out of the anti-room when she came back from overseas and told you get out of my office. What are you doing in here? Go back out yonder, the office out there, the one that has no windows or files in it, that is your office. That is who talked about water taxis. I am not knocking water taxis but as I heard sotto voce from That Side as a tourist attraction. As I said, if you are talking bunker C or diesel to propel that craft, you are not going to pay \$1.50 for that you know. No normal Barbadian going to work on morning is going to pay \$15, \$20 or \$25 in a water taxi so that is not a practical ...

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. I hold in my hands the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto of 2008 and I read at page 31:

“The new Democratic Labour Party Government will, with a sense of urgency, explore the feasibility of using ferries to take passengers from secure berthing points around the island, to and from Bridgetown and to other towns, a modern efficient ferry service would link Six Mens Bay, Speightstown, Holetown, Bridgetown, St. Lawrence Gap, Silver Sands, Oistins ...”

Mr. Chairman, I do not have to say it, the Honourable Member is ignorant of his own party. That is part of the reason why there are such a preposterous calamity befalling the country, when a man who acts of Prime Minister of the arm does not know “B from bull foot”, no clue whatsoever on what is pledged to the people and is placed at the top of Cabinet to Chair in the absence of a Prime Minister to preside over more calamities.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, proceed.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, the Manifesto said explore and feasibility and I would suggest that the Honourable Member should look in the dictionary at those two words before he carries on in here and he better be aware that we found there was a little mistake in the Domestic Violence Protection Order Act, we might be amending it so he may want to hand in his sick certificate so that he can miss Parliament for another four weeks while he is at it.

Asides.

(31)Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, explore feasibility. There is a reason we use those terms. I am simply saying that we have to be practical and we have to do what is feasible, and it comes right down to the central point that I am making. This current Minister of Transport and Works has to go down, frankly speaking, as one of the boldest we have ever had. We have taken the private sector players who have been deemed a menace by some and are embracing them in a meaningful way in providing public transport for Barbadians.

We constantly say that if we could get the reliability factors and the customer satisfaction up we can even have a situation where people would be prepared to even park their vehicles and use the public transportation system, but

we have to deal what these problems, and I think that the Minister and his team should be commended for this effort, and this is all we are saying here.

Mr. Chairman, I once again want to say that I think we are going in the right direction in terms of what we can do to more efficiently deal with the issues of making transport more available and still keeping it affordable and at the same time of course dealing with the vexing problem of the transport subsidy. Mr. Chairman, I once again want to salute the work that has been done by the officials in the Ministry of Transport and Works.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and I am obliged to you.

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

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I enter this debate really with just a few short observations and also comments as it relates to the Head of the Ministry of Transport and Works.

I believe the last speaker has sought to reinforce my point that this Administration pace leaves little to be desired because I do believe that the pace at which the legislation, which the Honourable Member has indicated, the amendments to the Road Traffic Act, have been short in coming that it is suggestive that this Administration has in fact been dragging its feet. Now, I do accept that there will have be consultation with the various partners but the fact remains that various stakeholders, Mr. Chairman, have been calling for amendments to this legislation for quite some time. I know the Honourable Member is well aware of that. He would have succeeded the previous Minister. Even under the previous Minister the amendments to the regulations were not in fact done, so we find ourselves now seven years into the Democratic Labour Party Administration and yet again we are hearing today that the amendments to the Road Traffic Act are at the process of drafting.

Mr. Chairman, there have been some concerns expressed by several private sector entities in relation to things like breathalyser test. It has been on the cards for several years, I think even under the Barbados Labour Party Administration. I am somewhat concerned that we are hearing that at least one in three persons who have to go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital sometimes in terms of death and stuff on the road are caused as a result of persons under the influence of alcohol. Now, what we are finding obviously is that you have a situation where if the breathalyser test was actually able to be instituted by the police officers at the scene, it would actually save a considerable amount of time for persons at the Accident and Emergency Department doing a lot of diagnostic test that they have to do. Mr. Chairman, that was a view that

has been expressed by persons in the Accident and Emergency Department. Several of the doctors have expressed those concerns.

I think that we in this Parliament and certainly in this Administration would be doing the country an injustice if we wait any longer to bring the legislation and the legislative amendments to the this Chamber. Too many people are losing their lives. One of the deeper concerns is that you have a number of cases going before the court where the breathalyser test results would actually be useful for the prosecutors and certainly for the police to be able to use in the course of prosecuting the case. Mr. Chairman, in the absence of having that, I believe that again an injustice is being done within the criminal justice system and it is one certainly that this Administration has to take seriously, it has to approach with a certain degree of concern because we cannot allow persons to be dying on our roads and we are not able to bring them before the law courts as expeditiously as we possibly can.

The other concern that I would have is that for some time, and again under both Administrations, we have grapple with the issue of the playing of loud music on the PSVs. When I peruse the legislation I see there is provision there for persons not to be able to play the music on the various buses so that it is not a distraction to the drivers and is not also a nuisance to the commuters on a number of these vehicles. Now, I do not know if it is that there has been a lack of finding the testicular fortitude to be able to implement what I think everybody appreciates is necessary to bring the regulatory framework in place. It seems to me that if it is that we both recognise on each side that the amendments need to be made to the legislation, then that is what needs to happen. I appreciate the Minister may be able to bring all of the amendments one time but again I do think that this is an issue that has been going on for far too long.

There has been several studies which have given weight to the view that music on the ZR vans and the minibuses influences a lot of our young people. The fact remains today that a lot of young people are using their cell phones in school so they have access to the same music that many of us view as very derogatory. The fact remains that as a Government I do believe that this Administration can take steps to certainly police the minibuses and the ZRs to ensure that there is some kind of formalisation of the system as it relates to the non-playing of music on these vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, I attended a meeting recently at the invitation of the Transport Authority Service Integration pilot project. It concerns obviously St. Michael South East because one of the routes that was being looked at was the Fairchild Street to Edey Village. I appreciate the invitation which would have come for me to attend that particular

meeting. It is not often that the ministry sends invitations to us to consult when we are on the other side but I do appreciate that given that I represent a constituency and I am not part of the Government that the invitation was in fact extended. I believe also that the Honourable Member for St. George South was also present at that meeting as well because his constituency was also affected.

The issue of the music was raised at the meeting because it would appear that one of the policies that the Transport Authority is putting forward is that the persons who are actually being engaged to be hired for the various routes are not allowed to play music. Now, I am not sure if that is still the case but certainly at the meeting that was what was told to several of the persons who attended. I certainly expressed concern that perhaps this was a way by the current Administration to seek to bring in the provisions that we all know to be necessary, but I think we do not want to have is that one set of public service vehicles are not playing music and another set are playing music. I think the sooner that we can get to a position where the system is actually regulated where a firm position is taken by the Administration that we are not supporting the playing of music on the ZRs vehicles and the minibuses.

The legislation is there and the Honourable Minister is free to say to me whether that is the intention of this Administration, but I do believe that this was one of the position that the former Honourable Member for St. John had in the 2008 election as it relates to the introduction of free bus fares. Two of the reasons that had been advanced was the way in which music was affecting our young people but also he was looking at the aspect of the financial cost to parents who had two and three children that had to send them to school and did not have the financial resources to do by having to pay the fare on the Transport Board bus. I do think that it is something that his Administration has certainly advanced time and time again. It is something certainly that I believe a lot of time requires the regulation but often there seems to be a fear of the very persons who own the vehicles and certainly a fear of the drivers. (32) The law is there to be enforced. If there are flaws with the legislation I believe Mr. Chairman, that attempts have to be made to make the amendments to the legislation but just like with the Breathalyzer test, I do not feel that these are issues that we can continue to ignore, because our young people are listening to music in different forms, they are exposed to it in different ways. It is not that we are going to be able to protect them from the culture that exists because of technology but I do feel that if it is that is the position that has been taken, then we need to move in that directly as quickly as possible.

Mr. Chairman, in relation to the Transport Authority service integration pilot project, what I will say on the routing from Fairchild Street to Edey Village is that it has

affected the Pinelands area. I would have spoken to the Minister about it and I had asked him to look into this as well, because the route has been diverted from out of the Pinelands community, it is causing some concern for elderly people in particular in the constituency. If you look at the statistics you will see that we have a fast growing population of elderly people across Barbados and a lot of them are complaining that they are having to walk far distances to be able to commute on public transport. Several of them, as you know, would be trying to make their way to get to town to do their banking, while others may be trying to get to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask that the Honourable Member and the Transport Authority would certainly revisit the issue. Mr. Chairman, many of these individuals are pensioners and therefore to say that yes we have a number of vans traversing the Pinelands community, is also to put an additional burden on a number of these pensioners which I believe right now none of us want to be able to have them endure. A lot of them obviously do not have the money to pay for private taxis and so I think that some consideration has to be given to finding available routes or putting back on the routes that were available.

