
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2013 – 2018

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, November 11, 2016

The House of Assembly met at 10.25 a.m. on Friday, November 11, 2016.

PRESENT

His Honour MICHAEL A. CARRINGTON, Q.C., B.A., LL.B. (Speaker) Her Honour Mrs. M-J. MARA THOMPSON, M.Sc. (Ph.Ed.) B.A.(Deputy Speaker)
Right Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ)
Mr. GEORGE W. PAYNE, Q.C.
Mr. GLINE A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P.
Hon. DENIS St.E. KELLMAN
(Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development)
Hon. Miss MIA A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B.
(Leader of the Opposition)
Ms. CYNTHIA Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P.
Hon. RONALD D. JONES, J.P., B.A. (Hons.) M.A. (Ed.) (Minister of Education, Science and Technology and Innovation)
Dr. the Hon. DAVID C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S.
(Minister of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Water Resource Management)
Mr. DALE D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B (Hons.), L.E.C.
Hon. MICHAEL A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.)
(Minister of Transport and Works)
Hon. RICHARD L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.
(Minister of Tourism and International Transport)
Right Hon. FREUNDEL J. STUART, Q.C., B.A., LL.M.
(Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Public Service and Urban Development)
Hon. JOHN D. E. BOYCE, B.C.H., MRAC, M.Sc., C. Eng.

(Minister of Health) (Leader of Government Business)

Hon. STEVEN D. BLACKETT
(Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment, and Community Development) Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, B.Sc.

(Chairman of Committees)
Dr. the Hon. DENIS S. LOWE, Ed.D., M.Ed., B.A., Dip. Theology (Minister of the Environment and Drainage)

Hon. ADRIEL D. BRATHWAITE, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.)

(Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs.)
Hon. DONVILLE O'N. INNIS, Dip., B.Sc., M.B.A.

(Minister of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development)

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER, B.A., M.Sc.
(Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)
Mr. TREVOR PRESCOD, B.A.

Mr. KERRIE D. SYMMONDS, B. A., LL.B.
Lt. Col. JEFFREY D. BOSTIC, M.V.O., B.A. (Hons.)

Mr. EDMUND G. HINKSON, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., LL.M.

Dr. Ms. MARIA M. AGARD, J.P., D.Ds., B.Sc. (Hons)

Mr. DWIGHT G. SUTHERLAND, M.Sc., M.B.A. (Dist.), B.Sc.

Miss SANTIA J.O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons.)
Mr. RONALD St.C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.)
Hon. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C.

(Minister of Culture, Youth Affairs and Sports)
Prayers were taken by Reverend Father Mark Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning, Honourable Members, this House is now in session. Members, I am not in receipt of the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, November 1, 2016, so I ask for the usual Motion.

MINUTES

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

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

The question that the Minutes of Tuesday, November 1, 2016 be deferred was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

PAPERS

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust Limited 19th Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended June 30, 2012.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Duties, Taxes and Other Payments Exemption Barbados Film and Video Association Order, 2016, and the Value Added Tax Waiver Order, 2016.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the First Reading of the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016. I also beg to move the First Reading of the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: I beg to second that.

The question that the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, and the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, be read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

The question that the mentioned Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of the day's Sitting was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 14

To resume Debate on the Resolution re. The Barbados Green Economy Scoping Study.

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

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to enter this Debate, but first I want to congratulate the Minister of the Environment in leading this Debate and giving a thorough exposition of his Ministry's approach and its programmes and initiatives relevant to this Green Economy Scoping Study. Mr. Speaker, this Scoping Study also touched the transport sector, particularly the public transport sector, and indeed this Ministry and my Ministry have initiated programmes and have actually been one of the stakeholders in meeting with the Ministry of the Environment. I recall during the Estimates that part of our strategic plan at the Ministry of Transport and Works was to have within that a clean transport policy, which I will get to very shortly. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Transport and Works is one of the largest consumers of energy in the public sector, based on the sector's use of fossil fuel and a high dependency on it. This Government is committed to having a sustainable transport system. This redounds to a positive contribution to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the country. Mr. Speaker, this is why, in the 2013-2020 medium-term strategy, mention was made of developing a comprehensive national transport policy. Indeed, in order to develop a sustainable and comprehensive national transport policy, we have to explore, where necessary, advanced usage of alternative energy, solar power, compressed natural gas and, of course, clean technologies in the public and private sectors.

Further, Mr. Speaker, I want to go to what we have developed thus far in relation to the clean transport policy. We have sat down in the Ministry, along with our officials, and have considered the fact that there are so many vehicles on the roads in Barbados; the last number I had was 110 000 but I think it is a lot more than that. Of course, you know that Barbadians are actually more dependent on their private transport, and we have to put systems in place at the Licensing Authority and in our Ministry to ensure that we control or do whatever is necessary so that we would not have vehicles on the road that obviously add to further pollution, even in the urban corridor where we have traffic congestion. We have to speak to that, too, in relation to what initiatives we have to put in place to ease traffic congestion, but certainly, Mr. Speaker, in our clean transport policy we have looked at this development and we have to take some concrete steps to build on certain

commitments made, and, of course, we have to identify the objectives.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that our actions in relation to a clean transport policy would involve the undertaking of energetic and even aggressive stakeholder outreach, collaborating with the Ministry of Transport and Works. We have had discussions particularly with stakeholders which would include Government authorities responsible for energy, urban and rural planning, environment, drainage, coastal zone management and, of course, the Barbados Renewable Energy Association that we have had discussions with. I think it would be remiss of me not to mention the approach taken by the former Minister of Transport and Works because sometime in April 2011 the Minister, along with the Permanent Secretary at the time, who is in to this very heavily, they actually installed at the Ministry's headquarters about 80 photovoltaic panels which is actually that development.

I must praise the Minister for this and I am always praising him. Only recently when we had the power outage we were able to continue our operations at the Ministry and there are still working. That has resulted in a significant reduction in the electricity bill at the Ministry of Transport and Works headquarters and hopefully with the programme where the Ministry of Energy is developing a smart energy programme and giving each ministry a vehicle given the fact that we have the photovoltaic panels there, we can now utilise that to have on the compound some charging stations for the vehicles to come into the Ministry of Transport and Works. I was a positive step again from the former Minister of Transport and Works and I want to congratulate him for it.

Further to that, Mr. Speaker, I had mentioned the clean transport policy and we have to engage the stakeholders. I mentioned a few of them but there are a number of others, particularly the Barbados Renewable Energy Association and of course, other regional and international institutions so that we can get the best practices and the best available assistance and even funding available to us. Of course, we cannot develop that policy without the completion of pending legislation relevant to the Transport Section. We have to, of course, look at a further partnership with the private sector and we have heard a lot of discussions about adopt a kilometre and we are not doing the right things but that is part of greening. We have done a successful job with adopt a kilometre approach, we are looking to extent it and of course we are looking to ensure more greening initiatives that would be undertaken in these said programmes. Those are the actions that we have to take in relation to the clean transport policy and I know that the Ministry of Environment have started to engage the officials from our ministry in terms of developing this clean transport policy. Indeed the components of the policy, Mr. Speaker, or the key

platforms of the policy we are developing and I want to really congratulate -- I do not know what is the guy's name who came over from the Ministry of Finance -- but he is doing an excellent job. He was actually responsible along with the Permanent Secretary for developing a draft strategic plan for the ministry 2016-2020, which involved this same greening and the clean transport policy programme. Indeed, mentioned in that plan or the key platforms of Barbados Clean Transport Policy would include improvement in transport planning, the extension of appropriate road infrastructure network conducive to sustainable transport, improved traffic management measures. I know for a fact that the traffic management section at the ministry are engaging and only recently a document was produced regarding how we can mitigate and some instances alleviate some of the traffic congestions, particularly in the urban corridor. Indeed, we have to look at the passage of enabling legislation but it draws me, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that we have even engaged for the first time -- and I know that when I mentioned the Road Traffic Act sometimes the Minister of Finance says well we have to get there -- but indeed it would take some time and we have actually now reached a stage that very shortly we can get the Attorney General certificate but for the first time in any piece of legislation, particularly the Road Traffic Act, there will be an offense in it for littering on the Highway.

Secondly, the Minister of Environment mentioned that there is a problem and indeed there is a problem with abandoned vehicles on the highway. There is a very serious problem with abandoned vehicles. Yes, the CTO has power under the Highway Act to take the necessary powers but when we include it in the Road Traffic Act it is now an offense and you had the section here which we are placing in the Road Traffic Act to give power to those persons who have the power under the Road Traffic Act to remove abandon vehicles where they are obstructing traffic and of course, where this abandoned vehicle is contributing to the obstruction of transport and where it is a threat to the health of the persons in the community or those nearby.

Mr. Speaker, I said that our approach would be the agenda in terms of the amendments of the legislation but what are we doing in terms of looking at areas that fall within the power or control of the Ministry of Transport and Works and that draws me particularly now to how we are going to advance urban renewal. It brings me now to the River Terminal because it is part of the urban renewal. I believe in the 50th year of Independence that when we walk over to the River Terminal and we look at it that is certainly not the way and indeed when we toured the River Terminal we asked for a report to be done by the relevant ministries, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment.

The problem, and the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown would be interested in this, that exists out there in the River Terminal are that there are 121 vending operations at the River Terminal. Indeed we have 67 of the 121 vending operations sell food, either ready to eat or uncooked but the picture that is being painted or the picture that was painted in the report on the conditions at the River Terminal, and if we are speaking about greening, particularly the urban corridor, we cannot turn a blind eye to the River Terminal. In fact, the Report in a nutshell is saying that the entire area needs to be redesigned to ensure that the public's health and safety is taken into consideration.

This Report was prepared by the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Health, and the findings revealed that there is an inadequacy of space, lack of running water and the provision of waste water disposal, and an absence of toilet facilities for food handlers and an insufficiency of garbage receptacles. The comment was made that this was found to be very unacceptable due to an insufficiency of garbage cans and poor disposal practices by both food handlers and the travelling public. Mr. Speaker, that is why it is against this background that we decided to develop and build a terminal out there. The Report even speaks to the fact that the facilities, the four toilets, that were built in the 1990s, I think it was under your Administration, cannot service the thousands of passengers, the PSVs operator out there and the stall owners, that it is totally inadequate and that is why we developed and want now to build a terminal to ensure that we have the best practices in terms of food safety, that we have better sanitary conditions out there for the public and that even the workers at the Ministry of Transport and Works who work in that terminal have better working conditions, and that is what we are developing.

Mr. Speaker, my Report tells me that even in January 2016, we had discussions with BARVEN and the vendors out there notifying them that at some point in time they will have to move. We are not taking a hard and fast approach because the 127 operators out there have families to feed, but at the end of the day we have to ensure that the conditions fit into good public health standards. We want to assist, we want to develop, and of course we want to utilise alternative energy particularly in relation to the use of photovoltaic panels on the building. It is a good design done by Stanton Haynes and I must compliment him for that. I know that he has taken some slack for another design there at Eagle Hall, but of course I think he has done an excellent job. We have decided that we have to ensure that there are better toilet facilities and that there is office space. We have to create that environment out there so that when people come to Barbados and go to the Terminal that they feel proud and that we too can feel proud that we have developed a situation out there where we get rid of what is found in this Report.

Mr. Speaker, the Report in its final verdict states that the conditions in the Van Stand can only be described as deplorable and in need of immediate remedy as each day it is left unattended the risk to the public health is intensified. The risk of food, vector and waterborne diseases outbreak in addition to the offensive odours emanating or appearance makes this area horrendous from a public health perspective.

Mr. Speaker, in the interim we will ask the Ministry of the Environment and the Sanitation Services Authority to place the necessary receptacles out there to collect the garbage. Construction is about to start in January and in the meantime we will have further discussions with the vendors. In fact, we met with BARVEN about a week ago and we are having discussions with all of the stakeholders out there to ensure that everyone fits in to what we are remodelling out there to ensure... The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown will be proud of this because he also speaks to urban renewal. He also speaks to the housing stock, about the fact that we need to really improve the social conditions and the housing stock because of the quality of the housing stock in the city is a lot to be desired, and also given the fact that he too would have some opportunity to traverse the River Van Stand.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I was just speaking to the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown in relation to the fact that this is some improvement in relation to the urban corridor.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we also will look at or promote and examine the feasibility of a car sharing programme with automotive industry leaders by 2020. This was discussed at the conference I was at recently that had a discussion on urban mobility and the easing of traffic congestion. We are developing a car sharing programme to really reduce the usage and also the loads of vehicles within the urban corridor to control those emissions and to prevent further emissions in the urban corridors.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we have a number of objectives. We are looking at the following initiatives in relation to the sustainable transport sector and of course the renewable energy objectives in the Ministry. We have looked at the execution of LED street-lighting retrofits along the highways by 2017; the integration of electric buses in the public transport sector by 2018; employing new technologies and building management practices that are both cost-effective and environmentally responsible; and to expand the use of the alternative fuel vehicles Government wide and of course to ensure that low-cost high efficiency vehicle options are available to customer agencies. Those are some of the objectives that we are looking at in relation to our programme.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we are working on this draft Strategic Plan. Very shortly we will bring the clean transport policy in its fullest form to Cabinet. We will also bring to Cabinet the actions we have taken and the objectives we are seeking to achieve so that we can have a discussion on it and how are we going to further develop a sustainable transport system.

The fact that we have engaged in the TASI Project to make sure that there is scheduled public transport is also part of the clean transport policy to ensure that there is efficiency, to ensure that there is a reliable public transport system, and that is what we are doing. Yes, there are challenges but we cannot develop a sustainable public transport system without the utilisation of electronic vehicles. Yes, they are costly. We went on a visit and looked at these buses. In the Throne Speech and in our Manifesto there is a commitment to the usage of electronic buses. It is a fact. There is a commitment to it.

Mr. Speaker, that is included in our policy. Again, I want to say to the Opposition to join with us in relation to our initiatives. I know that the lead spokesman for the Green Economy Scoping Study tried to place some ownership on it in relation to his party, but we must move upward and not engage in dialogue such as the housing estates needing garbage cans and other things. I say to the Opposition to join with us in helping us to promote a full and clean transport policy, including the usage of clean energy. Sir, the fact that we are on a path of urban renewal, along with the River Terminal we hope to be able to develop the Fairchild Street Terminal which again would complement what we are doing at the River Terminal. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Mr. Speaker, I crave your indulgence to contribute very briefly to this very important discussion and debate as it relates to the Green Economy Scoping Study specifically but also generally to the Government's intended policy of making Barbados become the most advanced green economy in Latin America as has been designated. Mr. Speaker, it is a very tall order, of course. One would say even the most casual or indeed most engaged observer that we have set ourselves a fairly ambitious, and some may even say, idealistic target. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing entirely wrong with that at all, because out of idealism comes the practicalities that are required for the advancement of the development of countries, of individuals, households, citizens and of businesses to contribute to the increase in the standard and quality of life of those persons whom we seek to serve but even more critically to protect and enhance the space within which those individuals, institutions and other organisms or entities can exist within those spaces.

Mr. Speaker, we are happy as a Government, I believe, to be associated with this fairly bold objective of moving Barbados as an advanced green economy. Mr. Speaker, we do so, not without trepidation about the challenges that we face as a country economically, socially, even politically in some respects relative to our evolving norms of governance, but buoyed with the view that through incremental steps Barbados can, in fact, achieve these objectives or this ultimate objective of becoming the most advanced green economy in Latin America. We are also fairly fortified that the Government of Barbados has indeed began the process of putting incrementally the policy framework and some of the practical interventions being executed in place for the achievement of that overall objective.

Mr. Speaker, I say that, Sir, with a degree of confidence because I believe that in spite of or despite most of the criticism which you would hear and those we welcome because even among some of the fluff that passes off as critical discourse among us, some of it more invective than actual constructive criticism, in there are ideas which help drive the engine room of thought for which good policy can emerge, can be framed, can be put in law or can be passed in Administration and developed for the advancement of the country.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen how our own Ministry of the Environment and Drainage with its sister ministries across the structure of the entire Government - because these issues touch every single ministry and sector in the Administration of the Government of Barbados - has been able to establish itself as not only a credible domestic voice but as a leading regional and international voice on the issues as it pertains to the green economy.

Mr. Speaker, I know from my own practise previously as a member of the civil society movement and the leader of a major regional non-governmental organisation, it is often said that this part of the discourse in socioeconomic advancement tends to like catch phrases, so that we hear of the "green economy", the "blue economy", the "brown economy". These things come up every time. You hear of "NDGs", now "SDGs" and there is a particular type of diplomatic international speak that kind of paraphrases or captures the thoughts of persons who actually are very well-intentioned about what they want to see happen in their own societies, their own communities, their regions and of course their work.

Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely nothing wrong with that because it says something to us that we as human beings, that we as living organisms that inhabit a particular geographic space that we call the world or the globe, we know that through our actions and indeed through natural occurrences that levels of sustainability of the type of quality of life and standard of living that we want to have

cannot and will not be achieved if we do not coalesce around certain concepts and ideas to ensure that the practical actions, interventions or policies that we implement right down to the very minutia of those policies, unless we create that ethos and space those policies will not evince the sustainability to allow us to ensure that future generations that inhabit the space that we are now inhabiting will be able to do so with a degree of confidence that their lives can continue at a reasonably high level or at an appreciable, acceptable and deserved high level of existence.

Mr. Speaker, that is why the concept of the green economy so correctly places within the now acceptable normative discourse internationally and domestically the idea of economic, social, cultural and - for all that it is worth - humanistic development within a discourse that says to us that what we are doing now is not sufficient to sustain and to enhance our livelihoods going forward and that we need to intervene in specific ways to ensure the sustainability of human, plant, animal and whatever other life that we need to sustain.

I have myself, personally, but also as a professional in the field of development, absolutely no problem with the concept of green economy. Meaning for what it is worth that we take policies both at an intellectual and a practical level to ensure the things we do, in a very basic way, to ensure that we can interact through our various human endeavours whatever those may be, that we can pull policies together to ensure those actions do not sow such or disrupt or our environment both natural and otherwise that it causes us to do irreparable damage to the way of life we have come to understand and know as well that the way of life that we do understand and enjoy evolved. It is a dynamic. It must go from one thing to the next, to the next, to the next, because there is a certain dialectical connection between what happens with actions, today, and results tomorrow and impacts the day after. Or actions today, impacts tomorrow and results the day after.

What are we hoping to achieve when we say as a country we want Barbados to be an advanced green economy? The question is, if we are going to be a green economy, what is it that we are now? What colour of economy are we now? Some would say we are an economy that is a brown economy. Brown in the sense that what we currently do -- and this is not limited to Barbados- we try to forge a life that is driven, by the need to sustain certain things we say in the post-Independence history of Barbados but even of before, but certainly within that context are critical and have been critical to the development of Barbados. What are these? The provision of certain social services, health, education, sanitation, clean water, those very critical social interventions. We have done exceedingly well as a country in achieving the provision of those services. Many around us have done as well, some

others not as well as Barbados but some better, some not as well, but all countries have sought to try to provide for their citizens that backdrop of stability, that represents the social ethos within which this country has been constructed and a platform on which we have been constructed. Those have been in significant areas of social intervention.

However, in support of those interventions whether they be good public health care, good sanitation and water resource supply, good education up to tertiary level and beyond, post tertiary education as well, those things have had and are continuing to cost Governments considerable amounts of money to sustain. They came about in an environment in which many of the things that we became accustomed to, were being provided for us in many respects, we would not say free of cost, but as an adjunct to the transition from colonial status into an independent country.