Mr. Chairman, the bus down Meadow Road, in the Wildey area has also been taken off and again we have a large percentage of elderly people in that particular community.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that consultation is key. I think at the same meeting what I would have noted is that a lot of the people who would be affected by the route had not been aware of the actual meeting and therefore were not in a position to express their concerns. Certainly that meeting was held in St. David's so that the persons in the Pineland area, for whom they would have had the most disruption, were not able to be consulted at all.

Mr. Chairman, the other area I want to touch on is the issue of the use of cellphones. It is fast growing becoming an area where I think us and legislator and the insurance companies have to be wary that if we do not take steps that we may be looking down the road at the several accidents being introduced in our country that could have been avoided. The insurers are crying out that a number of the accidents that they are finding are actually as a result of persons being inattentive on our roads, several people are texting. From what I looked at in the regulations it is an offence, rather, for persons who wear an earphone, ear plug or other thing in their ears, except it is a hearing aid or other medically prescribed device while driving a motor vehicle that constitutes an offence.

Mr. Chairman, obviously it does not speak to a cellphone but these are minor amendments I believe can happen quickly if it is that the drafters are not ready with

the full aspects of the legislation but I do not feel that we need to wait on some of these things. They are things that are topical, a number of our people are aware of what is happening in other jurisdictions, many of us travel and so we are familiar with the fact that we cannot drive and use our cellphones. We need to have a hands-free unit available to us. Mr. Chairman, I think that given that our people are far more educated in terms of what is happening outside, that we need to be able to take bold steps to be able to bring us in line with the international conventions.

Mr. Chairman, I started by saying that I do feel, and I would agree with the last speaker, that this particular Minister does need to be able to take bold steps in his Ministry. One of those bold steps would certainly be in the area of consultation. This issue of UCAL concerns me because again it is ordinary Barbadians who are actually affected by this, and whether the Minister or others feel that buses have been sitting down in UCAL for several months, the fact remains that the contract with UCAL provides that they are supposed to provide the labour, while Government is supposed to provide the parts.

Mr. Chairman, it is not enough to say that the buses are sitting down there, nothing is being done. The fact is that without the necessary tools, UCAL is not in a position to be able to repair the buses. I believe consultation needs to happen between the Minister and UCAL to ensure that there is some resolution being brought to this issue. When you listen to the Leader of the Opposition highlighting the fact that there are 115 families that are affected by the decision that has been taken in relation to the nonpayment to UCAL it must be cause for concern on both sides. It is not something I feel that we can dismiss easily.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please wrap up.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, my final point on this is that I would like the Minister to address the issue of whether there is a contract, the contract had expired in 2007 and from what I am hearing on the ground there is concern that this contract has not been renewed to date. Again, it is something that I believe consultation something I believe consultation will be able to bring some resolution to the issue and so I would invite the learned Minister to address those issues. I thank you.

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

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make just a short intervention. First, I think we all accept that the public transportation system cannot exist without the private providers. Indeed, if my memory serves me correctly, the private providers now move about 70 per cent of the passengers on a daily basis, the whole issue in

terms of discipline that for eons we have been discussing. I know the Honourable Member for St. James Central brought the Transport Authority Act from Jamaica -- and I could be wrong -- but if you get into a mini bus that is supposed to carry 20, it actually carries about 60 because the people always tell you to go round to hold somebody else. In Trinidad and Tobago and wherever you go across the region that I have travelled, it is a very serious issue.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to touch on discipline but I think we need to accept that indeed the private operators play an essential part in the transportation of our people. If you are on the road at 4 o'clock in the morning, sometimes at 5 o'clock in the morning, you see ZR vans or mini buses going collecting passengers from early in the morning, as you see them late at night and all across Barbados, so let us accept that they play a very important role in the transportation of our people to and from work.

Mr. Chairman, like most things there are some issues in terms of discipline. A couple of weeks ago I had an interesting conversation with owners of private minibuses. I believe that the genesis of that was that I said at a branch meeting that I thought that the emphasis was being placed on the wrong individuals, that I keep on hearing about the drivers being charged but I do not hear about the owners feeling the weight in their pockets and they thought that comment was a bit unfair and uninformed, that, in fact, I as Attorney-General was suggesting that the owners did not themselves take cognizance of the indiscipline and were trying to stamp out indiscipline in terms of the drivers.

Mr. Chairman, they posited the view that part of the challenge they have lies in the fact that there is very small pool of drivers that are available. I believe that the insurance companies have put a system in place that they will not license a vehicle that has a driver who is under 25 years of age.(S33) According to them, they then end up recycling these drivers because it is a very small pool in terms of drivers who are available. They have suggested in fact that if the rule was relaxed a little bit, maybe the pool can be expanded a bit. I also heard stories of drivers taking home less than \$50 in a week because of the number of vehicles on certain routes and because of competition for passengers. I also heard the suggestion that some owners have actually gone out of business because of the cost of operating minibuses, and again, because of the number of buses on some routes. In that regard, it is to my knowledge that the Transport Authority is carefully examining routes to ensure that there is a bit more equity in terms of the availability of buses on the routes, and that in fact we are not placing too many vehicles on a route to make it unprofitable. Of course, if it is unprofitable, you have two things that will happen: This indiscipline that we all see from time to time will be exacerbated because there is more competition for a smaller pie, and you may very well find

that indeed persons may exit the business. Something has to be done.

I am also told, and again this has to be examined, that on some routes there is inequity; that in fact you may have a minibus licensed to go to Wanstead, for example, but it has the ability to go through Baxters Road. You may then have another bus that has a licence to go to Wanstead but cannot go through Baxters Road but that individual in fact has to turn by Holborn and come up the Harbour Road; whereas the person who can go through Baxters Road has access to a wider number of individuals going to Jordan's Supermarket and coming from the other stores. If that is the case, then it seems to me as if that needs to be looked at again, and maybe have a situation where, if you believe that the issue is that you need to control numbers, then maybe have a lottery system so that every two years everyone turns back in their licences. However, you should not have a system that you have ten or 20 buses going to Wanstead -- I am only using Wanstead as an example -- but only the chosen five can come through Baxters Road and the other 15 are cut out and have to go around where there is less traffic. That seems to be unfair, and that needs to be looked into. That needs to be addressed. At the end of the day, as I began by saying it, they play an important role in the transportation of our people and I want to see some equity, if what I am hearing is true.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I must say that where I am from in St. Philip, St Philip South in particular, I receive complaints about the length of time it takes to get a bus on afternoons. Sometimes individuals tell me that they are down here for two hours on afternoons waiting for a bus going to Sam Lord's Castle, so that they can make their way up to Rices or Kirtons and so on. We need to examine how we can address that. Monday mornings, I swear, Mr. Chairman, is a time when no-one comes to work early because those mornings when I am coming down I see lots of people at the bus-stops waiting. It is an issue, and the key to it is to see how we can move this initiative in terms of incorporating the private vehicles with the Transport Board, and see how we can expand that. Frankly, Sir, I do not believe that there will ever be a point in time in Barbados when the Transport Board will be able to provide all of the buses. Those days are long past. The initiative and the correct initiative to see how we can incorporate the private vehicles into the public system makes a lot of sense.

A couple days ago I asked my friend, the Member for Christ Church South, a question, and it was this: Is there anything that prevents us from allowing the private owners to charge whatever they want? In other words, if a chap wants to charge a passenger \$5 for coming from Six Roads to Bridgetown and the passenger wants to go with him, he can go with him. However, if the Transport Board, which has a social responsibility, wants to maintain its fares at \$2, then that is what we do. I do not know what the

answer is but I did ask a question. I asked a question from the point of view that the private owners are saying that it is unprofitable at this \$2 that is being charged. I am not saying that we should move it one way or the other. As I said, I understand our responsibility as a Government to ensure that we can move as many people as possible at a price they can afford. We set the law. Yes we do, so there is no reason why we could not do it the other way. There is no reason why we could not allow the free market to also dictate, but that is a separate issue. I have just thrown it out there for consideration.

I go back, though, to my issue in terms of getting adequate transportation to St. Philip, in particular. It is an issue that needs addressing on mornings and on afternoons, and again that may be an area where the Transport Authority may want to look at the number of permits being issued for areas like Sam Lord's Castle, going through Oistins to Sargeant Street and coming through Six Roads and so on, and see whether or not there is not room for having additional private resources on those routes. As I said, when I go around the constituency, the cry is consistent with respect to how long it takes to get from St. Philip into Bridgetown and back.

My other quick point is with respect to overall discipline. One of the few privileges that I have as Attorney General is that I have someone assigned to me who brings me down on mornings. I get the chance to sit and observe a lot of what is going on traffic-wise and, Mr. Chairman, I see persons on their cellphones, texting all the time, putting on makeup, reading books. These are drivers. I have seen a guy actually smoking a joint in broad daylight one morning. The level of indiscipline that I see concerns me tremendously, and this has nothing to do with the minibus drivers who we all like to speak about. This is the ordinary man and woman on their way into Bridgetown on mornings, and it is getting worse and worse. I heard the Member for St. James Central speak about persons taking short cuts across Bagatelle when they are coming down. All across St. Philip on mornings you can see that a lot. You see persons taking short cuts, creating roads where there are none, and the thing that upsets me most, which I raised with the Member for St. Philip North, is this.

(33)Mr. Speaker, we need to look at a system that penalizes individuals from coming into the roundabout, they cannot exist the roundabout from where they want to go and the whole roundabout is blocked up. Sir, if I can put it so that you see it vividly. Sir, on afternoon when I am leaving Wildey and I am coming to Bussa, I want to cross Bussa going up to Warrens. I can see the road ahead is clear but in front of us is blocked because the person going down to Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre has it blocked, and the person going up to St. Philip has it blocked and no one can move, so all across Wildey, we are all blocked because those two areas are blocked. If we have a situation

where people are penalized for being trapped in that circle, so that I would always be free, I think that would make a lot of difference. Similarly, we have a situation on afternoons coming down where persons are being picked up by St. Winifred and all down Belmont Road is blocked up because children are being picked up. Sir, those areas we need to look to see how best we could alleviate the traffic.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to comment on flyovers. I believe simply if there was some penalty for persons blocking the exit then in fact there would be freedom of movement.

Mr. Chairman, with those words, I thank you and I will come back on one further point.

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

Mr. E. HINKSON: Mr. Chairman, I intervene in this debate under the Head of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport first by saying that this is the first speech from my new position in this Parliament. I would feel comfortable anywhere in this Parliament once it is on the side of the Barbados Labour Party. I will not be seen on the side of the Democratic Labour Party and, therefore, it is not an issue. First, I want to say that the issue of improvement of roads and building of roads and repairs of roads should be placed on a non-partisan position. Sir, we on this side are happy to see that an additional \$21 billion is being voted for this Ministry in this year's Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I am quite surprised to hear the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who likes to speak all the time that he is senior in terms of quantity, the number of years in this Parliament even if not in quality. Sir, to say that Government should provide social services to all the constituencies but if your belly is full and mine is empty I should get more because that is the same Honourable Member who in his 14 years in the political wilderness as an Opposition Member of said that social services should be equally distributed between all the constituencies in Barbados. We have a situation here where certainly under the programme that we have seen, a lot of the \$10 million that is being proposed would be road improvements in Democratic Labour Party held constituencies and really and truly Barbadians drive on all the roads and tourists who we depend on drive on all the roads whether it is a Democratic Labour Party held constituency or a Barbados Labour Party held constituency and, therefore, this is an area where narrow Party political consideration should not come into play.

Mr. Chairman, clearly, this is a situation in Barbados where we have great traffic congestion. We have 130 000 vehicles on the road at any given time and, therefore, traffic

congestion is something that the policy makers in the Ministry starting from the Minister down must take into consideration. We on this side think it was certainly a mistake, an error of judgement and typical shortsightedness of the Democratic Labour Party Government in refusing to go ahead with flyovers that were proposed by the last Barbados Labour Party administration. I believe up to five flyovers were certainly being proposed at least one in the Warrens area and one in the Wildey area, two of the most trafficked areas at all hours, not only at prime time in Barbados but really and truly when the late Prime Minister obviously in agreement with the Cabinet of Barbados fired 3S on the Floor of Parliament, they were to do the flyovers, and said they were not doing any, that was a mistake which Barbadians will live to regret was made by the Government of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, when you look at the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto, the Barbados Labour Party had proposed in the 2008 Manifesto to pave all roads in communities in the country by 2010. Sir, that would have been a very good policy again and on coming into office the Democratic Labour Party Government did not proceed with that programme. The Barbados Labour Party had the Rural Development Commission involved in this Ministry of Public Works. Sir, certainly in my constituency roads were started by Rural Development Commission in areas such as Upper Mount Standfast, which when the Democratic Labour Party came into office, they discontinued and up to now they have not been done. This is unfortunate, sir.

Mr. Speaker, we have the issue again of transparency and good governance. Sir, even during this debate, a member on the Government front bench, I believe it was the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central spoke about how the Democratic Labour Party is into good governance but yet we have the inexcusable situation where again a major statutory corporation and no annual report laid in this Parliament of Barbados since the financial year 2008/2009. Sir, that is the last annual report laid in this Parliament of Barbados, 2008/2009 and this, Mr. Chairman, is totally inexcusable because this is a situation where you have a statutory corporation that is being heavily subsidized by the taxpayers of this money and, therefore, it ought to be incumbent on any Ministry of Public Works to bring before the people of Barbados annual reports which includes the audited reports and financial statements showing how money is being spent, the profit, the loss and whatever. I understand that tomorrow this Parliament is going to be asked to vote monies for the Transport Board. They should not bring any such Resolution or Supplementary or Money Resolution, Mr. Chairman, unless annual reports are laid in here (S35) showing us financial statements and audited statements, how can you be asked to vote money for a statutory corporation and you do not have annual reports for the last

seven years. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South who was minister for five years who would have brought, at the most, one report before this Parliament and he is a person who has been involved in business and ought to know that he should not run a Government ministry like that because it is taxpayers money involved and the present minister, my good friend, a very good criminal lawyer, ought to know that too. This is taxpayers money that we are dealing with and we have a duty to provide annual reports including audited reports and financial statements to this Parliament if we are talking about good governance and this is one of the reasons why there is a lot of inefficiency in Government, in statutory corporations, et cetera, for which ministers of Government have to take full responsibility.

We also have the issue, Mr. Chairman, of workers who were made redundant at the Barbados Transport Board two years ago. They eventually got their severance payment or unemployment benefits after almost a year. I do not believe that they got interest on those moneys as they out to have got since they were outstanding for more than four months. I believe that over 200 Barbados Transport Board workers were fired, but what is relevant to this debate was that yesterday we heard from a leading sportsman of the Cabinet, the Honourable Minister of the Environment on concerns for pensions for Parliamentarians and on a concern about Parliamentarians being deprived of their pension because of an Act and the public of Barbados must take note because all of his fellow Cabinet ministers tapped in adulation and in agreement with what he was saying, but the public of Barbados saw in real terms what they have been saying on the ground for months and years, that the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Parliamentarians are more concerned about pensions for Parliamentarians than for proper work, employment and payment for the people of Barbados. The Cabinet of Barbados led by that Minister of the Environment and the Honourable Minister of Transport would have fired over 3 000 workers under conditions that the Right Honourable Prime Minister himself, in some cases, said that the way they were fired was very, very, very, very wrong and these workers were only paid after months in some cases. In the case of the workers of the National Conservation Commission (NCC) fired unceremoniously two years ago and up to now, not yet paid one red cent since now out of circulation not even five cents, sent before an Employment Rights Tribunal which was none existent at the time, that up to now cannot even give a decision but yet Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Parliamentarians are more concerned about pensions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we are on Transport and you have about ...

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: But, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Wait a minute, Sir.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Sorry, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am just trying to tighten the debate and I really want to stick to relevance so bring it back.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Yes, Sir, I understand but I am talking about Barbados Transport Board workers, who were fired. The Barbados Transport Board workers, 200 were fired but now we hear about, in some cases, Barbados Transport Board employing new employees when a lot of the workers who were sent home were wrongfully fired in breach of the last in first out principle. We had a situation where the Honourable Minister, almost by his actions caused a shut down in a case where a relative was allegedly being looked to put in and all of this bad employment practices of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Government who do not care really and truly about the workers of Barbados but care about pensions. Mr. Chairman, there are all now entitled to pensions after eight years have gone since January, all of them are now entitled to pensions but that is the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) for you that has been hoisted on the people of this country.