What do I speak of, Mr. Speaker, here? I am speaking about things like the preferential treatments that had, access to markets, guaranteed acceptance of what we produce whether it was sugar and for other countries rice, other countries bananas, as the case would be for Barbados it was predominantly sugar, low tariffs, if no tariffs at all, substantial inflows of development assistance and aid whether it is from our colonial masters through directly, bilaterally or through multilateral institutions such as the European development institutions, whether it was one-way -- I say one-way. It is not a good term. It is not the correct term to be used, but I am trying to not complicate it with the language. A symmetrical, as the trade people would say, trade agreements with the ACP/EU arrangement, the Caribbean Basin Initiative, Carican, all of these things that allowed us to be able to send our goods overseas, and receive guaranteed payments for them to help us to build up an economy that was able to sustain, create and eventually sustain a platform of social intervention on many of the substantial things which we have been able to do.

Sir, of that course of development, one of the things which has emerged, very strong for Barbados and that has been able to help us to carry forward our own economic and financial development has been the building of a solid well-educated, very mobilized middle class in Barbados. As the middle class grew, as the development of the country advance, as we brought in the new industrialised age into the post globalized age of financial services and international business, and all of these other things that help advance the Barbados economy from where it has been able to come, along with it came the cost of living. I am not using cost of living as the way we say cost of living, but the cost of living. In other words, the cost of having substantially high comparatively standards of living.

One of the things, for example, if we anchor this back to the debate on the environment and on the green economy that has driven this, has been our development of a consumerist society, nothing wrong with that. Do not get me wrong, Mr. Speaker, I am not saying it as some kind of derogatory way of referring to what has transpired in Barbados, but we have developed a consumerist society adjunct as it is to a global movement of consumerism, where people value things based on what you can purchase and acquire and procure, whether it is a business, whether it is a Government or whether it is an individual or household on what you can acquire.

One of the things that has driven that level of consumerism in our societies has been the demand which it has placed or which they have placed on the capacity of societies, Governments, households and individuals to support that level of consumption.

In doing so, Mr. Speaker, we are only too aware, and I would not say painfully aware, but we are only too aware that as the advance and the sophistication of the demands which are made in the consumers-type society evolve, it is absolutely critical to ensure that the capacity to support such evolves with it. It is when that capacity has not and cannot keep pace with the demands and the requirements of that new type of society that deficits are created. Deficits between the governed and Government, deficits between the demands and the supplies, and deficits between the costs associated with providing that standard of living, and the capacity of all of the agents within the society, Government, private sector, State, individuals and households to be able to sustain that quality of life.

One very specific example is the area of energy. There is nothing more complete in any form of investigative analysis or any analysis to miss, than over the last 50 years there has been a disconnect, a kind of love/hate relationship between the demands of a modern society and the provision of energy, particularly fossil fuel energy. In fact, I believe 2 or 3 of the major recessions since the 1950s can be laid squarely at the feet of disruptions in oil production. We know of the major recession in the 1970s. We had a vicious impact of it here in Barbados which led to a number of things happening here that were not so pleasant. We know again of the sustained recessionary conditions in the early 1980s, again around the issue of oil production and having an impact on Barbados that caused us under the previous Barbados Labour Party administration of Tom Adams to have to go to the International Monetary Fund. Almost 10 years later, a decade later, we had the same issue when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and triggered a war of the coalition of the willing to engage in a war in the Middle East to liberate Kuwait, and to try to get oil resources flowing again.

We know in between those times, during those times and in between those times, because of the demands of emerging economies such as India and China, those have caused oil prices to skyrocket and elevate as the demand outstripped for some period of time, the supply and the futuristic markets speculated about what would happen and drove up prices of oil. We experienced that only as recently as the middle part of the turn of this century, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, and yet that kind of love/hate relationship. We love when the oil is flowing and coming to Barbados, as other countries love it, because it helps sustain that driven consumerism that is undergirding the development of our countries and the markets within our countries, but we hate when it gets to a point where we cannot afford it and we blame everybody for the problems which it throws upon us. Yet, in all of that 50 years we have not seen except until very recently in the last decade-and-a-half, a driven policy to transform our economies in a way so as to lead to the creation of the nomenclature of the green economy. Not just the nomenclature but the concept and the ideas of a green economy.

It is amazing how these things happen that we have had to be pummeled and beaten into the ground of uncertainty about our future for us to take heed of that, but not any more so than having to face the spectre of significant and fundamental and far-seated and deep-rooted changes in our very physical environment through the process of climate change. Again undergirded and very much driven, if not fueled, by the basic level of consumerism in our societies for us to have bigger cars, bigger houses, bigger plants, bigger manufacturing plants, bigger everything to produce bigger blocks of pollution to change our ozone layer, to change our climate for us to then inculcate in ourselves that our very basic concept of the post globalization era economy and society that is driven by consumption, that in fact may very well be the biggest challenges we have in sustaining human, plant and animal life on this earth.

So, what we have developed has now come back, Mr. Speaker, to face us full in the face.

Sir, when we hear discourses in our domestic environment about certain things, our domestic policy space, we have to pause and take stock of what we are talking about. When we speak about certain parishes in Barbados that cannot get water, horrible, very bad, nobody can say anywhere or dismiss it with any flippancy, because not to have water is really not a very pleasant thing for anybody to experience. You can do perhaps without electricity. Even that we may not be able to do without, but you have to have water to survive, but we cannot narrow that debate in a discourse of petty politics, because the truth is, if Government were to change tomorrow, contrary to what some people may want to believe, the problems of getting consistent potable to every household in Barbados

will not change, if the fundamental bases of correcting the problems that exist not just the operational network of the Barbados Water Authority, but changes to the behavioural pattern of the consumerism that has led to that problem are not changed. So let's be very clear.

There is no mystery box somewhere in Roebuck Street or George Street or Wilkey, in the Pine, or in the Port, that anybody can open up to solve that problem. My colleagues have made quite eloquent, far more than I can do, I am not that eloquent in speech anyhow, have made the observation that if you have mains that are over 100 years old to the extent where you reach a stage 40%, conservatively, of the water is being leaked out, the mains are bursting and that problem is not substantially corrected, even if you were to get water mysteriously from somewhere by the billions of gallons, it still cannot be successfully piped to those who want it because the system is bad.

Let's face it, and I say without fear of contradiction. As Minister of Finance I have seen where the Barbados Water Authority, in order to correct the basic -- not even the advanced - challenges in the water network in Barbados, will require more than BDS\$1 billion. \$1 billion. It is not an inexpensive business, whether you are talking about a network change in pipes, reverse osmosis, desalination plants, fixing the South Coast Sewage Project, doing a West Coast Sewage Project or fixing Bridgetown. All of these things, if you add them together, will come to more than \$1 billion. We have spent more than \$500 million of that already and still have considerable distance to travel to get that situation under our thumb and under control, so let us be very frank about what is going to have to happen going forward. That is only in water, my folks.

We know right now that because of the population we have, and because of our standard of life and sophistication thereof, substantially more demands are being placed on the State and on the society to supply water. We have more schools, we have more businesses, we have more households and we have more population, and therefore water does not just supply itself. There is a process, and it costs.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five minutes in which to conclude.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Five, Sir? I believe I need 500 more minutes, but I am obliged to you, Sir. If we flip that script and go to sanitation, the Honourable Minister has spoken, again very eloquently, on this issue. We are producing more than two to three times more waste now than we produced 15 years ago. Why is this happening? It is not because people are going outside of Barbados and finding waste to bring here. It is because of the waste that we, undergirded by the system of consumerism that we

have embraced globally in the post-modern globalisation era, have inculcated this and now produce substantially more amounts of volumes of waste; waste of all types and varieties. How does a State with limited resources...? Remember I said it was \$1 billion for water. You are going to talk about close to \$500 million to treat the waste and to collect the waste, but nobody wants to accept this fact because you, Mr. Speaker, and I are happy when we see the sanitation truck come and the garbage is carted away. Some of us in the country unfortunately do not even know where it is being taken, but once we see the truck turn the corner, we know, thank Heavens, that the waste is gone and it is somebody else's problem; but that is not true, Sir. That is the problem for every citizen in Barbados, and that is why it is a little offsetting when we play politics with waste and water.

That is how the thing is ordered so we have to do it, but the fact of the matter is that in pushing this whole concept of a Green Economy, of the Government putting in place substantial concessions to allow for alternative energy to come as a way to bring us off the consumption of fossil fuels to make us more efficient and more secure in our economy and society, for the Government to then invest substantial amounts to fix our water network finally, to put systems in place, to ensure that we upgrade our sewerage systems and all of that, there must be a corollary to it. That corollary is ensuring that citizens have the level of education, and after education the level of interaction and intervention with the system to ensure that, as we meet the demands that are placed, the supply problem is resolved and certainly modulated in a way that the demands can be easily managed. That is what this concept of moving to the Green Economy is.

I am sorry my time is up, Sir, because I wanted to speak about the fiscal issues. When we do the interventions, they cost money. When I put \$1 million or \$1 billion in water, or we put \$1 billion or \$500 million in waste, somebody has to pay the bill. If we no longer have preferences, no longer have access to people's markets, are not being given development assistance at concessional rates from international agencies because they feel that we have done too much and would like to graduate us back to poverty, and we then have to go into the open market and borrow money to do these things, we Barbadians have to pay for these things.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we have to accept that we cannot expect that we are going to have what I described, in this Parliament while delivering a Budget a couple years ago, as "a Scandinavian lifestyle" on the social side and "an American economy" on the financial side. We cannot expect that all these things are going to be provided for as we demand them from the State, but that we must have the lowest levels of taxation in the world. The two cannot work, and we have to accept that we are going to do the

things that we need to do as an economy and a society to ensure, even as we move toward the Green Economy, that we protect our society so that we can boast to the world not only that we are moving toward being the most advanced Green Economy in the world but we are doing so through policies that are socially balanced, environmentally sound, economically viable and characterised by good and transparent governance. I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Member for the City.

Lt. Col. J.D. BOSTIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make my contribution to this Debate relating to the Green Economy Scoping Study. I think it is an important Debate in the sense that the Study itself is most important indeed. I agree with the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, that it is perhaps a massive undertaking and one which we may not be able to afford, but I hasten to add that I think it is one of those things that we cannot afford not to afford. I will go back a few years to say that my first exposure to this idea of a Green Economy was in 2007 when I sat in the Visitors' Gallery for the first time to listen to a budgetary presentation by the then Honourable Minister of Finance. He spoke at length to this thing called the Green Economy at the time, and I know that there has been a policy framework that was created back in 2007 and several things have happened since then. I recall the construction of new community facilities and beach facilities. I remember the Boardwalks on the West Coast and South Coast, and efforts to green Barbados along the highways, which were initiated back then. I also recall the passage of legislation to protect our marine environment. I mentioned those points not to go back down memory lane but to reinforce the point that we on This Side support this Resolution. It is important and I want to spend a few minutes giving my views on this matter.

I noted that the study focusses on the potential for greening the following sectors, agriculture, fisheries, building, housing, tourism and transport and those were some of the critical sectors that were identified by the United Nations Environmental Programme in terms of Barbados making the transition to a green economy, but I want to focus my presentation on two areas. First of all, the climate change phenomena because this, in my opinion, must go hand-in-hand with any green economy and the effects of climate changes on those area identified in the study really means that we need to create some sort of a nexus between sustainable development and the effects of climate change, or establishing adaptation measure in relation to climate change.

Second, I also want to look at some peculiarities relating to the urban corridor because this is very, very important, not only for me as a representative of an urban

constituency but recognising and accepting the fact that we have some serious vulnerabilities within the urban corridors of this country. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that climate change has to be one of the most serious threats to us as a society, as a people, as a nation and as a climate dependent economy and society, Barbados is certainly very, very vulnerable to climate change. Whatever we do in terms of our developmental programmes going forward, climate change has to be at the centre of those programmes. The vulnerabilities in relation to climate change are exacerbated by the fact that we have a long coastal zone north to south with several significant urban settlements. We have our capital city along that coast and these urban settlements extend inward for as far as about four kilometres. We also have some critical or vital structures located along the urban corridor especially in the city of Bridgetown including Government Headquarters, Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Barbados Defence Force, Royal Barbados Police Force, Barbados Fire Service Headquarters, Parliament buildings and so on, so I believe any talk about sustainable development initiatives taken into account the climate change phenomena perhaps ought to start in the heart of the nation which is in the capital city and certainly taking into account the long and continuous urban corridor that we have.

I also noted that about 90 per cent of our hotels are located within one kilometre of the high water mark and less than 20 metres above sea level and according to the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change Project Report, one metre of sea level rise places 8 per cent of our major hotel infrastructure in serious trouble. Two metres that number goes to 32 per cent and there are a lot of experts saying that sea level rise in Barbados is occurring at a rate of about 10 millimetres per annum so you can do the calculations to see the difficult situation that confronts us as a country so for sustainable tourism climate change is also a significant factor to be taken into consideration.

We have been seeing effects of climate change with more severe weather systems, strange rainfall patterns, subtle changes in temperatures and so on. We need to really marry the two, sustainable development with climate change phenomena. As one technocrat puts it there is no point in developing today and then have to clean up tomorrow.

In terms of the urban corridor, we have some peculiar vulnerabilities that really need to be addressed and these must factor into any urban renewable plan and that is something I want to talk about at this point. If you look along the urban corridor flooding and poor drainage is a problem. I am not sure but even though we may not be able to stop flooding we certainly can alleviate some of the occurrences of flooding that exists along the urban corridor. I am not sure that throughout the last several

decades that we have really put the best brains together in terms of trying to find some way to ease the situation with flooding along the urban corridors. This is an important point here because if you have been following within the last few years you would recognise that there are more deaths that are caused by flooding and storm surge than even wind activities during massive hurricanes. We have been lucky to a point in that we have not really been high by a massive hurricane but I remember as a youngster back in the 1970s, there was a flood, the great flood I believe it was October 02, 1970 or 1971 when the boats from the carenage ended up all along Broad Street and in other parts of The City. The entire place was flooded. A storm surge that is generated by a severe weather system impacting on Barbados is going to place the entire urban corridor in jeopardy.

We have along the urban corridor as well poor land management and design for some of the residential areas. Of course that was noted in Cats Castle and Greenfields where the alignment of houses really does not make any sense. We have a lot of wooden structures, we have too many houses without indoor plumbing, we have several vacant lots and derelict buildings and structures, not enough green spaces and so on and these are issues that really must be taken into account when we are going to roll out any development programmes going forward and especially as we move towards the green economy.

The whole management of the solid waste issue is a significant factor along the urban corridor as well. I know it is a national situation. Only yesterday I saw something which indicated that Barbados was in the top 10 countries of the world in terms of the production of solid waste. I did not have time to really verify that information but the point is, we really need to have a discourse in terms of solid waste management. The production of solid waste, how do we deal with it at the household level, at the community level and at the national level. There must be some conversation on this because going forward this problem is going to be a serious one that we all have to deal with and it is going to require a lot of change in terms of attitude and in terms of habits and that is not going to happen overnight. It has to be initiated now and we have to find some ways and means to be able to talk to our constituents, to our nationals and to our communities in order to have this problem dealt with significantly.

Green economy and transportation. I do not want to spend a lot of time here but I believe certainly within the City of Bridgetown and its environs that public transportation utilising renewable energy has to be something for that future. That is what has to happen going forward in order to ease not only in terms of the use of fossil fuel but also to ease the congestion within the City of Bridgetown with everyone wanting to drive into town. That

has to be factored in and that is something that I am looking forward to see in the not too distance future.

The green economy, tourism again, where and how we construct our tourism infrastructure not only the tourism but the construction industry on the whole. I am not sure that we are really moving at the kind of pace that we ought to be moving at in terms of our construction industry. The use of materials and retrofitting and so on maybe has to move at a much faster pace when you look at the whole idea of the green economy and trying to really come up with sustainable development initiatives.

Given the fact, like I said, that this thing started back in 2007 with a Barbados Labour Party Government, it has been taken further by a Democratic Labour Party Government, we are at 2016, and whereas that there are some things that we will fight over politically and there are occasions for doing so, I believe that there are things that we need to come together on not necessarily out of choice but by necessity and by obligation to the people that we serve. We do not have the leisure of time when it comes to certain things, climate change and even this green economy, and there is no point when the Barbados Labour Party is returned to office whenever elections are called that we throw what has been done through the window then to reinvent the wheel, it will make no sense. Whichever Government is formed when elections are called that Government should be able to pick up from what has been done and take it further in the interest of this country.

I also would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that we need to move expeditiously when it comes to this matter. It was discussed in 2007, we are at 2016, and we have to move much faster with this in terms of climate change yes and because what we do now will affect what this country looks like in the future. There is no point in delaying, if we are going to develop, let us develop along sustainable lines. Remember do not build today what you have to clean up tomorrow.

With those few statements, Mr. Speaker, let me say that I support this and I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I rise to just make a short intervention on this Resolution and to give my full support to it, the calling on Parliament to note this Green Economy Scoping Study. I believe that I did the featured address on the occasion when the Study was handed over and I made some remarks on that occasion which as far back as then indicated my support for what the Green Economy Scoping Study was about, and therefore there is no need for me to repeat myself here, but I should like of course to thank and congratulate the Honourable Minister

of the Environment and Drainage for the passion and the commitment which he has shown to this issue and to issues environmental on the whole. He benefits of course from a cadre of very talented and very well-trained officers, and they at the Ministry of the Environment have brought a particular conviction to matters related to the environment and its preservation here in Barbados.

The Green Economy Scoping Study, of course, came into existence around the time when the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Environment, now retired Permanent Secretary Lionel Weekes, had a particular fondness for these issues and who manifested a very strong commitment to green economy issues and I should like to take this opportunity of course to thank him for the sterling service he rendered at the Ministry of the Environment and the role he played in ensuring that the Green Economy Scoping Study saw the light of day.

Why do we talk about a green economy at all? The reality, Mr. Speaker -- this is not fancy talk, this is not conference speak -- is that when human beings are talking to one another it is open to the person being addressed at any stage to close his ears or to allow his mind to roam on to some other subject or not to take seriously what the person who is talking to him is saying, that is an option we have in interpersonal discourse. When I stand up in the House to speak or when any other Honourable Member stands up in the House to speak it is open to any Honourable Member not to pay attention to what is being said, that is an option we have when there is interpersonal discourse, but when the planet is speaking we have no choice but to listen, and if we do not listen, the consequences for us will be severe. In fact, the consequences are existential, they go to the very root of our capacity to exist on this planet, and for some time now the planet has been speaking to mankind across the world.

Carbon concentrations have been leading to unprecedented rates of global warming. Let me give an example of what I am talking about. You measure carbon concentrations, carbon molecule, in parts per million. For 800 000 years carbon concentrations never exceeded 300 parts per million, and then all of a sudden since the industrial revolution and since that great transition from the use of muscle power to the use of machine power, that transition from individual or small family gill life to largescale factory life, we are now nearly at 400 parts per million and rising, so that the environment has become warmer confronting us with all of the

perils to which the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown has referred. Therefore, Small Island Developing States like Barbados have no choice but to listen to the planet and to spearhead the crusade against the intensification of global warming. Small Island Developing States have been doing that at Rio in 1992, the then

Barbados Right Honourable Prime Minister distinguished himself by writing an ode to the environment. It was laughed at back then in the same way that when the Presidential Election in 1992 in the United States of America happened that Mr. Al Gore who was a candidate was ridiculed and described as "Mr. Ozone". He wrote a brilliant book entitled: "Earth in the Balance" but he was ridiculed and called "Mr. Ozone", because matters environmental were thought to be matters to provoke laughter. Now we know that they are not and that climate change is no longer a matter for academic disputation, it is a fact put beyond doubt by all the experiences that we are having around us, some of which the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown has highlighted: unseasonable rains, unprecedented flooding, temperature rises, coastal erosion, et cetera. All of these things have been happening around us and because of the levels of deforestation and so on environmental impacts have been very pronounced, so that is the reality that we face. Mr. Speaker, Barbados which was represented on the United Nations Secretary-General Global Sustainability Panel, first by the distinguished late Honourable Member for St. John, then later by myself, we made our own contribution to the whole issue of sustainability of the environment in the face of these changes.