Mr. Chairman, I like to be fair and I still have to commend the Ministry of Environment headed by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, one of the very few ministries to have done any kind of work of whatever kind in St. James North since the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) came into office, some work done at Sion Hill in case of drainage, not the ministry under this Head but, Sir, you could appreciate having repercussions because if the drainage bad, the roads will get worst.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, wrap up please.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: The roads will get worst and we will have to wait and see how when the heavy rains come in how they have been treated but we still need works in areas such as Trents, Lower Carlton, Westmoreland and Rock Dundo. In terms of the road works and the drainage we have written, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Transport since April three years ago on about 10 roads in the constituency of St. James North. To his credit again, Mr. Chairman, he responded to the letter within a week of getting it, and I credit him for doing that, but none of the roads were repaid, none of the 10 roads were named and most of them in the area of St. Peter, which was transferred to St. James North and that is an area which would normally vote for the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) candidate but some of the worst roads in Barbados in those constituencies. Mr. Chairman, I really believe in the philosophy of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy before he went into Government that there should be more equitable distribution of the finances of the taxpayers money in terms of road repairs in this country.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your time has expired.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Sir, you are saying that my time has run out and I will come back later on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

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

(36) GOVERNMENT NOTICES (RECOMMITTED)

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$63 881 565 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 2015-2016 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 10 2015-2016 which form the schedule to the Resolution.

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

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 8.45 p.m.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that, Sir. The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 8.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, once again I rise to enter this debate. I first want to respond to certain matters that were raised. I want to respond to the Honourable Member for St. George North when the Honourable Member did mention about the Electronic Vehicle Registration System. I want to state to the Honourable Member that it is a project that we implemented in two phases, because the Honourable Member said that he hoped we would introduce it and that we would not sit back on it. I just want the Honourable Member to know that we are not sitting back on it but that in fact we have gone through expressions of interest and that various companies have shown interest and once that

selection process has been completed, then we go forward to the first phase which includes the changing over from the current licence plates to reflective ones, and the installation of 14 reader sites.

Mr. Chairman, in fact tomorrow I will get the information as to where we will be looking at placing these reader sites but in areas where we know that is heavily trafficked. We also will be creating a Vehicle Processing System with a new central database, and the sharing of database with the Royal Barbados Police Force and the Judiciary. Of course, also sending out notification and reminders for the renewal of registration, insurance and road worthiness certification.

Mr. Chairman, it is expected that when we move onto phase two that that will be a further cost of \$2.5 million but that for this financial year as I indicated from the funds in the CAF we are using \$2.5 million in the first phase to bring about this revolutionary change and the use of technology in terms of the registration of vehicles and really moving and modernising the Barbados Licensing Authority in terms of the registration of vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, secondly, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East had raised the point about driving while using a cellphone or hand-held devices. I just want to draw to the attention of the Honourable Member that in terms of the amendments to the Road Traffic Act we have included in that draft the ban on cellphones or hand-held devices while driving thus making it an offence under the law. We are placing it specifically in the law that will be coming, to make it an offence while driving while using cellphone or hand-held devices. Mr. Chairman, further too, we are also looking to making it an offence of parking in an area designated for the disabled.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of provisions in here that are included, in terms of the amendment to the Act, to update the legislation.

I have heard Honourable Members mentioned the fact of the users of private garages in terms of the inspection of vehicles to take some of the load off the central Barbados Licensing Authority, that also is included. I recall that there was supposed to be a pilot project where we will utilise private garages to take some of these vehicles, thus making the Barbados Licensing Authority more efficient. I can say that is also included in the amendments where private garages are given the opportunity to do inspections and taking some of the load off the central authority that we have.

Mr. Chairman, the issue of vans operating illegally or term we use in Barbados as 'pirates' vans. When we came to office, in fact, when I became Minister that was one of the bug-bearers. In fact, we got numerous calls from

PSV owners who obviously were compliant, who paid their dues and who adhered to their obligations under the Road Traffic Act to become lawful, who were complaining because there were persons who were not compliant yet who were sharing in their market space and also were creating a risk to passengers, based on the fact that by law they were not mandated to work those particular routes and under the law they were not recognised to carry passengers as a public service.

Mr. Chairman, we therefore corroborated with the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force utilising the Barbados Tourism Authority workers to identify some of these vans. Sir, we were successful in terms of getting some of those vans off the road, but we are still having issue with some of those pirate vans. Sir, there is the question of resources so we need to get those other pirate vans and I call for inspectors, and we hope to have those additional hands on deck so that we can properly regulate the illegal vans on the road.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have said in my opening that we are seeking to draft a clean transport policy for Barbados. Sir, we have about 115 000 vehicles registered with the Barbados Licensing Authority. The finding of the 2010 Green Economy Scoping Study identified four main challenges facing the transport sector: traffic congestion, high fuel cost, public attitude towards the use of public transport, and the lack of financing and investment for greening the sector.

Mr. Chairman, it went on to say that it was necessary to identify a package of investment and policy reforms leading to the development and implementation of fuel performance, air and noise pollution standards, improved traffic management, and the use of mixed modes of transports. Mr. Chairman, we have decided against this background to develop and create a clean transport policy for Barbados. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, the platforms of that policy would include the fact that we need to look at partnerships to ensure (S38) that there is sufficient infrastructure, particularly with respect to vehicles and gas emissions. Those are the things we are looking at, and of course, within that framework, the creation or the passing of enabling legislation to reflect a clean transport policy in Barbados. That is the platform that we need to go for, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank my officials. We have to meet with the Ministry of Energy and the Environment, the officials and the Minister, and move this forward to another level and create a policy, obviously with Cabinet's approval and a public discussion on this matter. Mr. Chairman, I will come back but I just want to state for the record that we have the Road Traffic Act which we are seeking to amend, including all of those issues that the Member for St. James Central mentioned in relation to dealing with recklessness on the road. The Member for St. Thomas spoke to how we are going to deal with the

manufacturing of licence plates as well. I said that in that draft Bill, we are putting an obligation on the manufacturing of licence plates that once the person is registered and recognised by the Licensing Authority, there is a duty placed on the manufacturing of the licence plate to ensure that the person is coming for a licence plate. They must then produce the necessary documentation before it is issued, which includes valid identification, proof of ownership and an insurance certificate. Those conditions are set out in the draft Bill, and of course the sharing of information by the manufacturer to the Licensing Authority so that we have a proper record and a proper monitoring of the issuing of licence plates in this country.

The law as it stands now has the Barbados Licensing Authority as the sole manufacturer. We have to make the amendments to include and give legal standing to those persons out there who are making licence plates. We do not want to disenfranchise them, but give them the opportunity to work with us and be part of the true regulatory framework, and to make sure there is strict adherence to the road traffic laws of this country. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Mr. R. ST.C. TOPPIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I feel constrained to intervene in this debate, if only to make one point, although I will make a bit more than that on behalf of my constituents, in relation to the condition of a certain road in my constituency. Mr. Chairman, I think it is pretty clear to say that at present in Barbados you can identify more than a few roads that are in improper condition, and I want to single out one. This road, Sir, is Well Gap in Cave Hill. Sir, Well Gap is in an atrocious state but it has an interesting history. What happened, Mr. Chairman, was that in August-September of 2008 that road got damaged very badly because of the heavy rains. Why I am very annoyed about this is because I raised the issue back then. When I asked that the road be repaired, I was in turn asked if I did not realise that the Government had changed. When I acknowledged that, yes, the Government had changed but the people had not changed, I was then told, "when the Barbados Labour Party gets back into power, you can fix it". Believe it or not, Mr. Chairman, nothing has been done to fix the road. As the road over time has deteriorated even worse and worse, I took it upon myself last year around September-October to write to the Minister directly. I have not to this day even got an acknowledgement of the letter but, as a precaution, Mr. Chairman, an *ex abundante cautela* - not in the same way as "sub juicy" - but Mr. Chairman, I took it upon myself to copy the letter to every resident of Well Gap, Cave Hill, and the surrounding areas, to let them realise I am indeed very concerned about this road.

In my letter, Sir, I specifically indicated that this road was so bad that no patchwork or the applying of a little tar or marl can fix it. This road has to be entirely relaid, and I really want to ask the Minister. He seems to be aware of the letter that I wrote, and I really am asking him. This a very serious thing, because this is not only damaging the cars of a large number of people but it is also making it impossible at times for pedestrians to walk on the road, especially when the rain falls. Mr. Chairman, with all the pleading that a human being can do, I really am asking on behalf of the folks in Cave Hill and Well Gap, more particularly, to render some assistance and let us cure this scourge.

Well Gap is a major artery. It may not be classified as a major road in the sense of some I have seen listed in the projects, because it is noticeably absent in the roads listed by the Minister to be fixed under the programme shortly. I really ask the Minister to find a way to include this because it is really not a major road in that sense, but it is a very heavily trafficked road and it is really causing a lot of damage to road users; both vehicle owners and pedestrians who are very seriously inconvenienced. Mr. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, I really want to ask the Minister to look at that. Honestly speaking, we pay too much road tax to find our roads in this condition. Our road taxes are too large.

Mr. Chairman, my second point is road safety, and this applies not only to drivers of vehicles, one against the other, but also pedestrians. I really and truly had thought when I saw the walkover being built in the area by the CBC (Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation) in the Pine, that the Government had come to the recognition that any time you have a major highway, at least by Barbadian standards, passing through a residential district, you have to make special provisions for how people are going to cross the roads. I thought that walkover signalled the Government's recognition of that fact, and that we would then have seen a continuous programme of the installation of walkovers across this country in areas where the highway goes through heavily residential districts. Mr. Chairman, I have one in Hinds Hill where there is no speculation about the damage or the harm that can occur in that location. People have been killed trying to cross that Hinds Hill stretch from one side to the other. A very young girl only a few years ago is still recovering. She was so badly injured when she was hit trying to cross the road. People now literally run across there in the hope that they will get across, because if they do not go across at some point along there, they have to walk all the way to the traffic lights, go across and come back up, or walk all the way up to the end by Cheffete, go across there and come back down. It would be about a 45-minute walk. Really, to continue to expose the residents of Hinds Hill to this risk when we have a precedent done in another area, a sensible precedent of the construction of a walkover....

Asides.

R. ST.C. TOPPIN: I am not partisan in this. You need to have these things. I am not even prepared to call for the installation of traffic lights in a situation like this. I think the most effective thing is a walkover. I remember years ago when I was in Cabinet and I was raising this point about walkovers, I was told by a very high-ranking official in the Ministry of Public Works at the time that the record showed that people across the world do not use walkovers for very long. I believe that the very sensible counter to that is that somebody would use a walkover when they realise they have to use it.

(39) Mr. Chairman, I remember years ago when I was in Cabinet and I was raising this point about walkovers, I was told by a very high ranking official in the Ministry of Public Works at the time that the studies show that people across the world do not use walkovers for very long. I believe the sensible counter to that is that somebody would use a walkover when they recognise they have to use it. When you have to use it, you will use it. I cannot think of anybody crossing the stretch of road that goes through highway would decide they are going to continue to chance it when they have the option of a walkover. I am asking that the Minister also look very seriously at prioritising the installation of a walkover in that Hinds Hill area.

Mr. Speaker, the last point I am going to look at is the issue of order on the road. I really have to say that both administrations have failed miserably in taking the bull by the horn and restoring order on the roads of Barbados. Sir, both of us, I really have to say that. Sir, it bothers me as to why it is that no Government has taken the bull by the horn and really brought this issue to its knees. Sir, nobody wants to deprive a man of making a dollar, nobody wants to do that. Sir, take the junction there by Bussa. If you go there any evening from about two O'clock which is a relatively easy time to drive on the road and fellows are going to decide to sell at that junction and, Sir, what they sell changes every week because when it is not dunk season, it is cane season, or ackee seasons or nuts. It is a full time thing 52 weeks a year, 365 days a year. Now, I am not suggesting that we want to deprive a man of making a living. Sir, these fellows do not sell next to the road. These fellows are selling in the road, not on, near or next to the road but in the road itself. Sir, it is an excellent network and very well organized. The fellows are walking in the middle lane as you are coming down and in the inside lane or outside lane, three or four men are coming at you. They are stopping the car and when they stop one car, the ripple effect back up is phenomenal.

Mr. Speaker, I would not like anybody to go and say that I am suggesting these fellows be taken up and move and prevented from making a dollar but we need to bring some order to how things are done and both

administrations have sat back and let certain things take root and then it gets out of hand. Sir, at some stage you have to grapple with these issues. It is better to grapple with them earlier rather than later.

Mr. Chairman, that is only one area I have mentioned but I am sure there are many areas as well. Then you have the the same issues with the ZRs and minibuses. Again, nobody wants to figure that fellows should be deprived of making a living and unnecessarily persecuted but the fact is that both administrations have failed to wrestle this issue to the ground. It started from before my time in politics. It continued in my time as a Government Member of Parliament and it is continuing in my time as an Opposition Member of Parliament. Sir, the situation is not improving. The Minister came some time again and laid down regulations for dress. How many people you see operating minibuses and ZRs who are dressed the way they are supposed to be dressed? How many of them have stopped picking up people anywhere at all and putting them down anywhere at all. How many have stopped going off route and operating off route, how many have stopped doing it. Sir, I sit down and talk to some minibus men and ZR men and I am surprised at the things they actually say they do. Even sometimes when they give you accounts of encounters with police officers, the way they tell you they talk to police officers when police officers go to them. I wonder if it is true to be honest with you or if it is something made up to make them sound like big bad Johns but they really and truly are still ruling the roost and nobody has as yet managed to wrestle this thing to the ground. Mr. Chairman, only yesterday, I was speaking to a police officer and I was telling him that they need to start to really make sure that these fellows comply. He said it is really not our fault. We do take them to court. He told me of cases where fellows have 300 and 400 charges outstanding and the cases have not even begun. They just continue being adjourned and roll over and roll over all the time, so what more can they do than take them to the court. He said to me his experience was that he went to court one day with a particular offender, the case was heard, he got convicted and fined and he paid the fine and the very next day, he saw the same man doing the really same thing that he had paid the fine in relation to yesterday.

Mr. Chairman, I believe we have to get serious. I do not want to sound as though I am discriminating against the minibus and ZR men. I also want to say in all fairness to the same ZR and minibus men. I am also noticing that there are some drivers of Government owned vehicles, not a lot, but a couple of times you are also seeing them engage in some of the same practices that you are condemning the private drivers for doing. Sir, it is not very often but you are still seeing that creep in as well. I do not want to send the message that we are discriminating against these fellows. I believe that really and truly, when you find that any driver be it a private driver driving his own car or a ZR

man driving his own ZR or the owner's ZR or a minibus man driving his minibus, just to show that we are serious, any driver at all who commits X amounts of offences and is found guilty in the course of a year must face imprisonment, that is a fact. Let us set the bar seriously. Clearly the police reporting them is not deterring anybody, fines are not deterring anybody, so let us get serious. You cannot impose one rule against the ZRs and not against me or you, Mr. Chairman, or the Prime Minister because everybody must play by the same rules. Let us have it across the board that anybody who commits X amount traffic offences and is convicted over the course of whatever period of time faces imprisonment in this country. Sir, that is what I believe would bring about some law and order again on the roads of this country.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make that one point in relation to my constituency and with those few words, I am indebted to you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member St. George South.

Mr. D. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Chairman, I rise again to make just a brief intervention with respect to a few areas. I said earlier I would return in the debate to discuss a few parochial issues. Sir, one of the things that bothers me is this whole aspect of road building. The road from Brighton to Halton, that road started some four years ago, and up to this day, that road has not been completed. Sir, people say it is not a highway but it a highway. It is a linkage from St. Michael to St. Philip and it is a well-used road. What we have seen over the last four years would be a number of persons calling into the call-in programmer and their main issues were maintenance of their vehicles. Sir, I was told and I am aware that there is a part of Ministry of Public Works that caters to vehicle maintenance or repairs when indeed the Government has been tardy in executing (40)road repairs. I am not sure in St. George who did such and who did not benefit while they were using the road from Brighton to Halton and I would say after four years, that four years is way too long for a major highway to be in this state. We have that section from Brighton to Melverton that is still unfinished. I would have seen a number of moneys allocated to re-habilitation or road works, I am trying to find the actual page, road rehabilitation. I am not sure whether that would be captured under CAF that the minister can explain in his wrap up or when he returns but that is a road that has posed tremendous concern to the residents of St. George in those areas of Melverton, Windsor, Bydes Mill and some aspects of Ellerston too. I would like the minister to tell the people when this road will be finished because four years is indeed too long.

I will move off of that and I will go back to the UCAL. We would have discussed UCAL somewhat earlier in the debate and the Honourable Member for St. Michael

North East would have spoken about economic enfranchisement and one of the things that bothered me, hearing the Honourable Member for St. James South in his brief intervention, he alluded to the fact that UCAL should be closed down and I am surprised to hear that because if we closed UCAL, we are looking at 120 families who would be affected. Mr. Chairman, I am asking ...

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I really did not want to interrupt the Honourable Member but the Honourable Member for St. George South is misleading the House. I never stated or implied that UCAL should be closed. I clearly stated that it was configured and is currently structured, it has and continues to be a major drain on the public purse therefore, it needs to be restructured. I never stated or implied that it should be closed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please proceed.

Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My point remains 120 families would be affected if we - and I say we as a governing body, both Opposition and Government - decided to close UCAL because we are at a stage where we have a small business that was birth out of the Barbados Transport Board, skilled persons but who do not have the wherewithal to buy spare parts to execute their jobs. The contract with UCAL is a labour only contract. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North can correct me if I am wrong but from my knowledge of reading the contract it seems to be a labour contract only so, we cannot expect other private entities that are conducting maintenance work and supplying spare parts with respect to repairs and maintenance on buses, we cannot expect UCAL to compete with these entities. It is something that if we are looking at restructuring, as the Honourable Member for St. James South said, as opposed to closing down, and I would use the words of the Honourable Member for St. James South, restructuring, then we have to compare apples with apples. When then have to give UCAL that leverage to purchase spare parts just like we give those other private entities, if we really want to compare UCAL with those private entities because coming into the Honourable House because the Honourable Member for St. Phillip South said that UCAL had about 40 buses waiting. You cannot have 40 buses waiting, waiting for what? They cannot be waiting for labour because they provide labour, they have to be waiting for spare parts to execute major repairs so you cannot tell me, you can say to the Honourable House that those 40 buses are awaiting labour but I would find it difficult to believe that 40 units are sitting down at UCAL waiting only for labour to be executed. We need to restructure UCAL, forget the whole notion of closing down UCAL because we have 120 families that would be affected and I am sure that we can find a more effective and efficient way of running UCAL.

We have brains, we can sit down, brainstorm and we can come up with an optimum solution whereby - I am not saying the UCAL should not carry any blame because at the end of the day, UCAL is still a business and it has to be run like a business so I am not putting everything solely on the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW) but I am asking since you have to create the enabling environment and since it was a company that was born out of the Barbados Transport Board with the skills and the knowledge, provide training for these gentlemen. Send them to Europe where these buses are manufactured. There is specialised training that you can give to the workers at UCAL.

Mr. Chairman, it is just not the whole aspect of UCAL but this whole aspect of buses and my comments are directed to statements made by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North who said in his preamble to this Head that the last time buses were purchase was in 2006 and I would have seen route rationalisation not only in St. George, but I can speak to St. George because there was a pilot project and I did indeed go to the initiation whereby PSV merged with the Barbados Transport Board to provide buses on the route from Bridgetown to Edey Village but in the absence of buses we have seen a major challenge with respect to people getting to work and people being late for school and even though we have sought to merge the whole PSV with the Barbados Transport Board with respect to optimising transport on these routes, I still believe that the time has come for us to purchase some buses. We would have debated this several times and I am saying to you that there are section in St. George South like Drax Hall Hope, we would have seen and I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East mention in this Honourable House during her Estimates presentation that there was this old lady who had to call a taxi to get from her home in Drax Hall Hope to The Glebe Polyclinic to get medication and when she got there, there was no medication and she had to turn around and take the taxi again back home. We were fortunate to be there, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. I am saying that if you have rationalisation of a bus route and you do not send a bus in Drax Hall Hope between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. at night and you have over 200 persons living within that area, between the Greens Junction and Fair View it is a major problem. When we rationalise the routes, I am not sure whether major thought went into it and if we would have talked about satisfying transportation within those areas, Drax Hall Hope and The Greens areas so my point to you, Honourable Member for St. Philip North through you, Mr. Chairman.

My point to you, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, through you, Mr. Chairman, is that th time has come for us to stop talking about buying buses and let us buy some buses so that we can ease the transportation

woes not only in St. George but in St. Philip, Christ Church, St. Thomas, and in St. Joseph. We have major transportation challenges in this country and I am calling on the Honourable Member for St. Philip North to at least tell the Chamber in his wrap up when we will be purchasing buses.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise to enter this discussion at this point because I think all of us could speak and talk about roads and the need for road repairs, it is a seminal function of the Ministry of Transport and Works. Of course, I think that all of us perhaps would want to see more done, but the circumstances of the day have placed some constraints on the Ministry of Transport and Works and within the context of those circumstances the Ministry has sought to do what I believe could be characterised as the best it can at this time.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister and I have had conversations about roads in my area that could take some help, and I believe that the Ministry is committed that when the resources become available they would respond. I have sought to advise my constituents to hold strain, and we will do what we can to make things as comfortable as possible, and I am quite sure that as prosperity returns that we would be able to do much more on the roads.

I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, that every year as we discuss various ministries that we should use the same approach. If we wish to give the Minister advice, we ought to be trying to guide the Minister's thinking in a particular direction, that is, if it is not in that direction already. The Minister has been leading the Ministry really a new pathway and certainly his officers really deserve a lot of praise for what they are doing there.

I know that the Ministry of the Environment and Drainage has benefitted significantly from the assistance of the Minister of Transport and Works particularly on some of the challenges that we faced over the last year and a half. They came and continued to work with us and for that I am very grateful to the Minister for his assistance.

Mr. Chairman, what really brought me into this debate at this time was the Minister's announcement of the Ministry's intention to pursue a clean technology programme that would impact upon the rudiments of transportation. I believe that is an important development in the Ministry of Transport and Works. The Minister also mentioned that the Ministry of Transport and Works was listed as one of the sectors that was included in the Green Economy Scoping Study. One of the reasons why that

Ministry was included was because the architects of that Study thought it was important to look at transportation within the context of sustainable development and see what was the state of the transportation sector in Barbados. Mr. Chairman, that Study revealed some very interesting results.

Mr. Chairman, very shortly the Parliament would be treated to a full discourse on that Green Economy Scoping Study and would have more time to discuss some of the findings of that Study, but for the moment I would like to spend a little time talking about the role of a modernised Ministry of Transport and Works including public transportation, the Transport Board and the other facets of the Ministry.

Mr. Chairman, within the context of the Green Scoping and Study, the Ministry of Transport and Works was cited as a key sector as it relates to its contribution to sustainable development. What was discovered in that Study was that transportation in any developing country or any developed country plays a very important role in its overall development. When you think of transportation you think of health, for example, the movement of people, the movement of patients, responding to different scenarios and so on and so forth. When you think of public transportation, you think about work and you think about business and business development and the ability of the country to move its workers from point to point across the country so that they could meet the requirements of their jobs. When you think of public transportation, you think of productivity. If workers are not able to have a reliable transportation system, then it could have a negative impact on their capacities to deliver the services that they would be required to deliver. When you think of the development and public transportation, you also think about education and of course the ability of the State to move its students around the country so that they could get to their various schools. This was also one of the areas that the Green Scoping Study would have looked at. When you think of public transportation in the context of sustainable development, you also must think about tourism and the fact that public transportation is supposed to provide the means by which visitors can move around the country, can get to the various locations, can sightsee, can move one from one place to another, from the city to other points of interest and therefore public transportation is a vital cog in the wheel of development of any State particularly a Small Island Developing State that is now moving its development model to one of that is fully sustainable.

When you think about that, Mr. Chairman, you also have to contemplate what are the other impacts of public transportation. I believe this is what really brought the Minister into full contact with the idea of developing a clean transportation model. For some time the Minister and I have talked about the whole issue of emission testings. I

believe that there needs to be an emission testing policy in Barbados. I also believe that when you think about the contribution of transportation to the generation of greenhouse gases, you discover that the generation of electricity and the generation of transportation results in about 76 per cent of all greenhouse gases emitted in Barbados. There is a relatively fair balance between the generation of electricity and of course public transportation.

(s42) There may be some empirical evidence out there that the cleaner our air quality the lesser respiratory illnesses we have in our society, impacts significantly on the respiratory systems of our citizens.

Mr. Chairman, I have received scores of letters as the Minister of the Environment and Drainage from citizens all across the country who have queried the Government position on this whole issue of public transportation and the emission of CO₂. The truth is that when you carefully look at it, you realise that there are some vehicles on our streets that emit such toxic gases and smoke that if you are driving behind in an unprotected vehicle -- and by unprotected I mean a vehicle that the windows are not up and you are sitting exposed -- and you are driving behind, for example, some of these huge diesel trucks, some of these ZR vans and other operating equipment on our streets, that you are confronted and exposed to these kinds of impacts.

Mr. Chairman, I am not seeking to suggest that anyone is more guilty of pollution than the other but what I am sharing from my own empirical evidence, Mr. Chairman, is that have observed as a first-hand source these impacts on the quality of our air. Now, there is a department in my Ministry called the Environmental Protection Department that is responsible for measuring ambient air quality. They do measurements on a persistent basis and they have expressed concern about the rising pollution of our air quality.

Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact, I am looking forward to a partnership between Ministry of Transport and Works and my Ministry that we can quickly advance that policy position and move it towards legislation where it becomes illegal to drive a vehicle on the streets that is not compliant with new emission standards.