What has been the response as contained in the Green Economy Scoping Study? The very first thing that we have had to do was to determine what we mean by a green economy. Sir, very generally and loosely speaking, a green economy is an economy that takes into account the implications for the environment in whatever area of economic planning that you do or upon whatever area that you are embarked. The Green Economy Scoping Study directs our attention to production, so that we have to pay attention to what we produce and how we produce it. It also draws attention to distribution, so that we have to pay attention to what we distribute and how we distribute it. It also draws attention to consumption and as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West has so lucidly pointed out, we now live in a consumerist age. That virus has not escaped Barbados and therefore we have to pay close attention to what we consume and how we consume it.

The Green Economy Scoping Study also draws attention to the whole issue of waste assimilation and that is an issue which we have to face and face very squarely as well. Mr. Speaker, interestingly enough, on my way back from a recent visit abroad, I was reading an issue of that day of the Daily Telegraph, London. There was a story that said that because of a reduction in the transfers by the Central Government in England to local councils, a particular local council had announced that they could only collect household waste once every three weeks. This is in a G-7 country, one of the wealthiest countries in the world and householders are being told that because of economic constraints that garbage could only be collected once every

three weeks. Mr. Speaker, as a result of that, of course, some private people got involved, they saw a vacuum, they saw an opportunity and got involved and householders then began to pay £25 per month to get their garbage moved because they could not wait once every three weeks on the local council to do that.

Mr. Speaker, because the consumerist culture has overtaken the western world, and a consumerist culture has everything to do with capitalism's inherent tendency to overproduce and we know that very well. There is Breeze, Tide, Fab, Colgate, Pepsodent, all different names but they all do the same thing. Sir, product differentiation is a feature of capitalist production but they have made us all very consumerist and we therefore generate more waste today than at any other time in human history.

Mr. Speaker, the Green Economy Scoping Study draws attention to production, distribution, consumption and waste assimilation. It also draws attention to the fact that as a Small Island Developing State we have a fragile ecosystem that we have to take into account and that in taking that fragile ecosystem into account we have to plan our social, economic, cultural and environmental development with those considerations in mind.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Barbados in the year 2013 embarked explicitly - that is the operative word - on a sustainable development agenda. Sustainable development is defined in the literature and is articulated as meaning that in taking care of the developmental needs of people in the present generation, at the present time, you take account of the fact that you must pass on a secure and safe environment for future generations, so you cannot allow you own present-day preoccupations to blind you to the needs, to the interest and to the welfare of future generations.

We therefore embarked on a sustainable development agenda. Our Manifesto set it out very clearly under the pillars of Sustainable Development. We said we would try to create a society that is socially balanced, economically viable, environmentally sound and characterised by good governance. That is a sustainable development agenda. We did that in 2013. It was not until last year that the United Nations got a chance to put in place a sustainable development agenda, which is now called Agenda 2030. I spoke on it at the United Nations last year, but I could say in my speech that Barbados had done that already. In pursuing that sustainable development agenda, we have been looking at issues, for example, of the kind of energy and the energy sources that we use. Only yesterday at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre, I delivered a full, expansive policy speech on renewable energy and the Barbados projections up to the Year 2066, with certain landmarks along the way: 2030 and 2066. I set out what we plan to do in the areas of solar energy, wind

energy and all of that, because that is the way forward, and you are not talking greening or being environmentally friendly unless we confront the issue of energy.

Fossil fuel use has been accelerating the degradation of the human environment, Mr. Speaker, and therefore we have to pull back on that. It is true that Barbados has a lot of offshore potential for the production of fossil fuel, and we have awarded blocks to BHP Billington and Repsol in that connection, but there is no contradiction between what we are trying to do offshore and what we are trying to do onshore, because what we intend to do is to use the revenues we make from offshore to reinforce what we are doing onshore in terms of the transformation of our economy and its effective greening by the Year 2066. The longest journey begins with the first step and that is what Barbados has been doing. The Minister of Transport and Works made a speech in here this morning in which he connected the transport sector to the whole issue of greening and the use of renewable energy sources. Some time ago, the late Professor Oliver Headley did the Sir Winston Scott Memorial Lecture and the lecture was attractively entitled 'The Sun Will Still Be Shining When the Oil Runs Out.' That is where Barbados' anchor has to be. We do not have to use foreign exchange to import sunshine. We do not have to borrow to get wind. These are gifts from the Almighty Himself, and we have to make effective use of these gifts and make sure that we use them to generate the energy we need, so that our environment is much friendlier and so that we protect Barbados for the future.

The Minister of Finance, the Member for St. Michael North West, was quite right. There are some attitudes in Barbados that have to change. I smile very often, and I know the Member for Christ Church South does too -- I hear him often enough with it -- when we talk about modelling ourselves on Singapore. Recently in Singapore, a man was seen dropping a cigarette butt from out of his own window, and he ended up before the courts, had to pay \$15 000 as a fine and had to do about 60 hours of community service; for dropping a cigarette butt through his own window. We throw Kentucky boxes through windows around here, we throw cups through bus windows, we take up garbage from our homes and carry and dump on other people's premises; we do all those things but we want to emulate Singapore. I heard Lee Kuan Yew say just a few months before he died, "People ask how Singapore got so? I decided it had to get so." That is what Lee Kuan Yew said, and he never allowed democracy to get in his way. Singapore had to become a disciplined society and that is what it is today; so when we are talking about the Singapore Model, if we want the benefits let us look at the costs as well. I repeat that this is a published report of a man just throwing a cigarette butt out of his own window and he had to pay a court fine of \$15 000 and do 60 hours of community service. We litter around here. I am

very glad to hear the Minister of Transport and Works say that we are going to have provisions in the Road Traffic Act against littering. We litter around here and, as I have said in this House before, we behave as though the garbage that we generate belongs to the Government. We generate it, we buy the pep bottles of drink, we buy the Kentucky Fried Chicken, we accumulate all the plastic bags, and then we treat them as though they belong to the Government; so if somebody does not come and collect them and collect them in our time, that is an occasion for quarrelling and protest. We have to become more responsible and more mature and more disciplined if we are going to get this Green Economy right, if we are going to create a more environmentally friendly Barbados, and if we are going to deal with some of the drainage problems which the Honourable Member for the City quite properly and quite wisely raised. We cannot be throwing beds alongside the road and dropping old chairs where wells need to get water. You cannot do that and expect to have a healthy environment.

Mr. Speaker, I fully embrace what the Green Economy Scoping Study advocates. We have to take into account our fragile ecosystems and we have to make sure that our production, distribution, consumption and waste assimilation practices take into account the fragile ecosystems. We have to integrate these things and make sure that we pursue a developmental path that is sustainable, by which I mean that we not only take care of our interests in the Year 2016 but we leave or pass on a Barbados to future generations that is better and more environmentally sound than the Barbados we inherited. It talked about carbon concentrations and the increase which is getting dangerously close to 400 parts per million but that is only part of the story. The other part of the story is that that increase has been attributed by the climate scientists and by other scientists to anthropogenic interventions. In other words, these are not acts of God, these are not things that happened by accident, human actions or human inaction has led to all of this so all of us have a responsibility, every single household, every single business, every single school child, every single school, we all have a responsibility to tune into this frequency and understand that it is not just your brother, sister, uncle or aunt, or your teacher, minister, politician or priest who is talking to you but the planet is speaking and if we do not listen carefully to and obey what the planet is telling us, our very existence is going to be put at risk. In fact, it is being put at risk all like now. Our very extinction will be secured because we would have no planet on which to live. I give this Green Economy Scoping study my full support.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin my wrap up by extending my sincerest thanks to all Honourable Members who made a contribution to this debate. I certainly want to thank the Honourable Members on This Side especially for their contributions and I want to thank our esteem leader, the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados and Honourable Member for St. Michael South for the exposition he just gave us which really ties together all of the essential strands of this policy debate. We could have chosen to spend much of our time talking about the symptoms of failure to observe and to practice the rudiments a green economy. What we chose to do, Mr. Speaker, was to pitch a debate at a policy level encouraging the full participation of all Honourable Members of this House and perhaps more significantly engaging the public in a discussion that is very essential for the future journey of this country and certainly the next 50 years and beyond of our development. I noted with some interest the speech of the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown who tried his best with success to link this debate to a time before this current Government took office and I have no quarrel with that attempt but I want to take that Honourable Member a step further. In the Government of Barbados Development Plan of 1993-2000 the then Administration took some interests to outlay some fundamental concepts on the environment on the green economy although, Mr. Speaker, the specific terminologies may not have been used. The principles of the outlay of that Development Plan took into account the important themes that we have covered in this particular session in this particular topic and under the heading The Environment noted that the protection, conservation and the enhancement of the environment are perquisites for sound and proper development of any country. In this way prosperity is guaranteed and the right to enjoy the fruits of development in a healthy environment. It goes on to say that over the past several years the degradation of the environment has manifested itself in the form of soil erosion, coastal erosion, marine and water pollution, the destruction of coral reefs, hazardous substances disposal and the destruction of rare flora and fauna. This is back in 1993 in a document published by the then Government, the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Government, of course. The Government established as an environmental policy at that time, recognising that development must take place in a manner that promotes sustainability. Its strategy would be guided by the principle that a proactive and preventative approach is preferable to one of correcting environmental problems after they occur. Mr. Speaker, it goes on to say that accordingly, Government's efforts will be focussed on the conservation of the countries manmade and natural resources and the avoidance of future environmental degradation. To this end, comprehensive legislation based on continuous studies will be enacted to protect the marine eco-systems to reduce soil erosion and manage the disposal of fuel affluent and solid waste.

Mr. Speaker, I am putting that in the record to indicate that they has been a very determined decision by this Government to ensure that matters related to the environment are kept at the centre piece of our development model and in this debate we sought to outline what is the green economy. We argued why the green economy is essential to our future development, we argued how the green economy can be achieved and what policy measures and policy space needs to be put in place to accommodate this development journey. We sought to identify the key sectors and their relationship to the green economy and we identified, of course, sectors like tourism, housing and buildings. We talked about transportation, agriculture, fisheries and, of course, renewable energy.

Mr. Speaker, the journey of a Government is not simply about the establishment of monuments, physical structures or casual conversations to engage and to titillate the public. The real journey is to take what it has been handed and ensure that what is handed over is far advanced, well preserved and worthy of occupation of future generations therefore it becomes essential for any part of a Parliament, whether it is on the Government's Side or the Opposition's Side, to come together, as the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown made the point, not necessarily out of simple choice but perhaps more so out of necessity although to be urged by necessity forces one to adopt choices therefore this policy debate is an essential debate coming at the end of 50 years of independence and the spurring on of another 50 years of development in a different type of social spaces, in a different type of economic space, versus what it was in 1966 and in a different type of environmental space because then we did not contemplate the ravages of climate change. We did not understand in 1966 what today would mean in terms of changing weather systems and having to confront coastal erosion and having to deal with the compromised of our reef system. We did not contemplate it then in this way as we must today, so therefore that development is now occurring in a space, atmospheric and otherwise, that is causing us to look at things through different prisms. Fortunately for Barbados, Barbados has been a leading light among Small Island Developing States and developing countries globally in voicing forth its concerns and its experiences about how we deal with matters related to the environment and the preservation of the environment and good governance of the environment.

Mr. Speaker, we talked about noting the relationship between the green economy and sustainable development. I do not need to go over that because our honourable leader just gave us an exposé on sustainable development and what it means in this context and how we should face development. Mr. Speaker, that development is not just about achieving at different gradations of status, that development is about building out a sustainable platform that would allow generations to come to enjoy a level of

security within their built and natural environment. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are talking about and that is why although we talked about waste and waste assimilation and about those other things we could not linger too long on the symptoms of what may be happening in our society as much as we look at the policy roots of what must happen, and that is why we would not have wanted to spend an inordinate amount of time talking about garbage in the neighbourhood because the Green Economy Scoping Study talks about waste assimilation and about the root causes of the production of waste. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it talks about how we moved from production to consumption, to waste production and how we have moved from 1974 from producing less than 200 tonnes of waste per day to today now where we are producing well over 1 200 tonnes of waste per day and moving from a small village to a modernised society with an increase of dwellings and an increase of population that is part responsible for the generation of the kind of waste that we are now having to deal with, so when we talk about waste management we are not just simply talking about a pile of garbage here, there and everywhere, we are talking about the dynamics of the generation of waste and what the country's response has to be to it. The country's response cannot just be a governmental response, it has to be a societal response where all elements of the society become active participants in the resolution of the challenges that we face in that regard.

I am fortunate and indeed privileged to be the person that this Government has chosen to lead the fight on the environment, and I must tell you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am passionate about the environment. For me the environment is not imbedded simply in the symptoms of things that could have been fixed, should have been fixed and were not fixed. My passion about the environment is about building the policy framework, establishing the policy space and ensuring that our policy messages get out there on a consistent basis.

A question was asked by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition Business in this debate in connection with my indicating that the Ministry of the Environment... Again, I thank my officers, all of the Permanent Secretaries that have been involved including Mr. Weekes and Ms. Gail Francis-Vaughan and my current Permanent Secretary, Mr. Edison Alleyne who have provided strong leadership in the ministry in galvanising the work of our ministry to go forward. I was raising the point that the Sanitation Services Authority in connection with the Solid Waste Project Unit in the Ministry have published a series of pamphlets and literature for the public, and the question was asked: So how does the public get in touch with this information, and I have one simple suggestion. As a Member of Parliament I found the information and I walked my constituency and tried to distribute it to as many

households as possible because to me that is the surest way of getting the information into the hands of people.

Mr. Speaker, independence for some people really mean exaggerated dependency you know. This Government has an obligation both at the social and moral levels to help people graduate from that expectation that everything that must work in a society must work only because the Government leads it.

This brings me, Mr. Speaker, to what we talked about, in closing, as the pillars of development. We talked about the economic dimensions and how our green economy fits into that dimension. We talked about the economics of ecosystems in Barbados and biodiversity. We talked about green jobs creations and the trade and the environment. The Honourable Minister of Finance gave us a wonderful speech today that included aspects of trade and the environment and how that trade policy has now been significantly influenced by considerations for the environment and how that global policy driven by developed countries who initially were resistant to the whole idea of a climate deal are now jumping on board trying to hold their own in helping to drive the protection of the environment because it does not matter what your history tells you about yourself. If your future is in jeopardy, your history means very little to your survivability, that is the reality and that is why that as a Small Island Developing State Barbados takes its place at every global discussion relative to sharing lessons learned, sharing its experiences.

Mr. Speaker, I will say this to Barbadians, today Barbados is one of the leaders not only in the Caribbean and Latin America in the pursuit of a renewable energy agenda that would help us to achieve energy independence. We just heard the Honourable Leader of the Government saying to us that there are target points where we expect to achieve some significant quantum relative to our renewable energy. I say to the Government and to all of us that we must be ambitious in our targets, we must be realistic in how we set about to achieve those targets and we must ensure that whatever renewable energy output we achieve that the ordinary citizens will benefit significantly from those outputs.

Mr. Speaker, we addressed the policy measures for scaling up the development in the use of renewable energy and technologies, we addressed pollution and chemicals management and we talked about the cost of climate adaptation and mitigation. We talked also about sustainable consumption and production and we focussed in on how it is important for people to understand there is a relationship between their consumption patterns, waste generation that impacts on the dynamics of waste management, and what the Government is purporting is a waste management situation that is integrated. Sir, we only talk about the

garbage that we see on the streets but there are other silos of garbage that the country has to deal with, for example, medical waste. Therefore with advancements in medical technology there is a whole new cycle of medical waste being produced here in Barbados with which we have to deal? We talk about waste and with the increase in tourism ships are now travelling with quantities of waste and if you are talking about homeporting in Barbados then you are going to be talking about the disposal of ships' waste here.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about liquid waste, which is another area of waste management with which the country has to deal, therefore, when the Ministry of the Environment and Drainage contends with the issue of waste management, it is not just contending with the challenges of the Sanitation Service Authority, it is also contending with the need to advance our technological skills to ensure that we have the right thinkers, people who own their thought process, people who are willing to antagonize new ideas, people who are willing to be pragmatic in their views, people who are willing to give the country the wind beneath its wings that will allow it to grow and develop and to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, a very happy thing happened very recently for my Ministry and me because we were trying to figure out how we were going to service a green economy society, where are we going to look to for expertise, are we going to have to import skills. I asked my secretary at the office to call the university and to begin a dialogue with them to get some ideas of where the skills and the skills transition are happening in the university. Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, to our happy surprise, we discovered that there is a wonderful thing going on at the University of the West Indies which we encourage our Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and Innovation, who I know it on top of it, to continue to work on it.

Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, the University of the West Indies offers a Doctorate in Philosophy in Environmental Science in Environmental Studies and in Natural Resource Management. It has had already three successful completions of those degrees. The University of the West Indies also offers a Master of Philosophy Degree in the area of Natural Resource Management. It has had 48 graduates in the area of a Master of Science in Natural Resources and in Environmental Management. It also has a Postgraduate Diploma in Natural Resources and Environmental Management.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to make the point that our green economy pursuits have to be ambitious because these 55-odd graduates will be searching for opportunities in a new economic order in our country. I am of the view, Sir, that as we plan forward, connecting back to the 1993-2000 Development Plan for Barbados, that we have to create the employment space to occupy these skills. These persons

cannot be flipping hamburgers or doing ordinary tasks, they are highly technically trained persons and that is why this Government is so excited about the renewable energy sector because it offers the opportunity and the space for these persons to be occupied.

Mr. Speaker, I have not as yet touched the over 100 undergraduates who have completed degrees in these following areas, so that the field is growing. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have an obligation and that as we look at our Right Honourable Leader talked about listening to the planet, one of the areas of focus for the sustainable development road map is the principle of what you call people and planet. Mr. Speaker, Barbados' contribution to the Global Accumulation of Greenhouse Gases is miniscule in the context of the overall accumulation but in the context of Barbados it is too high and the major emitter of greenhouse gas on the island is as a result of the generation of electricity; then of course public transport, which the Minister of Transport and Works talked about; thirdly, the landfills that we have.

Mr. Speaker, this is not anything that has been sanctioned in Cabinet or Parliament as yet but I am of the view that by 2025 we should have all opened landfills closed and that that should be overtaken by leading edge -- not just cutting edge now -- technology in the treatment and management of waste. Mr. Speaker, that is why the people of Barbados chose us, they did not choose us to decorate Parliament, and they chose us to be the progenitors of progressive thoughts that help the country to move forward. Sir, we do not claim that position in any pejorative way but we have to continue to plough in the fields of progressive ideas that allow us to be able to build out policy framework and practices and to transform theory and practice into praxis which really is the combination and fulfilment of both in one, so that tomorrow's world within Barbados could look back, as it is now reflecting on the 50th Anniversary of Independence and when they ask themselves what do we have to show for another 50 years, the ground work being laid by this Government today will be at the heart on what is reflected on tomorrow, that is the purpose of this Minister, that is the purpose of this Government and we have collective agreement on the footprint in going forward.

Mr. Speaker, it has been tough at times achieving what we want to achieve but the truth is, Mr. Speaker that tough times are what great men and women are built of. It is not just the luxury of easing through life without having to contemplate or negotiating hard spots, it really is about taking pride in not being intellectually anemic but being robust in how you approach antagonizing new ideas and enduring the friction of those ideas that give rise to new templates of operation, that give rise to new horizons of development, that give rise to a new generation of thinkers, of movers, of shakers in this great land of ours.

Mr. Speaker, in my final closing remarks, I believe that this has been a most profitable engagement. It has not ended, but it will continue. We will continue to push the themes of the green economy. Again I say thanks to the Ministry of the Environment and its staff, to the private sector, the various institutions, academic institutions and so on, and also the students, secondary and primary schools which are part of the process. We have come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord, and we know that we have not been brought this far to be left alone. I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. D.S. LOWE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended for lunch until 2.30 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, when the Suspension was taken we were on Government Business and to that we shall revert.

ORDER No. 23

RESOLUTION THAT THE PARLIAMENT OF BARBADOS CONGRATULATE BARBADOS ON THE ATTAINMENT OF ITS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

AND HAIL THE EFFORTS OF ALL BARBADIANS

FOR MAKING THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT POSSIBLE

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I rise pilot this Resolution which caused the House to congratulate Barbados on the attainment of this significant milestone of

achieving 50 years of independence and to hail the efforts of all Barbadians in making this accomplishment possible. Speaking on the 30th November this year, Barbados would have completed 50 years as an independent nation and over the last year beginning on 6th January this year, the country has been celebrating its Golden Jubilee. Those celebrations will climax on the 30th day of this month when the country completes 50 years of independence. Why celebrate? You really cannot celebrate anything be it a wedding anniversary or a birthday, a countries anniversary, a success in any area of human endeavour. You really cannot celebrate anything unless you are imbued with a spirit of thanksgiving. If you are not thankful for what you have achieved it is highly unlikely that you will want to celebrate it.

I take the position that if when we look back over the last 50 years here in Barbados and we can see nothing to thank God for and nothing to thank the people of Barbados for then something is fundamentally wrong with the thought processes in this country. That is the basis on which we have decided that we want to celebrate our 50 years of independence. I had hoped that these celebrations would not get enveloped in any unnecessary controversy. There was controversy at the beginning in 1966. I was a teenager then at age 15 following everything that was going on and I had hoped that in the 50th year of our independence there would have been no scope for controversy of any kind but that a spirit of thanksgiving would have imbued all of us as we looked back on battles fought and won, on mountains climbed, on achievements recorded and so on.

The Government begins by saying that there is ever reason why Barbados should celebrate a golden jubilee. We do not apologise for stretching these celebrations over the last year starting on 6th January because the 50th anniversary of Barbados' independence, its golden jubilee year, coincides with a number of national milestones which the Government thought were deserving of special recognition. I speak, for example, Mr. Speaker, of the bicentenary of that titanic attempt at the emancipation in 1816 at Bayley's Plantation when our National Hero, the Right Excellent Bussa, Washington Franklin and others rose up against an oppressive slave system and made their own contribution to the march of Barbadian democracy. We thought that the bicentenary of that rebellion, coming as it did in Barbados' Golden Jubilee year, should be especially highlighted and that our school children, our young people and those not so young, should have a chance to reflect on how far back the struggle for Barbadian democracy stretches. Of course, as early as 1651, Barbados had declared itself independent when the events which unfolded in the United Kingdom during the Cromwellian protectorate precipitated certain events here and in the year 1652, one year later, when a settlement was effected between Barbados and the United Kingdom, the Charter of

Barbados, and I have had a chance to look at the original of that document in the Archives of the Oxford University, put firmly on the national agenda issues of freedom of conscience, issues of the rule of law, issues of no taxation without representation, and so on. It is not without significance that the Charter of Barbados of 1652 became a reference point in the United States of America (USA) after the American Revolution of 1776 for the kind of ingredients that should go into the constitution of the United States of America. That point was made by no less a person than the late former President of the United States of America, President Linden Bayne Johnson, when in the second half of the 1960s the then Prime Minister of Barbados, Errol Walton Barrow, paid a State visit to the United States of America and President Johnson in paying tribute to Barbados basically thanked Barbados for its input into the thought processes of those who had to put the American State together after it had declared itself independent after the War of American Independence, so the spirit of Independence in Barbados has been an old one.

We have had before that a Parliament established here in 1639 and that Parliament has sat for an unbroken period of 377 years now and we can therefore boast not in any hubristic or conceited way, but we can feel proud that the wheels of democracy in this country have continued to turn, well-lubricated, by a highly educated and alert public opinion, so we thought that the Bicentenary of the 1816 Rebellion should be celebrated.

We thought also that having regard to the fact that our sole surviving National Hero the Right Sir Garfield Sobers was celebrating his 80th birthday that we should take some time to reflect on the contribution which he made to the overall development of Barbados and the Caribbean and the extent to which his exploits on the cricket field helped to imbue us with the kind of confidence that would take us into independence. Who can forget that in the summer of 1966 when negotiations were taking place at Lancaster House for Barbados' independence that Sir Garfield Sobers was leading the West Indies team in a test series against England and was by the rare and special quality of his contributions in the five test matches stood head and shoulder above everybody else in that test series. He ended up, I believe, scoring 722 runs in that series with three sparkling test centuries all over 150 runs.

As I spoke at Lancaster House two weekends ago I had to remind those who were in the audience that not only did Sir Garfield score those three centuries but his partnerships in those three centuries were with all Barbadians. At Old Trafford when he scored the 161 runs his partner was Conrad Hunte who scored 135 runs, at Lords when he scored the 103 runs not out his partner was David Holford who scored 105 runs not out and at Headingly when he scored 174 runs his partner was Seymour Nurse who scored 137 runs, so Barbados was

making a statement at that time that we were ready to assume the mantle of nationhood because by one of those rare coincidences while the discussions were going on at Lancaster House Barbadians were shinning on the cricket field and who could shine more resplendently at that time than our only surviving National Hero the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers, so we thought that his 80th birthday had to be highlighted, and the connection between what he was doing in 1966 at various cricket grounds and what was happening at Lancaster House had a lot to do with our independence.

Then, of course, as we look back we could not help but see that Barbados could not have got to where it has gotten today or could not have achieved what it has achieved over the last 50 years without the contribution of the labour movement. Again, by rare coincidence had the late Sir Frank Walcott been alive he would have celebrated his 100th birthday in September of this year, and we took the opportunity to frame a thank you contribution to the labour movement for what it contributed to the political stability of our great country over the last 50 years. Mr. Speaker, Sir Frank Walcott was not the only labour leader, there are other labour leaders as well and there are still labour leaders who have been contributing to the political, social and economic development and certainly the political stability of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, in this very month of November had she been alive our first female Governor-General Dame Nita Barrow would have been celebrating her centenary as well. The 50th Anniversary of Celebrations Secretariat has taken the opportunity to plan a series of programmes around that centenary since Dame Nita Barrow was no small figure in the context of Barbadian post-independence or even pre-independence history, and we climax those celebrations at the end of this month.

Mr. Speaker, independence was a necessity at the time when it was fought for. As I said, as long ago as the 17th Century just 24 years after Barbados was settled it declared itself independent but constitutional independence was fought for in 1966 just two years after we attained onto full internal self-government. I believe I mentioned some of the history around that in this House the other day when we were trying to do the Constitutional Amendment to elevate the retirement ages of the Auditor General and the Director of Public Prosecutions. In 1964 we effected the transition of the Office of Attorney-General, for example, from being a civil service position to being a full Cabinet position, we created the Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, we replaced the Financial Secretary with a Minister of Finance and we made a whole set of other little changes to ensure that full internal self-governance was achieved, and just two years after that we went into constitutional independence Mr. Speaker, all of this is very important, on 4th January, 1966, a Resolution was debated

in this House calling on the House to call on the Secretaries of State for the colonies to convene to discuss independence for Barbados. It was a very long debate on the Resolution. The Resolution did not secure the unanimous support of Members of the House at that time, there were contrary points of view in the context of the debate on the Resolution but the Government of the day, led by Mr. Barrow, had the majority and so the Resolution was passed and subsequently in the month of July, 1966, those discussions took place at Lancaster House, which led to 30th November being set as the date for Barbados' Independence, St. Andrews Day.

Mr. Speaker, four years before that, of course, both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica had gone Independent in the wake of the collapse of the Federation of the West Indies, and Barbados had proceeded to Independence in the face of the breakup of the negotiations over the attempted Federation of the "Little Eight". It was not the first time that negotiations of that kind had taken place, in fact, in the 1870s when we had what were called the Confederation Riots here in Barbados attempts were made to bring Barbados and the countries of the Eastern Caribbean closer together, those attempts were being imposed by the United Kingdom at the time as our colonial master and Barbados' resistance had led to riots here now known as the Confederation Riots to local historians. Mr. Speaker, once again in 1965 going onto 1966, those attempts failed, the coming together of Barbados in a Federation of some kind with islands from the Eastern Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, so that we proceeded to Independence, but in order to understand what Independence really meant at that time we have to understand what being a colony meant at that time. We had been a colony, of course, from 1627 and for 200 years of our colonial status we were a slave society and the whole rationale behind colonial status, the whole rationale of colonialism as a system across the world was that the interest of the colonial power ranked above the interest of the colony. The whole ethic behind colonialism was the promotion of metropolitan interest and the subordination of colonial interest. Sir, Barbados was in that position, like every other colony here in the Caribbean and elsewhere, that the interests of Barbados were being subordinated to the interests of our colonial masters. Therefore, it was thought that the time had come when we had to reverse that situation.

Mr. Speaker, let us be clear that as was acknowledged by the late Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Eric Williams, in his magnum opus, his great work, "Capitalism and Slavery" a lot of what happened here in the Caribbean during the colonial period helped to explain the development of most of the major British cities that we know today: London, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool. All of these centres of excellence and influence today in the United Kingdom could trace their

development, according to Dr. William's thesis, to production and labour here in the Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, in the 18th Century, for example, Barbados used to be described as the brightest jewel in the British crown because of sugar and the quality of our sugar production. In the year 2007 when the western world was commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, in a sermon preached at Westminster Abbey by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace Dr. Roland Williams, he called on former slaver owning countries to recognise that a lot of the comfort, prosperity and development which they were enjoying now could be traced to slavery and colonialism. He argued that if you accepted that side of the argument, the other side also had to be accepted, that a lot of the misery, a lot of the underdevelopment, a lot of the marginalisation being experienced by former slave ravished countries could be traceable to slavery and colonialism as well, so it was only a question of time before Independence had to be put on our national agenda. Independence had never intended to be an end in itself, it was always intended to be a means toward an end.

Mr. Speaker, yes, when you become independent you get your own Flag, you have your own Anthem, you have your own Pledge, you no longer have a Governor, he becomes the Governor-General, you no longer have a Premier, he becomes the Prime Minister. These are some of the paraphernalia of nationhood but it goes far beyond that because as a colony Barbados and all other colonies were responsible only for their domestic affairs, and Barbados only got full internal self-government in 1964, but your defense and your foreign affairs are still controlled by the colonial power, so that you cannot choose the friends that you want, you still cannot establish the kind of relations with foreign institutions and foreign powers that you would want to do because those things are still controlled by your colonial master.

Mr. Speaker, we had to proceed to Independence. At the time voices were raised that it was going to be too expensive to pursue Independence alone; voices were raised that if we became Independence elections were going to be abolished or a dictatorship was going to be established. All of these things were put on the table in 1966 but Barbados forged ahead and secured its Independence.

Mr. Speaker, at the conference at Lancaster House the Constitution that we now enjoy and that has served us so well over the last 50 years was hammered out and we have had Amendments to that Constitution since 1966. In 1974, eight years after Independence, we did some major Amendments to the Constitution of Barbados in this House. That, too, was very controversial but none of the Amendments complained about in 1974 have been

removed or changed since the House passed them 42 years ago. Not one of those Amendments has been touched, including the appointment of judges by the Governor General acting on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. None of those Amendments has been touched, because Barbados is a mature democracy and we have been practising democracy for many, many years. As I said, we have had an unbroken parliamentary experience dating back to 1639, and therefore the population understood, and has understood ever since then, our capacity to manage our own affairs.

Mr. Speaker, Independence was not intended to be an end in itself. Any country that is determined to fight for its Independence has to have a reason for doing so. When the Americans fought for theirs in 1776, they had a reason for doing so. The Latin American Independence wars of the 19th Century were all rooted in the fact that there were dysfunctions about colonial status that did not allow for the full and untrammelled development of their societies, and therefore it was thought that only Independence could do it. In the 1940s -- 1947, I believe -- when India got its Independence, that marked the takeoff point for India's management of its domestic and external affairs and its ability to make the friends it wanted to make and to pursue its development as it thought it should. Barbados proceeded to Independence as well.

Mr. Speaker, on any objective evaluation of the last 50 years it has to be conceded that the Independence project in Barbados paid off; it was the right decision. I have lived to hear many of the people who opposed Independence in 1966 and many who spoke on platforms in 1966 -- I was a teenager -- I have sat at the Bar table or elsewhere and heard them say, "Yes, we fought against it but on reflection, Errol was right." On any objective evaluation of the last 50 years, it has to be conceded that the Independence project succeeded. I cannot imagine Barbados being a colony still today, and all of the other arrangements on which we were insisting we have been attempting ever since then and have only been meeting with marginal success in terms of bringing this region more closely together. The region is closer together today than at any other time in its entire history but we could not have waited for the region to come together before we pursued national Independence.

What are the ends of Independence, Mr. Speaker? Any time a country fights for its Independence, and Barbados is no exception in this regard, the reason for fighting for Independence is to transform your society and to revolutionise your economy. If you do not have those objectives in mind, then you can do without Independence. The objective has to be to transform your society and revolutionise your economy. The question I ask the House today and ask Barbadians today is: Have we transformed Barbadian society? When I say "we", I do not only mean

Honourable Members on this side of the House, the Democratic Labour Party. I also mean the Barbados Labour Party, because over the last 50 years, 24 years of the 50 years of Independence were spent by the Barbados Labour Party in Government, and the remaining 26 by the Democratic Labour Party, and both parties in Government have made their own attempts at the transformation of this society. When I hear that there is nothing to celebrate, I do not understand what I am hearing because both sides have contributed to the development of Barbados over the last 50 years. We have not always agreed on directions, we have not always agreed on priorities, but let us concede the fact that both sides contributed to Barbados' development over the last 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, how did we transform our society? For one thing -- and I was a teenager in 1966, as I said, and I saw it all, I heard the speeches, I went around the country -- so far as the housing conditions in Barbados in 1966 were concerned, the picture in Barbados was the picture of a country which was just, as has been said by one local writer, "a collection of plantations"; a collection of sugar plantations. The people who worked on those plantations, for the most part, were leaving chattel houses on mornings to go to work on those plantations, whether during the crop season when sugar cane was being harvested or in what was called the hard time when the cane harvesting period was over. They were leaving chattel dwellings. Those chattel dwellings did not have running water. Those chattel dwellings were not electrified, and for the most part, the occupants of those chattel dwellings -- I am not speaking about every single chattel dwelling -- could boast nothing higher than a primary education to fourth standard, and in better cases to seventh standard. That was where we were in 1966. There was no social safety net such as we are able to boast about today. Public transport was not nearly as efficient as it is today, and it was certainly not nearly as diversified because, beyond nightfall or after dusk, very rarely could you get transport from one part of the country to the other. The number of motorcars on our streets was very, very limited. I well recall when a motor vehicle registration number P 600 turned up in St. Philip that was thought to be very revolutionary, that you could have had 600 vehicles in St. Philip. Now we are into to PA something or PB something, I do not know, but that was the Barbados of 1966. Today, there is no household in Barbados where the occupants either at the level of children or grandchildren have not had a secondary education because independence put us in a position where we could build out our capacity in the area of educational opportunity but also it is a rarity to come across any house in Barbados today that does not have electricity in it. We have basically substantially solved that problem and similarly waterborne facilities. There has been a sharp contrast between the Barbados of 1966 in terms of our social realities and the realities which exist today. I have always recalled in 1994, Mr. Speaker, being at my

campaign office at the Four Roads, St. Philip, and an old man came over to the campaign office a few days before the General Elections and he said to me that he came to meet because he wanted to let me know that he was going to support me. He said: "I am going to tell you why I am going to support you." He said: "I was in the Lower Green in 1959 when I heard Mr. Barrow say that if he ever gets power in Barbados he is going to blacken up the commercial banks." He asked: "Do you know what he meant?" I responded: "I didn't." He said: "Because in order to work in a commercial bank you had to be brown-skinned and Barrow said that he was going to blacken them up. I lived to see it and that is why I have to support you."

There was a sharp contrast between that Barbados and the one that we know today. That all had to do with the social transformation that we were able to effect over the last 50 years as an independent nation. We transformed our housing. We transformed our education, the building out of secondary school capacity over the last 50 years has been a revolutionary achievement. We built Springer Memorial School in 1963, Ellerslie Secondary School was opened in 1966, for Independence and they too are celebrating 50 years this year. When it was opened, it was not entirely finished but they were determined that it had to be opened for independence. We have other secondary schools like the Deighton Griffith Secondary, St. George Secondary School, what is now called Frederick Smith Secondary School or the old St. James Secondary School, Grayden Sealy or the old Garrison Secondary School, St. Lucy Secondary now Darryl Jordan Secondary School, Lester Vaughan School in St. Thomas built during the last 50 years, all of this capacity built out to make sure that Barbadian children could have access to secondary school places. That was not possible during the old colonial period. In fact, as the same Dr. Williams wrote on one occasion, during the colonial period, colonial masters were more interested in building prisons than in building school and that is what we were able to achieve as a result of going into independence and assuming responsibility for our own affairs domestically and also our foreign affairs and our defense. We have a social safety net of which we can be proud, the National Insurance Act was passed in 1967, I seem to recall, and that social safety net has protected thousands upon thousands of households in this country over the last 50 years.

It is, from my information and from the admission of many people whom I have spoken with across this region, perhaps the most efficient social security system anywhere in the English-speaking Caribbean. Our social security has been taken care of. We have had revolutionary changes in our family law that has acknowledged the rights of common-law spouses to property that is resulted from the break-up of relationships. Before the Family Law Act was passed, for succession purposes in 1975 we had passed the Succession Act to accord recognition to single women co-

habiting with single men for five years or more and they were given the same rights as if they had had the benefit of clergy and the whole concept of a bastard, a child born out of wedlock and treated differently from children born in wedlock was removed by the Succession Act and subsequently for more general purposes by the States, the Children Reform Act passed around 1978 or 1979 and the Family Law Act that came later.