Mr. Chairman, I had the fortune of living in North America where emissions testing were part and parcel of the transportation culture and where all vehicles had to be subject to that testing procedure. As a matter of fact, if you were not in compliance you would not be able to put your vehicle on the street.

Mr. Chairman, I know people say that with the Ministry of Transport and Works it is already overburdened

with responsibilities, and that may be true, but the policy there was that what is our Ministry of Transport and Works would certify local garages... I heard one of the Honourable Member on the other side talked about small businesses and about giving small people opportunities and this would be another opportunity for small compliant garages to be certified by the Ministry of Transport and Works to execute the testing of these vehicles under a certification standard that would take the burden of the Ministry of Transport and Works having to execute the testing themselves but that all of the results would be reported to the Ministry of Transport and Works who would then issue a certificate of compliance for those vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, the convergence of vehicles beyond a certain age in not an expensive endeavour. As a matter of fact, the converging of the vehicle to compliant standard, it is just a small instrument that they have to put on the vehicles, but when you consider....

Mr. Chairman, only recently a mother of an 8-year-old boy who is a bright youngster but who is challenged with asthma and the fear that that mother lives in thinking that any moment she can get a call and because of exposure, that child's life could be put at peril.

Mr. Chairman, I think when you do studies, and I believe that the Minister of Health has been doing some work in this regard, but if we were to do a study in this country to really look at the whole issue of respiratory

diseases being part of chronic non-communicable diseases I believe that that would reveal that there is a positive correlation between air contamination and respiratory health and therefore I applaud the Ministry of Transport and Works for moving in this direction because there is another reason why it is important not only in terms of human health but it is also important because the more greenhouse gases we emit, the more we entice the occurrence of climate change because of the relationship between the emissions of greenhouse gases and the climate change are phenomenal.

Mr. Chairman, of course, I should like to tell this Honourable House that the Government of Barbados is committed through the Paris Agreement has submitted its own Intended National Determined Contributions where it has committed itself to driving down emissions in this country, to meet the minimal standard. Sir, of course, Barbados as a Small Island Developing State is the least culprit when it comes to global emissions, our global emission output is .00007, or something in that range, it is very negligible in the context of a global measure but in term of our 166 square miles that is an important measure for us and therefore I would want to encourage the Minister and his team at Ministry of Transport and Works to continue to press on, working with us in the Ministry of the

Environment and Drainage coming up with a policy that is a world standard policy, so that we can begin working on protecting our citizens from contaminated air quality. Sir, while I am that, let me just throw in here that we also have to look at persons who are indiscriminately burning all hours of the day and night and also contributing to the same phenomenon but for the purposes, since we are on transportation, I applaud the Ministry of Transport and Works for moving in this direction and would like to register our 100 per cent in the Ministry of the Environment and Drainage for the Ministry of Transport and Works programme. I thank you, Sir.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member who spoke before me slanted the debate very well so tht we can accommodate the Ministry of the Environment into Transport but the synergisms of the logic was in my view a little way off but I understand you might not get a chance to speak on the Head and you took advantage of the opportunity. I know the Head we are dealing with is that of the Ministry of Transport and Works but I also saw the heavy emphasis on greening of the environment and so on.

Mr. Chairman, the last debates surrounding the Transport Board put a lot of emphasis... the most contentious issue that we had in relation to this is UCAL but somehow the debated slanted in such a way as though we were either trying to condemn the Transport Board or condemn UCAL. I really believe that my role in this exercise is to suggest that we find a solution to this UCAL matter.(S43) I am hearing arguments here about the incapability or lack of the required skills by UCAL to do the work. I do not know if that is true. I never heard much about these things before, because from my recollection of the last few years, both Governments were very supportive of UCAL. We do not have any new buses that require any special technology, so I am assuming they are the same buses that were going to UCAL before. What UCAL is contending is that efforts to access spare parts from Simpson Motors is a challenge when they get there to receive the parts. If that is the issue, let us try to address it and see how we can resolve that. I really believe that as a Government and as an Opposition, if you should make the distinction between the two in these circumstances, we should work with that common goal of trying to resolve the problem with UCAL. The Minister is a man with a conscience, and I think this was a great opportunity for us to demonstrate workers' participation in management. Some people describe it as economic enfranchisement, and I believe that should be central to the discussion on this UCAL matter. At a later date, we will probably get back to this discussion some more.

There are some parochial matters which I would just like to ask the Minister to take note of. Some time ago I did speak to him. I know he put the information in the

cellphone at the particular time. This was in relation to two large holes in front of the Israel Lovell Foundation. The holes are still there, and when it is raining and the water comes above the surface of the holes, it causes problems for vehicles.

Asides.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: In addition to that, there is the Neil's Tenantry Road that runs from Rouen Village to Barkers Road. That is very bad, and the surface of the road is off. If you can give me some assistance there, Minister, I would be grateful. I told you before about the Roberts road area that stretches from Salters going right back over to the northern side of Mount Friendship Road. I would be grateful. I do not think I have to put any great set of frills on those issues.

The other thing I want to talk to you about is that we once had a bus route going through Flint Hall into Licorish Village, straight up to Belle Gully and coming through Barkers Road right back into Tichbourne. Lots of senior people, especially, who live on the road where I live in Tichbourne, normally get off at the bottom of the gap there in Howell's Cross Road, and there is a long journey from there right up to Barkers Road. If the seniors do not have a Transport Board bus, they would have to walk from the bottom of that gap straight up, and if it rains, we would have some trouble there. I just believe that I should record those things. As I said, no frills, no froth or anything. I just want to make mention of those things to the Minister and ask that you take those things into consideration and try to see what you can do for the members of St. Michael East expeditiously. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman.

Asides.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hold on a minute. I know but we do not know who heard.

Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE: I would not wait for you to give any directive. I apologise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. All I am asking please is to recognise where we are and to act responsibly. Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, please proceed.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to intervene. I had not planned to because I preferred to listen

to some of the contributions in relation to the whole issue of public transport and transport and works generally. I think it may be useful for me to say a few words about the UCAL issue, in particular, but I think before I say that, I want to say that I think it is going to be necessary for us - at least I hoped that we would have -- to steer this discussion. I understand why Members would want to do that. I had hoped that we would steer the discussion more away from the day-to-day retail minutiae about transport and works, and in particular public transport, to speak more about it in a broader context, about the overall policy of the Government and the nation on public transport, in particular, and infrastructural development of the country as it relates to the buildout of our economy, the sustainability of our economic systems and, of course, of our social systems.

Transport and infrastructure are two essential aspects of the social fabric of a country that allow for so many other things to take place, and it really is a platform on which socio-economic development takes place in a country. Perhaps committee work may not bring that out, given the nature of the shortness of the presentations and the disjointed nature of it, since people have to give way after 15 minutes or so for somebody else to come. Therefore, the cogency of their presentations may not necessarily be had in the way that would allow us to understand that they are actually trying to address such a matter. I think it is absolutely critical, because now we are in our 50th year of Independence and we have advanced as far as we have in relation to building out this very small but clearly vulnerable and fragile economy that we have, and the type of integrated society that we have. Because of what we do in our economic activities, mainly tourism and international business and financial services, we have other people, hundreds of thousands, who come to Barbados to share in those services. If you add cruise ship passengers, you get into the millions. Pressure is brought to bear on those services as we struggle to provide what really are acceptable levels of service quality that dovetail and support the building out of Barbados' development. (S44)Mr. Chairman, I think it is that type of system that we have been carrying for so many years, and I think with some degree of success, for very much longer in the way in which we have been doing it. We have done public transport in Barbados in many different ways. Many people may forget that before we had a public sector public transport system that we had a fairly private sector driven transport system in Barbados somewhere in the 50s or so...

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, somebody came up with the brilliant idea that we should move it out of the ostensibly private system into a public transport system and ask the State in itself to carry the fundamental cost of providing highly subsidized public transport for the large

majority of Barbadians. Sir, that worked for a number of years, maybe a decade, two or even three but as we had population expansion, the demographics changed, not only the demographics in terms of the drift from rural to urban back into suburban and the integrated mix of them but also the employment demographics in terms of a build out of the hospitality industry, particularly the hotel industry on the west coast, people having to travel from far parts of the island over to another part in order to conduct work, or to undertake work in your tourism industry that was expanding at relatively rapid rates. There was an increase demand on the resources to provide that. Sir, I think in some way, we did not have the kind of acute social and economic planning to understand that providing a highly subsidized service of a reasonably good quality and a consistent level would increase exponential on the way in which the society itself, demographically was building out. Sir, in many ways, it came to pass that there would be a collision between the desire to provide a high quality service for Barbadians across the entire country from the remote areas to the central areas and in the suburban areas, that the cost of providing that kind of service consistently at a subsidized rate would cause the State to fall short in many respects in its capacity to deliver.