We have had the kind of social transformation that is the envy of many, many developing countries across the world and that is something of which Barbadians can feel very, very proud. Maternity leave with pay for women has been an achievement of the last 50 years as well. We take these things for granted now but there was a time when, if women went on maternity leave they could not get paid and that was put right by Barbados over the last 50 years of its independence. The Severance Payment Act which, at the time it was passed, introduced a very important dimension to the rights of workers because it allowed workers to be compensation for what they had contributed to the development of the businesses with which they were employed and that legislation, of course, had everything to do with the fact that, as a result of major fires in Bridgetown, workers who had been working at the businesses that were burnt down had to go home without a cent although they had not caused the fire, they had not lit the fire but they had to go home without a cent having spent many years contributing to the build-up of the businesses. That was put right by the passage of the Severance Payment Act. The Severance Payment Act is retrospective in its application and, of course, the law of wrongful dismissal which is now the law really of unfair dismissal, that was prospective in its application.

Barbados has done much over the last 50 years to transform our social relations. The relationship between the races has improved substantially as well. The Barbados of 1966 was a Barbados harshly divided along racial lines, let us be very clear on that. Over the last 50 years we have seen the dissolving as it were of many of those racial differences and we now have a more racially-inclusive society than we have ever had in our entire history. I know that some years ago under the previous Administration a Commission headed by Sir Keith Hunte was conducting hearings and a two-volume Report was published looking at the whole issue of race relations and social relations in Barbados. I am not sure whether the Report was ever debated but the reality is that the state of our social relations is better today and far more inclusive than at any other time in this country's history, and it all has to do with the fact that people feel more empowered than they have ever felt in this country's history and it has to do with enlightened policies introduced over the last 50 years to make our people far more confident.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure we will hear about this. The Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act resolved a contradiction that had always existed between plantation tenants and plantation owners. That did much to build out the quality of rural Barbados during our past 50 years as did the Tenancies Control and Development Act to protect tenants from the whimsical behaviour of landlords by putting landlords in a position where they had to follow certain procedures if they were going to throw their tenants off of the land or if they were going to get the court to intervene for those purposes.

If the rationale for independence, Mr. Speaker, is to transform your society, I am prepared to contend that Barbados has done that and to that extent the independence project was worth it and has been a success. There is no society on earth that solves these problems once for all. These are battles that have to be fought day in and day out. We only have to look up north at our great neighbour, the most powerful country on earth, to remind ourselves that battles that you would think have been fought and won have to be fought all over again because the price of liberty is still eternal vigilance and we still have to be reminded that every generation has to be taught the same things as the generation that went before it because every generation comes in and has to be exposed to an original experience. This is true of all societies. We have seen manifestations of demons that we thought were dead in Germany and in the United Kingdom. All across the western world battles that you thought have been fought and won have had to a greater or lesser intensity to be fought again, and some are still being fought.

Mr. Speaker, I am not standing here in this Honourable House today trying to give the impression that Barbados has become a perfect society and that we can now fold our hands and say now the labourer's task is over. We have to continue to make Barbados an even greater society than it is now and we still have some social dysfunctions that we have to tackle in this society.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at the progress I have seen made in Barbados over the last 50 years in relation to the disabled in this society and I think that we are going to make even more revolutionary progress in that area when we all face the reality that in greater or lesser degree we are all disabled. We all have disabilities in some areas of our lives. The disabilities are not always physical disabilities, sometimes there are intellectual disabilities. There are disabilities of various kinds and we have to face the reality therefore that we should never reach the stage where we lose the capacity to feel the pain of others or to see the inconvenience that others may be experiencing but that is a work-in-progress in all society but we have made great progress in Barbados in that regard.

Those persons who have fallen fouled of the law from time to time and who in some cases, not all - and of course the Government is looking at that legislation again to see how best we can humanise its application - have been shut out by the society as a result of having a criminal record... Over the last 50 years we have had passed in this House, I was in the House when it was passed by the previous Administration, the Criminal Records Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation. We are looking at the legislation now, it is about 20 years old and we believe that there are other areas in which we can make it more user-friendly and make it more inclusive for a much larger number of people. It really has been very, very difficult for people who have had criminal records and who did not have the benefit of that kind of legislation to secure inclusion in the economic and social life of Barbados.

I well recall when I was practising at The Bar in the Criminal Assizes of having to deal with the despair of a man from St. Philip, now gone to the great beyond, who was disqualified from serving on the jury because a conviction for being caught stealing canes from Thickets Plantation when he was about 19 years old appeared on his record, and because he had that on his record he could not serve on the jury. Thankfully, we do not have those kinds of challenges anymore being faced by people who have been convicted of those very minor offences. I reflected on the fact that at the time when he was convicted the breaking of that cane, as we used to call it 'breaking out cane', might have been his lunch for the day but he was caught and he had to go before the magistrate at District "C" and had a conviction recorded against his name. All of that is now a thing of the past because as I said the Criminal Records Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation is about 20 years old now. We have seen how it has operated. More and more people are calling on its services and we are looking to see how we can broaden its application, make it more user-friendly, and make it more inclusive so that an increasing number of people will be able to get back into mainstream society and not be kept out everlastingly because they may have made a mistake or two in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, we have a compassionate society, one that has made great strides socially, so that when I say that one of the imperatives of securing Independence was to transform the society, it is that which I am talking about. We have not solved all of the problems, in fact, we have not seen all the problems but as these problems are drawn to our attention we try to respond to them as best we can. We have the problem of being able to title land. Quite a few people in Barbados have lived on land for their whole lives or have lived on it from generation to generation and have never known a title deed, only a land tax bill. They have only understood the importance of getting a title deed when they wanted either to sell or to be able to get a mortgage and the procedure that we had in place in the law,

the old fictional title suit, was so cumbersome and so unwieldy that we had to replace all of that with a land title bill that allows people to more easily get title to their land and to be able to get on with their business more effectively.

Mr. Speaker, I had to bring this Resolution to this Honourable House because I do not think that many Barbadians have understood, or Barbadians of a certain generation have understood the journey which we have had to travel to get where we have got today. A lot of what people enjoy today they take for granted but a lot of these things had to be fought for and were considered privileges at a completely different time in Barbados' history, but Independence and taking responsibility for our own affairs, determining that we had a destiny which we had to try and mold, that has made the difference to the Barbados of 2016, that is why the last 50 years have to be celebrated.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, when you look back over the last 50 years the very first thing that strikes you is that you have so much to be thankful for and being thankful if a precondition, an indispensable prerequisite to celebrating anything. If you are not thankful for what you have then there is nothing to celebrate and we have thought that we have had to celebrate Barbados' Golden Jubilee because we have had so much to be thankful for. For us it is not just an academic exercise and the celebration has not just been wild and uncontrolled jollification, it has been celebration with humility and with a spirit of thankfulness because when we compare Barbados with other societies far less well-circumstanced, we realise how good life has been to us and how much we have to be thankful for. Therefore, we have transformed our society.

Mr. Speaker, we have also tackled the second limb of the rationale for Independence, we have also substantially revolutionised our economy. Mr. Speaker, the Barbados of 1966 was a Barbados that was, as I said, a collection of sugar plantations with villages hovering around those plantations and being dependent on them. I well-recall growing up in St. Philip around the time of Independence where in St. Philip alone you had the Three Houses Factory at which my father worked and died. We had Four Square Factory. We had Carrington's Factory. We had Harrows Factory. We had Oldbury Factory. There were five sugar factories in the parish of St. Philip by itself and of course that situation replicated itself across other parishes in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, in 1966, Barbados produced 175 000 tons of sugar. Mr. Speaker, that should give you some idea of the extent to which we were still sugar producing economy. Now, in 1965 we had passed International Business legislation to put the International Business Sector on our national agenda. That did not come to full efflorescence until the 1970s but the legislation was put

there in 1965. The year after Independence, 1967, Barbados produced 204 000 tons of sugar. We were a sugar economy. Today all that has changed, we now have an economy led by tourism, and tourism now pays this country's bills and accounts for a large number of jobs, directly and indirectly, and touches practically every household in some way in the year 2016. The country says routinely, "tourism is our business and we must play our part."

Mr. Speaker, in addition to tourism, as I said we put the legislation to cover the International Business and Financial Services Sector on the statute books, it did not come to full flowering until the 1970s and on but the foundation was there. We recognised that it had the potential to do much for Barbados and it has contributed massively to the development of Barbados over the last 50 years. The sector is still a very energetic sector, it has had its ups and downs, there are always battles to fight, battles of labelling, battles of slandering and so on, but through it all the sector continues to contribute to the development of this country and has been, for good part of its better days, a substantial contributor to the corporate tax revenue of our country.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to be committed to the sector and to developing it so that we can continue to remain competitive in a world in which, of course, the sector assumes many faces and remaining competitive is a continuing challenge.

We have also committed ourselves to building out other sectors and I speak of the cultural industries sector, while quite a few of the other sectors that we have had to rely on historically required us to find the raw material to get the sector functional, whether we are talking about manufacturing or agriculture but the cultural industries come with readymade raw material in the form of human talent, the God-given talents that our people have. That sector is quietly built out by creating opportunities for our young people to see the world as their stage, as their playground and to market Barbados through the parading and display of their many God-given talents. It is a young sector and it will take time to build out but we recognise its importance and, of course, across the world that sector is now a trillion-dollar sector and Barbados is determined to get its share of what that sector has to offer. We do not have to import the young people. They are born right here in our households, they go to our schools, they socialise in our communities, they attend our churches, and they have the talent to make themselves great and in the process to make Barbados great as well. Calling names, I suppose, would be invidious but the best example of that today is our own Rihanna, who has taken the world by storm and who, thankfully, having taken the world by storm, never lets anybody forget that she is a product of Barbados. That is to be commended. We are building that sector out, and

will continue to do so as indeed we are building a renewable energy sector out. I spoke on that this morning in this House, Mr. Speaker. I spoke on it yesterday at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre, and I do not have to traverse that territory again except to say that the economic future of Barbados is intimately bound up with getting that sector right and making sure that it is built out at great speed. The commitment of Barbados is to ensure that happens post-haste.

Mr. Speaker, we have been not only transforming our society but we have been revolutionising our economy, and over the last 50 years on any objective evaluation of Barbados' performance, I repeat, it would have to be conceded that the doubters of 1966 were wrong, the project has succeeded and there is better still to come if Barbados remains on course. Independence was fought for all of us. Barbados is our country and we have to be committed to its development, notwithstanding any differences that we may have.

Mr. Speaker, I have made the observation from time to time that we have to effect the transition from nationhood to Independence, because it is all right to take people out of a colony -- in fact it is rather easy to do that nowadays -- but taking the colony out of people is the bigger challenge. Fifty years in the life of a nation is still a very short time historically. There are still people in Barbados like myself and the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education and a few others of us who were born before Independence and who have had to sing two National Anthems. There are some in this House who have only had to sing one National Anthem because of the time of their birth. There is nothing wrong with that but the transition from nationhood to genuine Independence is going to take a little time. We have to work at it because getting the colony out of people is much more difficult and takes a much longer time than getting people out of the colony. Getting the colony out of people requires us to begin to respect more naturally who we are, what we produce, the quality of our landscape and our seascape, our flora and our fauna, and respecting what our artistes produce. We are further along the road with that today than at any other time in my lifetime. We respect our music, we respect the things that make us uniquely Barbadian, and I think that transition from nationhood to genuine Independence has to continue and has to be worked at. It requires leadership at various levels. Our school teachers have to be on board because, as they teach students from day to day, they have to communicate to their students the value of Barbados and the value of things Barbadian, the fact that Barbados is not better than any other country in the world but we are as good as the best country in the world - if that country exists -- and that what we are about is making our own unique contribution to the treasury of human civilisation. We have done that in many ways already. We have shown that we have it in us. We have

given the world much at the level of our human resources and our national talent, and there is still much more of that to be done, but we are not going to be genuinely independent until we reach the stage where, while not disrespecting what others produce and represent, we also face the reality that we produce and represent at a high level as well.

Mr. Speaker, the Independence project has succeeded. I do not accept any argument that there is nothing to celebrate. I do not accept any statement or any position that Independence was a sell-out. I do not accept that we were wrong for taking the plunge in 1966 to take our destiny into our own hands, to become responsible not only for our domestic affairs but for our defence and our foreign affairs, where we could choose our friends and chart the course of Barbados in a way that was consistent with our own interests. That is very, very important, and I think we owe a debt of gratitude to all those who have gone before, who have helped to make the success of Barbados possible. It could not have been done by parliamentarians alone. It could not have been done by professionals alone. There are some simple, salt-of-the-earth people in our villages and communities who, by their example, by the strength of their character and by their spirit of volunteerism, have helped to create the Barbados that we have today, and we owe them a debt of gratitude for what they have done for our great country. They did it very often at very great sacrifice. They did it sometimes against daunting odds, but they loved their country and they were determined to see it through.

The people in our diaspora have contributed substantially to Barbados' development over the last 50 years. By their remittances, they have contributed significantly to the development of this country. In the first Budget Speech he delivered in 1962, Premier Errol Barrow, as he was at the time, highlighted the importance of remittances to the development and the future development of Barbados. Those remittances from Barbadians who immigrated to foreign climes and who were prepared to work hard, have helped to make Barbados the place it is today and we owe them a debt of gratitude too. Those who have come back home and are now strategically dispersed across this country, living in our communities, interacting with our people and with our institutions continue to make a great contribution to Barbados.

I will say why I say that because when they listen sometimes to what our people say, what they complain about, it is they who confront our people and say, look, get real, come into the real world. This is how the real world works. We lived in this or that metropolitan capital, in the United Kingdom or the United States of America (USA), Canada, Germany, or wherever else and the world is not like that. This whole idea of taking, taking, taking, taking that sometimes we hear from certain quarters in Barbados it

is those people who have come back here having lived in foreign capitals who remind us that the stage has to be reached where we have to be talking about giving, giving, giving, giving and not just taking, taking, taking, taking. They have made a great contribution to the stabilisation of public opinion in this country and for the education of public opinion in this country with the strengthen of it because of the varied experiences and varied skills that we have brought back here to Barbados to strengthen the infrastructure of our society. We owe them a great debt of gratitude. If we did not have them sometimes to balance out opinions around here, then the national discourse could easily spiral out of control because there are still some people in Barbados who believe that the sun rises here, the sun sets here and the remainder of the world depends on Barbados for light. It is those returnees from abroad who remind us, not infrequently, that we have to get real. There is a real world out there that different from the one that we are talking about.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot to celebrate as an independent nation. I want to thank the 50th Anniversary of Independence Secretariat for the excellent work that has been done over the last year to bring home to Barbadians in ways, great and small, the importance of being thankful for what we have achieved in Barbados between 1966 and the present. As I said, Barbados' development did not begin in 1966 but independence was a great leap forward because the stage had been reached where this society could no longer accept that the interests of the metropolitan country should preponderate over the interests of Barbados. We took our destiny into our hands 50 years ago and we now have a respected voice in the councils of the world. When Barbados speaks, people listen and people respect what Barbados has to say because what we say is credible. As our founder and the Father of our Independence said: "We are not interested in the diplomacy of power." We are interested in the diplomacy of peace and prosperity. We are friends of all and satellites of none and that has earned Barbados a great reputations across the world.

Mr. Speaker, I did not think that 30th November, 2016 should have come and we not say thanks to the people of Barbados for all that they have done to make our achievements as a nation possible. We sing in our National Anthem: "The Lord has been the people's guide for past 300 years, With him still on the people's side, We have no doubt or fears ..." so we have a lot to thank God for too. That is why I have not been able to understand the noises I hear sometimes that we have nothing to celebrate. You can only celebrate if you are thankful and 50 years of thankfulness have welled-up in this society because when we look around at what is happening elsewhere the countries that have become independent before Barbados and the countries that have become independent after Barbados and we see what battles they have had to fight. Then we realise how much as a nation we have to be

thankful for. Our children still leave school home every morning and go to schools to be educated at the primary level, at the secondary level and at the tertiary level. We can still get healthcare that is accessible and is affordable, and of course, that meets acceptable international standards. We have a lot to be thankful for. We have changed Governments in Barbados. In 1976, we changed a Government here and the day after the change it was as though nothing had happened the day before. We changed the Government in 1986 and the same thing happened. We changed the Government in 1994 and the same thing happened and we changed the Government in 2008 and the same thing happened. In some countries, the results of the elections are not accepted and chaos ensues. There are leaders across some parts of the developing world who are reluctant to give up power when the time comes. Barbados has never had the problem, we have a lot to be thankful for and that is something to celebrate but this is the moment, Mr. Speaker, as I said, the 50th Anniversary of Independence Secretariat has done a great job. It is shepherding us through the last year. The Chairman of the Coordinating Committee, Senator the Honourable Maxine McClean, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Chairman, Senator Dr. Esther Byer-Suckoo, have rendered inestimable service in taking us through this period and right across the diaspora we have come up against, we have encountered a level of enthusiasm for the 50th anniversary, for the golden jubilee a level of thankfulness for all of Barbados has done for us as a people that has made me, as Prime Minister, feel very proud and I am sure has made Barbadians as a whole feel very proud to be Barbadians, so I have no hesitation, Mr. Speaker, in associating myself fully with the contents of this Resolution and call on this Parliament to congratulate Barbados on the attainment of this significant milestone and to hail the efforts not of the Government, not of the Prime Minister or not of the Minister of Health or the Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, but of the people of Barbados in making these accomplishments possible. I want to say thanks to Barbadians for being the great people they are and let us do even better over the next 50 years.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker vacated the Chair and Madam Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James Central.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: I am obliged, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to associate myself and the Barbados Labour Party with some of the sentiments expressed by the Right Honourable Prime Minister of the country with respect to this Resolution. I also take the

opportunity, Madam Deputy Speaker, to personally wish or express my congratulations to the 50th Anniversary Secretariat for the work they have done thus far and also take the opportunity to congratulate the Government for using its initiative to have this matter debated in our Parliament.

It would have been an unfortunate thing for us, Ma'am, to have come to this landmark without having had an opportunity for the country through the voice of its elected representatives to have an input into our feeling of joy of having reached this landmark and also an opportunity to express our own profound views and values about the direction in which the country could be taken in the next 50 years.

Ma'am, unlike the Right Honourable Prime Minister, I do not see this in the context of giving thanks. I think that there is much room and much value in giving thanks at this time but to merely give thanks limits us and constrains us in the exercise of this debate to look only at the history. I think, Ma'am, that we must project into the next 50 years and therefore to be seeing this more as an opportunity for discourse on how we can recommit and rededicate ourselves to some of the core and fundamental values that built this Barbados up during the last 50 years of independence and upon which I think we must rely if we are going to take Barbados sensibly and seriously forward into the future.

Ma'am, at the very outset I said to myself that it would be a wonderful thing if we as a Barbadian people were able to say with one voice in the words of Mr. Valiant-for-Truth in his work the "Pilgrim's Progress": "Though it is with much difficulty that I have come hither, yet I do not repent me of the trouble I have taken." Ma'am, in my view, that would be a wonderful way of summing up where we are today. It is not without much difficulty that we have come hither but we have not repented ourselves of the trouble we have taken.

Ma'am, as the Honourable Prime Minister indicated, I am one of those fortunate souls who have never had to sing for another person's National Anthem. I am a child of an independent Barbados. Ma'am, I believe that I owe a considerable debt to not only my family but the society that spawned me, the schools that educated me and the culture that shaped me as if it were a crucible that allowed me to be able to understand at a very early age in life that I could stand shoulder to shoulder with any person that I met of my generation or of another generation and feel confident that I had an equality of voice because my country mattered and had a voice in this world. I did not share anybody else's country and have to rely on that country's voice.

I am fortunate, Ma'am, that I can stand and say with certainty that there is an equality of opportunity that was

extended to me because of the society in which I have had the opportunity to live and the country in which I am born. Ma'am, one of the beautiful things about Barbados 50 years after independence is that that still sets us apart from many countries in the world where there is not the certainty of equality of opportunity. The United States of America just went through an election and they behaved as though the transition of power is a phenomena unique to them and totally un-exportable. The reality is that we understood these things from time immemorial as far back as the memory of man doth run.

Ma'am, I feel that it is important to say as well that it is because of an independent Barbados that we in this Parliament can say that we do not know of a country in which people are treated and accepted in law as being second class and third class citizens. That is the state of affairs in many parts of this world.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I feel very fortunate as well that I can say that I feel the security of knowing that the race into which I have been born or the status in society or the class in society into which any Barbadian is born need not be an inhibiting factor for that person to rise to the very highest levels of either society or indeed economy.

We in Barbados have had an opportunity that I think is almost second to none in these 50 years of independence. To the extent that the Prime Minister sees this as a debate in which we should give thanks then I echo his sentiment of thankfulness and gratitude to the people who have gone before us to help shape the Barbados that we hold dear and that we uplift and celebrate today, but Madam Deputy Speaker, I feel constrained to go further because I want in the early stages of this debate to honour some of the unsung heroes of Barbados. I want to specifically start by recognising and paying maximum respect to the workers of this country because it is on the backs of the workers of Barbados that all that we are going to talk about in this debate and all that we have enjoyed in the last 50 years have been built. Most particularly in the categories of workers, I think we must reflect on the public sector of Barbados that professional group of persons who have built the rules and who shaped the rules, the regulations and all of the conditions which make it possible for us to have a functioning Ministry of Finance, a functioning Ministry of Health, a functioning Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, a functioning Ministry of the Environment, and a functioning Ministry of Tourism, whatsoever you have, Ma'am. Without them we would be bereft of the opportunity to stand and speak in the way in which I now do. Madam Deputy Speaker, I say that in all sincerity that in any debate of this nature we have to begin with understanding the important role that the public sector of Barbados has played.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there was an unfortunate part of the Right Honourable Prime Minister's speech, in my view, which perhaps should be reflected upon without making this debate unduly partisan. It would have been a better thing, in my view, for the Right Honourable Prime Minister not to have sought to create the impression that there is a monopoly on patriotism held by the Government and supporter of the Government. I heard the constant refrain, which I understand to have a political tone, of the concern that there may be people who do not feel that there is something to celebrate and I will come to that.

Ma'am, in the very early stages of the debate the Right Honourable Prime Minister, while speaking about leaders of labour, mentioned Sir Frank Walcott, as indeed the Honourable Member should, but the aged old Latin maxim, *expressio unius est exclusio alterius*, means you expressly include one but you exclude the others. Ma'am, there are also two gentleman who are also National Heroes of this land, who have been made so at the same time as Sir Frank was. You have on one hand Sir Grantley Herbert Adams and the other, Sir Hugh Springer. In Sir Grantley's case, Ma'am, he was the first President of the Barbados Workers Union and that between 1941 and 1954, Sir Grantley as President and Sir Hugh as Secretary helped build out that which is now the Barbados Workers Union. They are the ones who locked horns with the plantocracy which at that time was the most hostile and oppressive political, economic and indeed social element in this country.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it was because of the fact that they did not know anything called timidity in politics or in the promotion of the rights and the interest of workers in Barbados, it is because of that that we came to a point where we had the introduction of Universal Adult Suffrage in this land that saw the removal of the exclusive income qualification and ultimately that saw the grant of women having a right to vote. That of course laid the foundation for the entry into Parliament of female politicians and as the Barbados Labour Party is very proud now to boast, of reaching the stage where you have a Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition who is female and Prime Minister-in-waiting.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is very important that as we reflect on the last 50 years understand that there is an aspect of this country's development that we must try to rededicate ourselves to. As I say to you, there is an opportunity here to understand that this debate is not only about giving thanks but that it is a debate about recommittal and rededication. I take the position, Madam Deputy Speaker, that Barbados has had a lot about which we can be proud. We have had a number of achievements about which we can be justifiably pleased, but let us not feel that it is just a matter of beating one's chest and reflecting on the halcyon heights that this country reached

over the last 50 years, it is also equally, Madam Deputy Speaker, a time which creates a need for us to be reflecting on the extent to which we have started to fall from those halcyon heights and the extent to which, Ma'am, we have started to fail the Founding Fathers of this country and to fall short of their vision for what Barbados could and should properly be.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I say to you that there is a lot about which we can feel justifiably proud. Now the Right Honourable Prime Minister could not have been expected to speak to the totality of all this country's accomplishments, because he would probably be speaking until this time next week, but the reality is that there are something that I think we must also focus on, even before we come to the point that we explain to the country the extent to which we may be falling short and the way in which we are falling short. Ma'am, I will do so.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to underscore the success of commercial enterprise in this country because if there is anything that sets Barbados apart today, is the fact that we still shine like a beacon in the night, a little rock in the Caribbean but that has been able to demonstrate through the years an ability to attract investments in a manner that is completely out of proportion to the size of the country and the amount of natural resources that the country has.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have been the source of attraction of major financial capitals around the world and that is not by happenstance. We have been the source of investments that is No. 3 in this hemisphere in terms of scale and size from Canada. That is not by happenstance. As the Right Honourable Prime Minister quite rightly said, we have built out an international business climate and presence which is the envy of many in this world. Ma'am, it has come about because of the fact that we did some fundamental things about which we should be very proud.

Mr. Speaker, we built out a Barbados National Bank, for example. In the energy sector we created a National Petroleum Corporation that today and historically has been able to link the average Barbadian to not only just natural gas but also to the concept of what we hope would one day be a substantially greater degree of self-sufficiency in energy production and management of this country's energy resources. I think, Ma'am, for example, of the Barbados Export Promotion Corporation, an entity which has worked through the years to make sure that those things that we can produce, that we have been able to penetrate external markets and make sure that there is a climate in which people look to Barbadian goods and have come to understand and appreciate Barbadian goods as being the equal of many others in the world and superior to many others in the world.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have built out an Insurance Corporation of Barbados. Yes, though its ownership may have changed, the fact of the matter is that it was a forerunner in providing insurance cover in areas where others were not prepared to go. The Right Honourable Prime Minister would remember that when, for example, the mini buses of Barbados could not get insurance cover from many other insurance companies, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados was there for them and therefore helped a small man sector to emerge. Ma'am, we can think of the fact that there was a time in Barbados where people found on giving owners of chattel houses insurance protection, and the move to change that began in the Insurance Corporation tax of Barbados.

Madam Deputy Speaker, not only on the strictly commercial side can we be very proud and justifiably so, but we have to look at the fact that Barbados has been one of those countries which understood the value of finely balancing the capitalist considerations of commerce on one side with the socialist philosophy of trying to make sure that you curb the excess of capitalism and making sure that you look after the ordinary man; making sure that the small man had a stake, making sure that the small man was not downtrodden and left behind but that he too had a piece of the pie and was given an opportunity through dint of hard work, industry and effort to build himself and his enterprises up. Ma'am, one of the things about which I feel we must be justifiably proud is the fact that those same minibuses operators that I spoke about have now become a major player in the Barbados economy. Ma'am, some small people who came out of an ordinary, humble village in Barbados, are now able to boast of the fact that they have built up a fleet of buses that may number 30 or more. There are not many places that do that. Ma'am, we took a public transport system which -- when I was a little boy, there was one run by Elite and another one by Rocklyn -- were privately owned enterprises. We took it, nationalised it and created a Barbados Transport Board, and then went a step further and made sure that a co-operative emerged so that workers at the Barbados Transport Board were able to be in charge of the maintenance and repairs of the buses and that the financial benefit of that type of activity was ploughed back into the workers, Ma'am.

Ma'am, the mixed economy is something that we in this country must feel very proud of and not lose sight of as a success. Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that again we must be mindful of the fact that we have done well in social legislation. The Right Honourable Member, when he spoke, quite rightly made reference to the concept of illegitimacy, the outlawing of bastardy, as it was called in the bad old days when you used to have little children being looked at in face and told, "You are a bastard so you cannot get anything your father had." We outlawed that through the Status of Children Reform Act. Of equal importance in my view, Ma'am, is the fact that we had a

National Commission on the Status of Women which saw a spectacular rise to prominence of females across all walks of Barbadian society. Ma'am, that National Commission on the Status of Women, if I remember correctly, may have made over 200 recommendations. I think all of them were eventually implemented, and those were recommendations which were about expanding the power of women not only in their households but in their communities and in the places where they did work and did business. Where we look around Barbados today and see females who are sitting at the top as chief executive officers in businesses and chief financial officers, et cetera, that did not happen by accident. That was by dint of hard work and appropriate investment to make sure that the correct social climate was created.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we can feel also very proud about the creation of a Barbados Drug Service; again, making fundamental medical interventions possible or accessible to the average man and woman out there. America makes a big hue and cry today about things that Barbados did years and years ago. President Obama, as he prepares to leave the White House, would say that a main piece, the central part, of his legacy would be some of the things in the healthcare reform of America that we in Barbados and I knew as a little boy and which we have reformed and reformed again. The issue that I will come to is how effectively are we managing it today, and how are we positioning ourselves, having achieved those vital successes, so that 50 years from now we could have made it so much better as opposed to running the risk of compromising them completely? Ma'am, this is an opportunity for us to re-evaluate what it is that we did in the past and to take stock of where we are now. Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not saying that we must all feel that everything that we are doing now is wrong, though I believe that much of it is, but we must recognise that where we are slipping we have to arrest the slippage. We have to arrest the slippage expeditiously and then reposition ourselves so that we are on a track, and so that those who come to this place 50 years hence will be able to say, "There was a period of time when things looked a little shaky in Barbados, but we got it right in the end." That is what we really want, Madam Deputy Speaker. Ma'am, whether you sit on your left hand side where we sit, or whether you sit on the right hand side where the Prime Minister sits, what we really want is to know that at the end of the day, when the hurly-burly is done and the battles are fought and won, that we the Barbadian population have got it right and it has worked out for the betterment of the people of this country. Yes, that did come from Macbeth; that is correct.

Madam Deputy Speaker, home ownership is another one of those areas where I feel that we can look back and say that we have done a lot of good things for a small economy like ours. Again, I think we judge ourselves by

the standards of gods and not of men. We have to look at ourselves in the context of other countries of similar size, similar economic profiles, and there are not too many where you will find the kind of interventions that we have made; whether those interventions are through the work of the National Housing Corporation or the creation of the Barbados Mortgage Finance, where people were given 100 per cent mortgages at one stage, and the Housing Welfare Scheme, Madam Deputy Speaker. Ma'am, those are things which ensured that Barbadians, as we say in the vernacular, "could own a little piece of the rock". It is a society that slowly, as the Right Honourable Member said, transformed itself from a collection of villages and a rural, agrarian economy into a society that became a lot more commercially oriented, where businesses were growing up and people were seeing an expansion of their income and the generation of wealth, and yes, the building of savings, Madam Deputy Speaker. Let us not forget that, because Barbadians were building large amounts of savings in their private capacities, and sometimes they would merge it into co-operative ventures and sometimes into little joint partnerships between two or three men who know one another from school or grew up in the same village. They would put the money together and face the bank, and as a result of that, were able to form a little company. Again, Ma'am, we have to preserve that, but to preserve it you have to re-evaluate where you are today, because one of the unpleasant truths about Barbados 50 years after Independence is that we are now seeing the statistics -- not the Honourable Member for St. James Central saying it -- of the country. The Central Bank is saying it. There is a loss of savings. Barbadians are experiencing what is called by the economists "dis-savings". Your savings are disappearing. That means that the wealth of the community, the wealth of the ordinary man and woman, is disappearing, and that puts them in a less competitive environment, Ma'am. It places them on a more uncompetitive footing, and that means that we are going in the wrong direction when we see that kind of statistic. It is time to take stock about that too, and to assess where it is that we are going wrong and how we have gotten there, and make sure that 50 years hence we are not in a society like the one we came out of 50 years ago where you had a big six in Barbados, Wilkinson, Challenor, that crowd that owned everything and everybody else were struggling for a mess of pottage. We do not want to go back there. We have to make sure that it is not immersing in a new Barbados 50 years from now. A new big six, it may not be made up of the same names, it may have in new names. I do not know what names you would have, but mark my words, it is quite possible that some of the people now who seem to be behind almost every project, seemed to be behind almost every financial venture ...

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have five minutes left.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker, I thought I had unlimited time, but if I do not, it that correct?

Asides.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: My apologies.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Right, that was the Honourable Leader of Government Business' wish, Madam. He wanted me to have only five minutes.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the important point is that you do not want a situation to arise where a narrow group of one or two control the vast majority of wealth in this country and that is what we have to avoid. Madam Deputy Speaker, I say to you that while I take great pride in what we have been able to do to spur homeownership in Barbados during the last 50 years, let me also say to you that in keeping with my theme that this is an opportunity to re-evaluate, that we must also look at what we are doing to potential home owners in Barbados because it is all too tempting, Madam Deputy Speaker, to look at those folks who have been able to benefit from a housing solution and to point to them as part of a set of statistics saying, these people got through but do you know that today at the National Housing Corporation there are approximately 27 000 applications sitting waiting - and that is not to reflect on the Minister or the administration of the National Housing Corporation that is to simply state a fact -- 27 000 application waiting to find solutions. Madam Deputy Speaker, the difficulty that we face is that we have, in Barbados, an unfortunate situation evolving where you can go into anyone of the 30 constituencies and find a good few people who would tell you that I applied to National Housing Corporation and my name is on the list. You would ask, but when did you apply and in some cases you would hear, I applied in 1980 something, or I applied in 1990 and you have a situation where, in spite of whether it is the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) in Government or the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) in Government, those folks are sitting waiting 20 years later. They are waiting in vain, Madam Deputy Speaker. We are frustrating the people whom we are here to serve, whose solutions are in the palm of our hand. That is something that we have to evaluate and to find a solution for so that 50 years from now we do not have a set of Barbados who have lost all faith as existed 50 years ago, when the average working-class man in Barbados had no faith that they could be anything that would be done for him socially by way of an intervention to help him achieve shelter. Shelter is a fundamental right, it is one of the so-called ontological needs of man, clothing, shelter, food, those things that we cannot live without.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I feel that it is important at a time like this to re-evaluate where we are on matters such as this. Yes, we have to give thanks for the fact that we have been able to shelter some of our fellow citizens but we must evaluate where it is that we are failing, the rest of the follow citizens who are having a similar need. Bear in mind, Madam Deputy Speaker, that of those 27 000 I speak to, it is a fact to say that a majority of them are earning less than \$1 500 per month. How then do we craft an intervention to make sure that those folks are looked after and not left behind?

Madam Deputy Speaker, I also feel that we can feel justifiably proud about interventions such as those that were done under a Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Administration where we created a Rural and Urban Development Commission. Why do I say that, Madam Deputy Speaker? Because I represent a constituency which really sits on the borderline between urban Barbados and rural Barbados and I am very familiar with the need for the upgrade of facilities and the introduction of amenities in both urban Barbados and rural Barbados. We in the Caribbean can boast of being able to make progress that was substantial. When I visit the land of your birth and neighbouring St. Vincent and so on, I still see many, many districts which have not yet have the benefit of the kind of interventions that were able to be made by Rural and Urban Development Commissions after it was created under the last Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Administration. The benefits for the ordinary persons, persons who did not have water-borne facilities, the old lady who is living in a chattel they had to leave in weather such as what we have been experiencing for the last few days, pouring rain at night but you have a call of nature that you have to heed and you have to find a way to get outside to get to the outside facility. We say that all around Barbados and as I say to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Prime Minister is right when he says he has to give thanks because it is a fact that you go to many of the eastern Caribbean countries and that is still the order of the day but by intervention we were able to substantially reduce the amount, almost wipe off, there are still some, but substantially reduce the amount of instance where that is the type of situation. Similarly, Madam Deputy Speaker, electrification of rural Barbados. The Barbados I grew up in was a place where you did not have light all over, it was not like now. You would go into some parts of rural Barbados ... the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, I am sure, would be able to tell you that there were parts of rural Barbados where electrification was not the order of the day. Indeed, even though I am a child of independence, I went to school with children who had been doing their homework by way of a smut lamp so that the transformation from that ...

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: The Right Honourable Member would have done all of his, so that the transformation, that which we take for granted today, there are lights in every house, you just hit a switch, but that was not the order of the day. The transformation of Barbados to take it where it is that if you fly into this country at night you think that you are arriving in New York City with the amount of lights you see. There are lights on the playing field, lights on the roads, lights in the houses, lights everywhere and yes we have just come through a lengthy debate on the green economy and we understand the implications for these things and we have again to re-evaluate what we are doing because it is true to say that there has to be an economically feasible way of maintain this kind of social service but the fact of the matter is, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we have to give thanks that we have been able to bring that kind of intervention to improve the quality of life of rural in particularly. Madam Deputy Speaker, may I also say that it is also true of the question of road and the Leader of the Opposition when she was Minister with responsibility for economic development would have had under her portfolio the Urban Development Commission and I have to give thanks to her for the assistance rendered to me in my constituency.

As I said, part of my constituency is urban and part is rural. In the urban section, Ma'am, we had a situation where houses were landlocked, people could not get to their house without crossing somebody's land. Ma'am, you represent St. John so you would understand that in situations like that you got to be forever on good speaking terms with the people around you, you cannot risk falling out because if you live in the middle you got to cross a man's land to get home and if you fall out with him there is no access. This idea of coming in with narrow concrete roads and so on creating access into districts that previously only had mud tracks fundamentally impacted on the lives of ordinary people in Barbados in a way that is yet to be done in many countries of the eastern Caribbean.

Ma'am, I therefore agree we have to give thanks but we also have to reevaluate where we are today because we did not solve all of those problems and until the administrative confusion - I put it no higher or lower - which now reigns at the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission is resolved and until the necessary financing is unlocked and made available, then Ma'am, we would still have those situations where in 2016 the unthinkable exists. It happens still in my constituency and I know therefore it has to be happening across Barbados. We have not gotten over this problem. It is still confronting us and I think it would be a crying shame for us 50 years from now to be at a stage where we have not solved the problem that ordinary Barbadians have that you cannot get to the little piece of land that you got where you have your house on because there is no roadway in. I have seen with my own naked eye an old lady, an

amputee, being lifted out of her home, a fire was next door, she cannot walk and she had to be taken out of her home when the house next door was burning because there is a risk that the one next to it would burn too where she is and the fire truck could not get any closer than probably a quarter of a mile away because there is no way in for the fire truck.

Part of that, Ma'am, means that we have now to sit down seriously as a Government with the Town and Country Planning Department and the ministry with responsibility for urban and rural development and all other stakeholders so that there are interventions crafted that make sure that we take the burden of this type of existence off of the backs of the people who elected us to come here as solution-makers and not to decorate the seats of Parliament, that is what this debate is about for me.

Ma'am, I hear the talk about giving thanks and I would be the first to say there is much to give thanks about but I do not want to give thanks that my garbage truck comes once every three weeks, I want to know that my garbage truck will be coming once every week as it is supposed to come. Ma'am, do not make me feel indebted to the state and to sing "Kum ba yah Lord, Kum ba yah" because I see a garbage truck once every four weeks. Do not ask me to give thanks because you have reduced me to the point where I am so unaccustomed to getting a garbage truck to come around that I see it once a month and "Oh Hallelujah" because I know that better can and should be done. Ma'am, 50 years from now we must be able to say with certainty that some of these basic amenities are being delivered to our people without the type of frustration that is being visited on them in recent times. Ma'am, that is what I think this debate is about: How we marshal the resources of the Crown in order to make sure that we prioritise because that is the issue.