Mr. Chairman, now that has come to pass, and it has happened, Of course, the increases in cost of the infrastructure, the equipment required, the type of vehicles required, the parts required to do that, the fuel alone to run these vehicles, it has now come to a situation where in Barbados, we have to face the stony reality that what we have promised to the public in terms of the extent of the service, the quality of the service, the timeliness of it, is really a cost that the methodology for financing is not necessarily in synch with the way in which the cost is rising.

Mr. Chairman, we sit glibly sometimes in Barbados but it is indeed a fact that what we ask people to pay when they get on a bus in Barbados is really not the true cost that it takes to provide that ride from point A to point B. Sir, on average, some people have seen some analyses that says that it could be \$5 or even further in terms of cost at point of delivery. Others have said \$6 or \$6.50 is really a genuine price point for what would be considered to be a break even cost recovery.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINKLER: I am not floating anything that is what it costs in reality. What the Government does is that Government steps in front of the passenger, of the ordinary Barbadian and really subsidises the rest of the costs, so that when the average citizen pays \$2 to get on a bus, it really does not cost \$2. It costs them \$2 but it costs the Government and really them because, at the end of the day, they have to pay the taxes to raise the revenue. It really

costs an additional \$3 to \$4 more and what we come to Parliament by way of an Appropriation Bill in these Estimates either when it is approved or laterally, when we do the supplemental vote is the actual cost when taken with the \$2 that you put in for every far that you take.

Mr. Chairman, we need to let people know that is the reality. Sir, having accepted that is the reality, the question is: If we want to continue universal accept to subsidise transport in Barbados, then we have to determine what is the most efficacious manner in which that additional cost beyond the subsidization, how is that going to be met. Sir that is the real kernel, the issue that we have to deal with in relation not just too public transport but to a lot of other things but as we are dealing with transport, we have to deal with that.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have to put a pause on that and go even further back to accept the reality... I am not making a political point because both Governments have to take responsibility for this, that at some point in time, somewhere in the late 70s, early 1980s, mid 1980s and certainly into the 90s that there was a shift in transport policy in Barbados. I do not think it was anything sinister. I think that it was the outgrowth of a particular class of entrepreneurs in Barbados, small business people predominately of black business people. There was a shift in the policy, certainly if not at the Government level, there was a shift at the Ministry level. I am not absolutely sure because I have not read all of the facts and the history of that particular period yet but it seems as though there was not sufficient clarity as to the potential collision between the maintenance of a high quality subsidized public transport system and the emergence of what we call the PSVs, the private service vehicle, privately owned system, (S44) so as one emerged and they both tried to feed off the same travelling public, somebody had to suffer in between there and there was reconciliation ostensibly in the policy about public transport and the cost that would be incurred when whomever the loser was in that exercise. It so happened that the State-owned agency became ostensibly the one that lost because it is now history and fact, Mr. Chairman, that many of the profit making short haul routes, and the Honourable Member for St. James Central knows what I am speaking about because he did some work on this as well, were surrendered so you are asking the public transport system to maintain service while the places where they can earn cash to balance out the loses in the longer haul routes, ...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I do not know if it was a trade off or surrender but I am using neutral language.

Once that happened you ostensibly condemned the very public transport system that you have to obvious

failure and the flashback was that the State then had to increase the level of its subsidization to keep the thing afloat and it has deteriorated and deteriorated and deteriorated from then until now.

Perhaps, I do not know if you are going to close up but I am going to come back because I want to get to the UCAL thing, Mr. Chairman, because the UCAL thing, I think, was a reasonably good idea but it was not thought out to the end because what we are calling UCAL today is really just a sophisticated reference to ostensibly what still remains an appendage of the Barbados Transport Board. It really is still a Department of the Barbados Transport Board but I am going to get back to that because I think the mix up in that modelling has landed us in the problem that we are in now and one has to ask the question if it may not have been less costly to the Government and certainly to the Barbados Transport Board to have left them where they were originally in the first place but I am going to come back. I thank you. I am going to come back again.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 9:30 tomorrow morning.

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

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

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BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. D. (St. Philip South)
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FORDE, Miss C. Y. (St. Thomas)
HINKSON, Mr. E. G. (St. James North)
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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Throughout. The source carries reporters' sequence markers run into the middle of paragraphs, such as '(S3)', '(S23)', '(27)' and '(S28)'. They are printed as in the source.

Q3. Suspension until 8.45 p.m.. The procedural sentence on the suspension is run into Hon. A. D. Brathwaite's 'I beg to second that, Sir.', and there is no record of the resumption or of the House going back into Committee of Supply: the next line is Mr. Chairman's 'This House is now in Committee of Supply.' Printed as in the source. Please confirm.

Q4. Government Notices (Recommitted). After the notice of a Resolution for \$63 881 565 (Supplementary Estimates No. 10, 2015-2016) is seconded, the source records 'The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.' Printed as in the source.

Q5. Opening. The source heads the resumption 'ORDER No. 21 (RESUMED)', and Mr. Speaker says the House had just come to the end of the Second Reading of that Bill, but the Order is not named and the House goes straight into Committee of Supply on Head 40. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Speech labels, Head 40. Hon. C. P. Sinckler's name is spelt 'SINKLER' on two of his speech headings. Printed as in the source.

Q7. End of the record. The record ends with the suspension until 9.30 a.m. the next day and the line 'END OF THE FOURTH DAY'S SITTING'; Head 40 was still under debate. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly resumed on the afternoon of Thursday, 17th March, 2016, the fourth day of the debate on the Estimates, with Mr. Speaker in the Chair. Mr. Speaker made a statement on seating: the Member for St. Philip West had spoken the day before from a seat other than his own, and he had received no indication from the

Leader of the Opposition or from Dr. Agard, the Member for Christ Church West, that their relationship had changed, though two Opposition Members had asked to be seated elsewhere. On the motion of Hon. C. P. Sinckler the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. J. D. Paul in the Chair, on Head 40, Ministry of Transport and Works (\$102 169 129).

The Minister, Hon. M. A. Lashley, outlined the capital works programme: a sector loan from CAF, the Latin American Development Bank, signed on 30th November, 2015, of which \$2.5 million would go to an Electronic Vehicle Registration system; an Inter-American Development Bank road loan signed on 19th February, 2016; and Caribbean Development Bank studies including the Ronald Mapp Highway upgrade. Mr. T. A. Prescod asked about bus services from a commuter's point of view and the River Terminal, and Hon. R. L. Sealy spoke on the politics of road maintenance.

Mr. K. D. Symmonds, Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, Mr. D. G. Sutherland, Hon. D. O'N. Inniss, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, Miss C. Y. Forde, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce and Mr. G. A. Clarke followed. The Chairman warned Mr. Sutherland that some of his comments would be struck from the record and he withdrew them; Mr. Sutherland's later point of order against Mr. Inniss was ruled out. Miss Mottley welcomed electronic vehicle tags, and Mr. Clarke said his administration had a \$70 million private-sector road programme with Rayside Construction and C. O. Williams. Progress was reported and the Sitting suspended until 6.15 p.m.

On resumption Hon. S. A. Lashley praised the Minister's management of the sector. Mr. Sinckler intervened on a point of order that Mr. Symmonds was misleading the House about the Adopt-A-Kilometre programme, and Mr. Sealy and Mr. Symmonds exchanged points of order over what the 2008 Democratic Labour Party Manifesto had said about trans-island ferries and water taxis. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw raised questions for the Minister; Mr. Brathwaite said private providers moved about 70 per cent of passengers daily; and Mr. E. G. Hinkson, called back to relevance by the Chairman, spoke of 200 Barbados Transport Board workers who had been fired.

Progress was again reported, Mr. Boyce gave notice of a Resolution for \$63 881 565 under Supplementary Estimates No. 10, 2015-2016, and the Sitting was suspended until 8.45 p.m. In the late session Mr. M. A. Lashley replied on the vehicle registration project, whose second phase would cost a further \$2.5 million; Mr. R. St.C. Toppin raised a road in his constituency; Mr.

Sutherland said 120 families would be affected if UCAL were closed; and Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe and Mr. Prescod spoke on roads. Mr. Sinckler said that when a passenger paid \$2 for a bus fare Government subsidised the rest of the cost, and traced the decline of public transport since the late 1970s.

Progress was reported once more, and on Mr. Boyce's motion the Sitting was suspended until 9.30 a.m. the following day, ending the fourth day's sitting.