If you listen carefully, Ma'am, and you may be tempted not to because you Ma'am, sits on the side that is to the right of His Honour the Speaker so you may be poisoned by the political environment in which you sit, but Ma'am, I urge you in moments of personal candour and introspection to listen to that which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has been saying to the country and to you and to the people you represent that we simply got to get the priorities right. We do not expect that everything can be done. We know that hardship is on the land but there must be some fundamentals that are prioritised, some things that we say come what may this is not to be compromised.

I feel, Ma'am, that this debate is a very useful exercise and a critical part of what we must be doing to celebrate independence. If you tell me on the other hand that in January of 2016 you are going to hold something in town and let go fireworks, then I am not entirely sure that I

feel the same sense of passion about that way of spending money, and that Ma'am, is where I pause.

Madam Deputy Speaker vacated the Chair and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member, I hope I have not broken your concentration, let us go.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you will forgive me from time to time if I call you Madam Deputy Speaker, because I became so accustomed to saying Madam Deputy Speaker but I will try not to make that error.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will not forgive you.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: If it happens it is not meant to be personal, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I feel as well that there are some achievements that we have made that again demonstrate Barbados' ability to stand as a country alongside some of the leading economies of the world, and about that we have to be proud.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Everything in Barbados becomes political and is the subject of some degree of political difference and controversy. There was a programme called EduTech, you might have heard of it, Mr. Speaker. When EduTech was introduced it was about making sure that little children who came from families where mommy could not give them a computer and daddy could not afford a laptop and so on could go into school and learn to use the computer because the vision down the road, as I said at the beginning, was that Barbadians could stand with certainty and know they had an equality of opportunity in this world so that if Canadian children and Americans children were being given the opportunity to become technologically advanced, then, Sir, Barbadian children could not be left behind, that you would not have a digital divide between a new way of saying some are born to have and others are to be born and they will have not. Sir, we fought against that and sought to close that potential digital divide by way of the EduTech Programme. It was not necessarily a perfect programme but it was intended to do exactly how I just described it. Sir, out of that we then came to what we called community resource centres.

Again, I say to the Honourable House at a time when I was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and indeed had a specific responsibility with respect to CARICOM and I was visiting every CARICOM country there was nowhere else that I could find this concept of community resource centres, that in a vast majority of the

constituencies you had one or two places where people could go because in their home because of the economic and social circumstances. They did not yet have access to the Internet or to a computer, that was not just yet the age where you had the tablets or developed smartphones as you have now, so you used to go into the Community Resource Centre and make use of the facility so that you would not be left behind. Mr. Speaker, Sir, those are the things which I think have helped to shape the Barbados of today to make it as competitive as it is.

Mr. Speaker, one can go on and on. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North is not in his seat but the Honourable Member was the person who piloted in this Honourable House an Unfair Competition Act that allowed the average Barbadian who went shopping at a megastore, by Barbados' standard... For example, if a man buys a television set which has a problem or a man buys a pair of shoes and there was an issue with those shoes, that man recently would have had no recourse if an issue arose. Now under an Unfair Competition Act as a consumer you are empowered. Therefore you are empowering people and that is what Barbados has done, socially and economically we have empowered and sought to begin or to advance a process of transformation of the circumstances of people in this country. Mr. Speaker, for those things, as the Right Honourable Prime Minister said, I think this country must be thankful.

Mr. Speaker, I also feel that again these are all things where we have a duty to reflect on what really what is it that we have achieved and where it is that we wish to go. Mr. Speaker, this country has already been introduced to a document which was poo-pooed in here by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central called the "Covenant of Hope", published by the Barbados Labour Party. Mr. Speaker, what can you say? Sometimes you can either light a candle or you can curse the darkness. On this occasion I would prefer to light a candle and to hope to illuminate the darkness of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. The truth is that the "Covenant of Hope" was published by the Barbados Labour Party because we understand that there is a danger in this country of people losing faith with the governance process, people feeling that they have elected a regime in good faith, one that makes concrete promises and that within months of coming in here much of that which was said in a campaign is turned on its head and becomes wild and whirling words, mumbo-jumbo, jetsam and flotsam on the tossing waves of the sea.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we feel that whether you win or lose, an election is not as important as making sure that the country understands where you stand and what you commit yourself to as broad overarching guiding principles. Ma'am, that is why, not for the foolishness we once heard in this House that we do not have a philosophy so they had

to write something down on a piece of paper, I expected that from the kindergarten class at St. Cyprian School, but I do not expect that in the House of Assembly where people are being paid from the public purse to demonstrate a sense of seriousness about Government.

Mr. Speaker, you turn to the “Covenant of Hope” which I believe is already a document of this Honourable House. If it is not, then I am happy to make it a document for those who wish to be given a little bit of guidance as to how governance might operate and will certainly operate in the future, God’s willing. The “Covenant of Hope” talks about the principles of good governance that this country has upheld and upon which the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, will want to expand and quite frankly about which we feel there is a sense of slippage, about which we feel that we are losing ground because things on the current trajectory are not going in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, we speak to the concept of making sure that everyone has a voice in the decision-making process. Sir, 50 years from now I would want to know that when the Town and Country Planning Department decides to come into Hoytes Village, St. James, as they sought to do in 2012 and to give permission to somebody to put an incinerator where folks have lived for 50 years, that at least the common courtesy of a discussion with the village about how it would impact on them would be conducted. At least have an input into the decision-making process and that that decision-making process would not be taken without reference, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to the people who have a stake in the community. I feel that is what good governance must be.

Mr. Speaker, the “Covenant of Hope” says that we see good governance as providing everyone with timely and accurate information. Sir, this is not new, it is certainly not new to the Democratic Labour Party because I distinctly remember a Democratic Labour Party Manifesto of 2008 which said that after every Cabinet meeting there would be a Press conference telling the people what the Cabinet talked about and what it had decided.

Mr. Speaker, between 2008 and November, 2016, things have changed because there have been many Cabinet meetings, but I do not know of any under this current Right Honourable Prime Minister... under the previous Right Honourable Prime Minister, but that went through the eddoes. Sir, 50 years from now, I will probably be dead and gone but the worms will come and tell me, and I want them to come and say that it is now a norm in Barbados that you have discussions with the people after Cabinet takes place on a Thursday morning.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, the good governance commitment that we speak of also say that it is desirable to hold decision-makers accountable for the choices that they make. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go into that in too much detail right now. Mr. Speaker, the Right Honourable Prime Minister starts to get nervous, the Right Honourable Prime Minister trembles when I said that the time has come to hold decision-makers accountable for the decisions that they make. That issue will be dealt with in due course.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: You are going to tell us when to deal with it, not us. You are going to ring a bell and we will tell you. That will happen, believe you me.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, the “Covenant of Hope” said that we commit to following the rule of law and to respect the independence of the Judiciary. Sir, I do not have to go on and on, I think that you get a feeling for the issues that we are talking about

Mr. Speaker, beyond that, I think that as I said to you, this debate while giving thanks, I do not want to be misunderstood, even with the interruptions coming from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, as not emphasizing the importance of giving thanks but I feel, Mr. Speaker, that as we come to this juncture much time must be spent on reflection and introspection with a view to where the Barbados of tomorrow is going to be going. Sir, at the end of the day it is really not so much about what we have done for the last 50 years. Most of us here cannot take too much credit for the last 50 years, that credit goes, in large measure, to those folks who are adorning the City Square and are called National Heroes. That credit goes to the public servants of the country and the workers but in large measure the future is what we are here to help shape.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that at this point it is necessary to take us back to the concern of the Right Honourable Prime Minister at the beginning when the Honourable Member could not understand why some people would express a sense of disappointment. Sir, I say that we have fallen from halcyon heights, we have. We have fallen from a Barbados in which Prime Ministers were in contact with all the parishes and the people of the parishes and that the people felt a sense of ownership in leader of the land. That was the Right Excellent Errol Barrow that we knew, and more recent Prime Ministers as well, Mr. Speaker. For example, I hear people who come from the parish of St. Joseph say that they would be hard-pressed to join in celebration at this point because, first of all, they feel as though they are a set of people who are no longer relevant to the Government; that a year could pass from November of

2015 to November of 2016 and almost on a weekly basis folks are bereft of running water. People leave the parish of St. Joseph and come down to St. James to wash clothes. People leave the parish of St. Joseph and go on Sundays into St. Michael to get food cooked for their families. People are bereft of a basic necessity for livelihood, Sir. Mr. Speaker, do you know that to this date, as much as we are here to give thanks, I know folks in St. Joseph would give thanks if the Right Honourable Member who is Prime Minister of Barbados paid a visit to St. Joseph with respect to the water matter.

Aside.

Mr. K.D. SYMMONDS: He did not go anywhere. He did not go a foot. He says that he moves incognito, under cover of darkness. I do not know where he goes but that is what he says. The point is, Mr. Speaker, when we are giving thanks we have to also evaluate what is happening in this country, and I feel that 50 years from now what we want to be able to say to the people of Barbados is that water, we accept, is a source of life without which development and growth are constrained, and that every citizen must have access to water and that all steps will be taken as a priority on the resources of the Crown to make sure that what folks have been enduring in 2016 they will never have to endure again in this country. What does that mean? You cannot just old-talk about the problem. You cannot just say you will bring plants into Barbados because they are portable and set them up hither and thither. Mr. Speaker, that is part of it but I would have thought that by now this country would have had a draft Town Planning Act before it which would make sure that every house, irrespective of size, must be equipped with the necessary amenities that you can capture the water that hits on the roof so that it can be used for some purpose inside of the house; irrespective of size, so that when you are building a house in Barbados from henceforth, or any other building, that would be a consideration in the same way that it is a consideration in Bermuda and in parts of the Middle East. Mr. Speaker, these are the things which tell me that the Government is more interested in talking about a problem than about bringing fixed and final solution to the problem.

Mr. Speaker, as I reflect on where we have gone in the last 50 years, I believe that we can all say that we have enjoyed a place that was relatively and reasonably safe to live, work and visit. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that Barbados' tourism product, which is literally second to none in the Caribbean, has benefited because of the relative and comparative safety of this country. However, Mr. Speaker, I take you back to this summer, the lengthy summer recess that we had; about eight weeks or more of break during which time we had a number of instances of automatic weapons of military grade being used in the streets of this country. We had a number of instances of people dying, in

fact as recently as last Sunday, in shootouts and so on; some with the police, some against each other. Mr. Speaker, I felt then and I said then as I say now, Government has two routes that it can walk. You can talk about these things and say, "Oh dear, that is a bad thing. Boy, we wish it were not so and we will look at it and see what can be done." It would have been a good thing, however, if the other route was taken, of saying that the Parliament that was on recess for so long while being paid -- while being paid -- was called back to work and that we take immediate action by way of a Resolution to discuss this matter as we are discussing Independence now. I believe the Independence of the land is no less important than the safety and security of the citizens of the land. What is the joy in the Independence of the land if the land is not a place where you can feel reasonably safe and secure that this is a place where you can live, work and play? Mr. Speaker, when Parliament can remain silent when you have automatic weapons of military grade being used in a willy-nilly fashion across Barbados, fellow citizens dead in the street, blood running like rivers of water, there was no Amendment made to a Firearm Act that is still in need of Amendment. You can wag your finger at me as much as you like; I am here as a messenger of truth. I am here, and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South must understand I am speaking as a messenger of truth, not to be intimidated by him because he did not send me here, and I am fairly satisfied that while I am here, he will be gone.

Mr. Speaker, I also feel that the question of a living income for Barbadian households is important. I say to you, Sir, that we can feel justifiably proud in Barbados 50 years after Independence that we have seen folk like the Right Honourable Member who led this Debate; a man of considerable intelligence and intellectual ability. He is. He might have other deficiencies but he is a bright man, and he used that God-given talent to pull himself up by his bootstraps to be leader of the land today and a senior member of the Bar in a private capacity. However, Mr. Speaker, that is not unique in Barbados. The former Right Honourable Member before him was, again, a man from very humble origins, and pulled himself up to be one of the leading economic luminaries in the Hemisphere. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that we have had a number of Barbadians who have demonstrated a tremendous level of competence in their personal endeavours and pursuits, and there has been a financial reward for them as they moved from working class Barbados to upper-middle class Barbados, and some even beyond. Mr. Speaker, while we give thanks for that, let us not forget the rest of the society. Let us also use this as an opportunity to reflect upon and to evaluate and re-evaluate, and yes, to rededicate ourselves to those things that helped make those successful people successful and understand where others who have the potential are being failed. Mr. Speaker, I honestly feel that we must accept that 50 years from now, 25 years from now, even ten years

from now, you cannot have a repeat of a situation where hardship falls on the country and, as a knee-jerk reaction, you just take a butcher knife and slash 3 000 workers from the payroll of the public purse. Mr. Speaker, this was in circumstances where two people from the same household, who were income earners, went home. How then, in spite of all the talent that a man may have and all the hard work he may be prepared to do, does a youngster in that circumstance pull himself up by the boot-straps, Mr. Speaker, when the Government, which should be the principal facilitator, is really the inhibitor to his progress? That is where we must re-evaluate how we have been doing things. Yes, there is a lot to give thanks for but there is an urgent need to re-evaluate and to rededicate ourselves never to be going that particular road again.

Mr. Speaker, as we say that we have to be mindful of the workers who waited two years in order to get a judgement; who were bereft of financial compensation for over two years. How did they live? Who here has paused to give thought to them because it is all well and good to talk about how successful we have been in the past because as I said, we are not the architects of the past we are the architects of the future and as an architect of the future, I feel uncomfortable about the future I have been, I cannot say I have been a part of shaping, but by virtue of being in a Parliament collective responsibility, I guess, says that you are part of that which was bequeath to those people who had to wait two years, whose families, Mr. Speaker, had to endure two years of financial punishment. That is an aspect of it, Mr. Speaker, that I think must be looked at.

Mr. Speaker, we had a debate in this House sometime in 2014, I believe it was, where we looked at the trade relationships between CARICOM and the European Union and I said then as I will say now, Barbados was expected - in the same way that we have taken traditional education whether it be studying English, Maths, Geography, History, whatever - to treat with a sense of urgency and sincerity the new opportunity that was created to do a thing call a National Vocational Qualification that if a fellow is not given to doing the so-called academic subjects but he is skilled and wishes to perfect the craft that he has in a trade, that you give him the opportunity to qualify as a tradesman. If he is a plumber the idea of the National Vocational Qualification, Mr. Speaker, was to give him an opportunity to demonstrate a skill and be tested by his peers. Yes, there is still a National Vocational Qualification but the point is that when Jamaica had theirs up and running and galloping ahead, and Trinidad had theirs up and running and galloping ahead, ours was in one scope. It is an indisputable fact.

I am saying to you that the natural leadership that we have enjoyed in this region stands to be compromised because tradesmen, as much as some people may feel it is dead, there is still a CARICOM and if you have a set of

persons who are skilled but are not able to qualify on the basis of the skill they possess and therefore are not able to move as would a lawyer, or a doctor, or a dentist or an architect, then you are depriving them of the fruits of financial opportunity when you have not provided the elites of the society of financial opportunity and that is what we have to avoid. We have built a Barbados over the last 50 years, as the Prime Minister just told us, of transforming the financial prospects of our average citizens, of saying to the average citizen, you too can have a stake in this country. You too can be Prime Minister like the current Prime Minister. Pull yourself up by your bootstraps but when Government through its inefficiency and some would say, incompetence, I would say inertia, fails to make sure that there is a satisfactory intervention so that the National Vocational Qualifications as far as they were concerned, we lagged behind. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I have a philosophical position that every young person who wants to go on to do that kind of training or to do tertiary training must be able to do so without working about how they are going to pay for it. I do not have to go much further because this Government stands condemned on that. The way I became a professional, the way all Honourable Members on That Side that sit before me now became professionals that opportunity has been deprived, that is what has bequeath by this new generation of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) so that people 50 years from now, Mr. Speaker, who are born into the same level of poverty of which the Honourable Prime Minister spoke in his circumstances may not be able to enjoy the success that the right Honourable Member enjoyed because the financial circumstances have not been mitigated by a Government that has intervened in a way as to make sure that the poor are not kept poor. It is all well and good. Some people will always get through but there is an element that is going to need the assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I honest feel that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is vex with me. He keeps heckling me because he wants me to get to healthcare and perhaps I should because we can look back at a Barbados over the last 50 years upon which there is much to be proud in terms of the administration of Barbados' healthcare. A Barbados in which surgeries were not brought to an end because the lights went off in the hospital as has happened two weekends ago, a Barbados in which every Barbadian was able to rely on a quality of healthcare. Again, as I have said before, you can spend your time lighting a candle or you can curse the darkness and with this particular Honourable Member I have grown weary of cursing the darkness so I will try and light the candle. Philosophically this is where the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) is.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that you have to be moving this country forward and making sure that Barbadians are in a position to manage their own healthcare. By that what do I mean? I mean that you prioritise Government's

intervention must be first and foremost to prioritise the wellness, you create a culture of wellness in the country, the prevention of disease, avoidance of ill health. It means eating right, exercising right, providing the assistance where necessary to make sure that that kind of lifestyle is promoted. Mr. Speaker, if that is what you are going to do then you have to have policies that support them and you have to have expenditure that supports it. You have to have households that have money, Mr. Speaker. Again this is where we have slipped because when the Right Honourable Prime Minister was a boy growing up and a young man as a young lawyer, when the Right Honourable Minister of Finance, sorry not Right Honourable, he is not Right Honourable yet, when the Minister of Finance was a young man and he put a little money on the bank, he knew what it was to get two or three percent interest.

What is happening in Barbados now? When I talk about re-evaluating where we are, when I talk about rethinking what we have done and understanding the implications for the next generation. Let us begin by understanding the implications for the current household where a man earns a living and he has the little children, he puts his money on the bank, but what is the bank giving him? In terms of interest, 0.3 of a percentage. It is virtually invisible to the naked eye so how does the household garner more wealth? I have already spoken about the considerable dis-savings because the cost of living has outstripped the earning capacity so people are living off of savings but now you have little or no interest when you put money on a bank and unfortunately and there is little or no confidence in the Government bonds. I know I would hear that there are Government bonds but I do not even want to go there.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: But it is true. Even you do not have confidence in the Government bonds, therefore, Mr. Speaker, part of what we are talking about is the empowerment of the average household in Barbados so that they are in a better position to invest more in the things that they must invest in and practice a lifestyle to eat the things they must eat in order to have this mission of preventative healthcare recognised

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Prime Minister spoke about institutions of which there are many to be proud, and I think that one of the things we have to look at in this debate is an evaluation of how our fundamental institutions have performed through the years. Mr. Speaker, let us be frank and candid with each other, as the Honourable Member for St. James South likes to say, with respect to how the institutions are working. I have heard the Honourable Member for St. James South heaped scorn on the way in which the judiciary and the court system of Barbados operates. I have heard him speak in his capacity as Minister

of International Business and I must tell you that I do not disagree with him when he talks about the quality of the court system but it does not end there because if we have to look at the National Insurance Scheme of Barbados, what it was, it is one example where you can say it went to prestigious and halcyon heights and held up its head anywhere in this hemisphere, but there is nobody who is observing what is happening in Barbados now and feels proud about what is happening with the National Insurance Scheme, it has become Government's piggybank. The printing of the money, which has now exceeded \$1 billion, is done by using money to go and buy Government Paper - what are we saying - so that Government can continue the financial recklessness and lawlessness about which the International Monetary Fund has repeatedly warned the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, Sir, those are the things that we say at 50 years of age we would like to see stop. Mr. Speaker, when I speak of slippage and when I speak of falling from the high standards that we held, we speak of an intervention by a Prime Minister who would be expected to be able to say bring that to a halt.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: In the same way that I speak again of the desire to have an ethos in Barbados where in the same way that we understood the importance of building out a new commercial sector in this country... Over 50 years we built out a new commercial enterprise, and as I indicated we built a commercial sector in Barbados - the Honourable Prime Minister himself also spoke of it - an international business sector and a wonderful well respected climate. At one stage Barbados was the host to the third largest amount of investment from Canada from this hemisphere and we still are, so, Mr. Speaker, how then can we sit idly by and watch all of that be threatened. I put this plea in now not for the people of the country but for perhaps the most frustrated Member of the Democratic Labour Party Cabinet, the Minister of International Business, who repeatedly asked his colleagues to intervene to help him create a climate of business facilitation in Barbados which will inure to the benefit of the country, which will see people who want to do business in Barbados be in a position to say you can get a company set up, you can get permissions, and you can whatever you need to have your business run. Mr. Speaker, it is not only for them. It is not only because outsiders need to come here and invest, it is because Barbadians got to deal with it too.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Government of Barbados understands what agony our constituents go through even to open a bank account in this country. Do you understand it? What records does a young man who has now gone into university at 18/19 years of age have? What record does he have of past financial dealings? What bill? No bill comes to him. No bill went in the name of Christopher Peter Sinckler, whomever he may be, when

was living at his mother's house. When he was 18 years old there was no bill. Furthermore he would have been up and down the place "lend mah a little dollar here 'cause I short for a hamburger". What bill?

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: He does not have to say that now, he could lend you now. The point, Mr. Speaker, is that this is where the intervention has to come because this has gotten to the point of madness. This is madness. Fifty years after independence you are making it harder than ever before for ordinary people to do ordinary things. You bring in something from overseas, you clear it at the airport and then you have to leave the airport to go down to Warrens with the paper to drive back up to the airport. It is madness, Mr. Speaker, Sir, and lest we get serious about it we will build in this country a level of frustration -- we may already have built it - which makes it impossible to feel the confidence about Barbados that I began by saying I enjoy as a young man and as a boy growing up.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want the Honourable Prime Minister who is the head of Government -- I singled him out because I have really lost faith in all of the rest, it is in him that I repose the dying breath of confidence -- to see this as an attack on him because to be Prime Minister on the eve of the 50th Anniversary is not just about the prestige of the moment or about the great march past and the salute, it is about the architecture, the shaping of the future. All those little children in the KG class that I just talked about are in the hands of the Prime Minister. Their future depends on him and they depend on him. The reality, Mr. Speaker, is that they want to live in a country which does not see as its first option an incinerator that will burn a furnace at the heat of the sun and pollute the place and compromise their health, they want to see as a first option for garbage solution a national policy on recycling.

As long as we have been talking about garbage solutions in Barbados and as much as we have said about Cahill Energy and all of that confusion, Mr. Speaker, do you know that in all that time no Bill has come to this House saying that this is a national policy on recycling that you are going to take your plastic and put it one place, that you are going to take your cardboard and put it another place and that you are going to put your glass, paper and so on in another place. It cannot happen by happenstance and accidents. It did not happen that way in Canada where it is practised now every day. Every time one of us flies up there we do it, we see the three or four options and we put what we have to discard in the correct bin, but Mr. Speaker, somebody had to sit down and craft the legislation.

You do not come to the House and parade for three successive weeks on the same debate about a green economy when a simple elementary demonstration of

common-sense craft... I heard talk today about a man being an architect, well be the architect, you are here to practice an action, it is called praxis, well then see the praxis, create the legislation and the Barbados Labour Party would be the first to stand and support it. Let there be mandatory recycling in this country, you cannot just leave it to chance. Mr. Speaker, instead of the Prime Minister ingesting and digesting and internalising that which is said, he now wants to heckle because he too is not prepared to be serious about what is confronting the country.

Mr. Speaker, for 50 years we worked hard to bring us where we are today because of the circumstances of the time. There were difficult times but we worked hard in order to make sure that we could overcome the difficulties of the time. The challenge that faces us now, Mr. Speaker, is to be able to speak sensibly to the future of this country. In all of the areas that I have pointed out, whether it be governance, the management of the environment, the management of the business sector or whether it be the management of finances and economic affairs of the country, not so much culture because to be fair to the cultural sector it is relatively well run - I believe that there may be a dark horse there that the country will start to look upon in the future but even as he blushes I will not trouble him because he may become swell-headed - there is very little about which Barbados can feel comfortable today, and that is where I draw my distinction with the Honourable Prime Minister. Let us face facts, this is a debate. The Right Honourable Prime Minister said that we should feel proud, I agree. We should feel proud about what we have achieved but that, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is not to the Right Honourable Prime Minister's credit, this is about what we can feel comfortable with as well.

Mr. Speaker, if I look from 10 years ago and go back, I can feel a lot of pride but where we have come to today is what I feel uncomfortable about. I feel uncomfortable that Barbados is being well prepared for the next ten years. I feel uncomfortable about what President Obama has just talked about in America as being the legacy that he leaves. I feel, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the country must feel a sense of discomfort that much about which we were able to rest and feel relaxed about and not take on, as I said, simple things like having your garbage collected regularly we now have to be anxious about. It is like if you are building up again from the building blocks and we can avoid that if we are sensible and strategic, even in our foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, this is the Barbados that stood and told the United States of America with respect to the Shiprider's Agreement that we were not on board with them. This is the Barbados, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that told China, the second most powerful power, that we are going to have relations with China, that we are going to put an end to a two-China policy, despite what the rest of the world may be saying.

This is the Barbados that went and form relations with Cuba and it had no difficulty with what the rest of the world may be saying.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you keep engaging other Members remarks. Please address the Chair.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: I beg your pardon, Sir. Mr. Speaker, the point is that even in the context of foreign relations... I heard the Right Honourable Prime Minister quite rightly quote the late Father of Independence, but point me to one foreign relations success that Barbados has had in very recent times. Sir, even if that cannot be done, the question is, how comfortable we can feel about our relations with the rest of the world right now.

Mr. Speaker, what we saw in the United States of America just now is something that Barbados' voice could have been heard long ago about, because we have allowed our brethren living in the eastern seaboard of the United States of America to believe that all is well in the way in which the United States of America has treated the Barbados Government and CARICOM. We have led them to believe so and if you talk to individual members of this Government privately they would tell us. In fact, the Ministry of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development is recorded now as to having said it. The outgoing Administration has not been any significant partner to Barbados but where we have failed is that we have not told them so for the rest of the world to see and to hear when they were subsidising Puerto Rican and Virgin Island rum to the tune of millions of dollars and compromising our market. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when that was happening the voice of Barbados was not resonating.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, I honestly feel that Barbados could have been a lot stronger and that the issues with which we are now confronted would not have been so easily confronted because people in the United States of America who are from Caribbean extraction and origin should have known early on that if the Democrats want to have the support of those people, then the Democrats needed to be more responsive in the way in which they treat to the place from which those people come. Mr. Speaker, but there is a feeling that we are no longer able to demonstrate any muscle or strength because we are small or whatever.

I say, Sir, the Barbados that stood and told the United States of America on the Shiprider's Agreement that we were not on board with them, full stop. Mr.

Speaker, Sir, when we were in Cabinet there was an effort to gut the US/Barbados Double Taxation Treaty. Three Members of this Front Bench right here and right now were party to the effort to bring a halt to that and we did. I still have the letter that Orion Hatch wrote to me, a pistol ball of a letter but it did not bother, neither did it humbugged anybody, he would have written the English language as good as or better than him, so I wrote back.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that is that there is a need for us to recognise that we are not the country that we used to be but that we can once again become there and that we must become that, and that we must go back there in the interest of the people of this country. It is not an attack, neither do I want it to be seen as an attack on the Democratic Labour Party, it is a request for the Democratic Labour Party to understand the way in which it may be frustrating the legitimate expectations of the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, yes, the Barbados Labour Party is giving thanks, yes, the Barbados Labour Party agrees that there is a lot to be proud about, but yes, also the Barbados Labour Party will stand on the four corners of the fact that there is tremendous slippage in this country about which the people of Barbados are legitimately entitled to be disappointed because the people of Barbados, like us, believe that better can be done, better should be done, ought to be done and must be done. The only issue, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is whether those folks that sit on your right hand side are capable of doing the job. If they cannot do the job, they should vacate the people place.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to speak in this debate and to say from the outset that in 1966 the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers, being faced with a problem, was able not to run away from that problem nor to curse his country but he was able to call his cousin down the wicket and he was able to speak to him and showed him how to solve a negative and how to be positive. Sir, because he did that he was able to save the test match for Barbados and the West Indies.

Mr. Speaker, 50 years after in the House of Assembly, after free secondary education has been exposed to us, we now have not learned how to solve problems, instead of dealing with the issues and demonstrating to the masses of people of Barbados how to correct the problems, we are now capable of going all over the world and advocating negatives on behalf of country Barbados

without respecting country Barbados for giving us so much.

Mr. Speaker, I am fortunate to come from and to represent a constituency that was able to give the Democratic Labour Party three Members: Sir Theodore Brancker, Sir Cameron Tudor and the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow who were able between 1955, 1958 and 1961. When all the naysayers were saying that we should not enter Independence, they were able in a short period of time to demonstrate the capacity of the masses of people in Barbados and to increase the productivity of Barbados, and also to offer new offerings and carry their people from the cane field to the offices of Country Barbados. Mr. Speaker, we must admit that those gentlemen were positive people. They did not go to Country Barbados and say that Barbados was so bad that things could not happen. What they did, Mr. Speaker, was to say to Country Barbados that things can be better and this is how things will be better. Not only did they make promises; they were able to demonstrate that they had the capacity to implement the promises. They were able to tell Country Barbados, "We will give you free secondary education," and by 1962 they brought free secondary education to Barbados after being elected in 1961. In 1966, they gave them Independence. By 1967 we were able to have a National Insurance Scheme in place, and we were able to create social things that were able to correct the lives of Barbadians. I am saying that after 50 years, we cannot have an Opposition coming into this House that can only give negatives to the country without giving positive solutions on how they are going to take the country forward. Mr. Speaker, if you start with a negative, you will end with a negative; and that is as far back as the 1960s when the Democratic Labour Party was flying high, they were still flying low. Fifty years after, they are still flying low because they cannot appreciate the contribution that has been made to this country by the Democratic Labour Party, whether it is in housing, manufacturing, agriculture or international business.

Mr. Speaker, in order to go forward, you must have foresight, and what is lacking is foresight from the other side. They come in here and give the impression that they are going to be supportive, and they go into all the negatives, but one would not believe that as far back as the 1990s we were able to come to this House with a Notice of Motion for the Adjournment of the House on matters of urgent public importance. Yes, that was in the 1990s. No-one would believe that occurred and that was led by the Barbados Labour Party in this House dealing with a matter of water. It was as far as the 1990s; go and check the Hansard. They come in here and give the impression that it was the Democratic Labour Party that created the water problem in this country, when they in Government came to this House and this Assembly and had to bring this Motion. Mr. Speaker, one would not believe that it was the

Barbados Labour Party. It is regrettable that in a Debate like this you can try to create the lowness and try to put the country on a higher path by pointing out the lowness of this Debate. It was not the Democratic Labour Party that deprived Barbadians of over 78 million gallons of water by going to the same Town and Country Planning Department which the Member spoke about and building tanks, Mr. Speaker. Instead of the water being able to go back and recycle, it was the Barbados Labour Party who put that policy in place, but the Democratic Labour Party, recognising an Independent country and understanding the importance of recycling water, now has to spend over \$1 billion to correct the problems that were brought to this country by the Barbados Labour Party. It was not the Democratic Labour Party that took all of our water which used to be recycled and helped create outfall water. It was not us. When one looks at the policy of having the outfall water and also having the water in tanks, one would recognise that because of the type of water system we have, we cannot afford to have 78 million gallons stored and deprived from the populace of Barbados and we cannot afford to take our water and throw it into the sea when one understands the system which we have.

Mr. Speaker, it is only those minor things that I had to reflect on because sometimes you have to be very careful how you allow a lie to go to the public. It is very regrettable that in a Debate at this standard, you have to spend time to correct offerings like those. Mr. Speaker, in 1966 the Democratic Labour Party in its housing policy was able to go to Waverley Cot, Farm Gardens, Gall Hill, Eden Lodge, St. Stephens and Haynesville, and they were able to start new housing solutions and develop lots in places like Bayville, the Pine, Wavell Avenue, Cave Hill, Belair and Ellerton. Between 1966 and 1972 they were able also to create massive new developments. They went into Wanstead; everybody knows about Wanstead Gardens and Wanstead Heights. Then they were able to go into Oxnards and do massive development there, and they were able to purchase the whole of the Husbands Plantation and allow people to buy land and houses in those areas. That was not all. We were also able to leave land in West Terrace, because it is the same land that was left in West Terrace where the Barbados Labour Party was able to come and build houses. By 1973 we understood we had to go a step further, and we merged the housing authority and the Urban Development Corporation and formed the National Housing Corporation. Because we did that, we were able to build Ferniehurst, Rosemont and Wildey. In Ferniehurst were 150 units, Rosemont 72, Wildey 325, Wotton 180, Bonnetts 106, Ivy 70, Haynesville extension 220, Eden Lodge 160, and on and on. We were able even to go into Meadow Road, Grazettes, Husbands again, and the same Oxnards. We did starter homes in Oxnards, Grazettes and Bridgefield; so when you hear people speaking as if we do not have a record of housing in this country, one has to understand that we were able to move people from chattel

to stone. People have to understand the importance of that. We were able to move them from chattel to stone because we understood what happened on the plantations. The reason why we were able to move them from chattel to stone is because we empowered them, not only by having a house but we also allowed them to have a piece of land to put the house on, and they were able to move to stone because they had security of tenure. Under the plantation system, it used to be said that two moves were worse than a hurricane, and that was why we moved early to ensure that they had a piece of land which they could own in order to build their houses.

Mr. Speaker, we are now being bastardised and everything is being said, but we do not worry because this Government is a very progressive one. We recognise the shortage of land and so on, and now today we were able to move from chattel to stone and are even able to make a further step because we were the Government which brought high-rise housing to this country. It was positive movement, because we understood the importance of the land use policy of the country; and because of the land use policy and the demands in the urban areas, we understood that we had to maximise the usage of land and ensure that we were able to capture the demand of the people and satisfy those demands. I have heard in this House how there are 27 000 people waiting on National Housing Corporation. The waiting list is about 17 000 and fortunately for this country, even though that the waiting list is about 17 000 we have, in this country Barbados, over 15 000 unoccupied units or houses. The reason why we have that is because in 1981, legislation was passed to empower people and because that legislation was passed to empower people some landlords tend to believe that if they allow persons to occupy their homes that that legislation may also be used to disadvantage them and also because the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) was able to pass laws to correct what they thought was in the interests of the tenants without looking at the interests of the landlords. Instead of creating a balance between the tenants and the landlords they favoured the tenants while ignoring that they needed the landlords and now you have a situation where you have 15 000 unoccupied homes in this country. We in the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) will not ignore that. We have recognised that we cannot have 15 000 unoccupied units in this country and that we have to find a solution. As a progressive Government we would have to look at the Housing Act, the Land Acquisition Act or the Health Act to solve this particular problem.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that we as a country have done a lot for this country Barbados and we have demonstrated that we are not only looking after the housing aspect and the empowerment of people in housing that the Minister of Tourism has done so well and the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) has done so well in tourism that we are not being able to push a concept of tourism called

community tourism that is just as important as when we had small farmers in agriculture. Anytime you have an industry and that industry can allow the masses of people and the “too-fews” to be able to be involved at the same time, it means that the industry is progressing. I want to tell the Minister of Tourism, do not allow the “two-fews” to convince you that AB&B is something bad because it cannot be bad because we as a political party have been pushing community tourism and what people call AB&B is what we called community tourism. We have to ensure that the same way that the small farmers were able to help agriculture that the community tourism players are able to help us to grow out tourism because as people advanced they will move up and it will create an atmosphere for more people at that level. I am saying that because of community tourism, Barbados tourism will always grow because it allows us, not only to capture the rich and famous, but it allows us to capture every market. That is why the people of Barbados will always have a commitment to tourism because they can feel what the Minister of Tourism and what this Government has done for tourism because it impacts on the lives of Barbadians and it continues to make this country Barbados an independent country. We are not ignoring these.

We also have to recognise that in order for us to continue to ensure that the cake is well shared that we also have to look after the rural areas, not only in terms of the people but also the sites. As we create, bring more people to Barbados and as we continue to grow on the number of repeat tourists, we have to have more offerings. That is exactly what we are doing and that is why the Rural Development Commission is important, to ensure that this land that is surrounded by water especially in the rural areas, attractions are created so that when tourists come to Barbados they have many offerings. They cannot say that you have a stale product but your product remains exciting and you are allowed to continue to attract people because they know that they are coming to something different. Not only that, it allows you to empower your people and by them being empowered at that lower level, the multiplier effect kicks in and it creates a greater economic activity for you when it kicks in at that particular level.

The water problems, yes we had water problems but we are proud to know that in our 50 years of independence that we have devoted enough capital to correct all the water problems. It was not the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) that brought desalination to this country or recycling and you do not just go and set up a desalination plant or a recycling plant by accident, you do those things when you have a problem. People have to understand that what we are faced with now is just a problem that was left for us but we are solving it and we will continue to solve it.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that in this country you have heard somebody making reference to the crime problem,

high-powered guns and all of that. We are not running away from the problem. If you are in 50 years of independence then it means too that you have to correct your social problems but you also have to know where the social problems came from. I have heard a lot about high-powered guns and how the impression is given that it is this Democratic Labour Party (DLP) that created the atmosphere for the high-powered guns but I want to remind people that prior to 1979, the country of Barbados never had that problem but on 31st March, 1979 when the Americans were kicked out of Barbados by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) quickly after they had the Grenadian intervention. Not only did they have the Grenadian intervention and the 31st March, 1979 but when the soldiers came back, some of them brought back the AK47 and that was the first time we knew about high-powered guns in Barbados. When you heard about high-powered guns being used, it was not the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) that brought the high-powered guns to Barbados but it was the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) who brought them.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that in our independence for 50 years we will have problems but if we have problems it is what we are doing to solve the problems. I am confident and happy to know that every social problem whether it would be guns or anything else, one of the things I will tell you is that I am happy with the job that Royal Barbados Police Force is doing to solve the crime in this country. In our 50 years no one can question whenever you hear of a major crime in this country you are sure that the police are going to solve it. That is what you call independence. The ability of a country to correct its problems. We have found them and we have been correcting them and every problem that you talk about that has been left by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), we as a country, have been able to solve them and we will continue to solve them.

The economy problem: we came to this country, we had a deficit, yes we knew the deficit, but one of the things that we did not know based on the paperwork that was given to use is that the deficit was so high. The reason why the deficit was so high was because the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) was underreporting the deficit by using the cash basis but this Democratic Labour Party (DLP) took up the cash basis, recognised that the system was changed, reported all the expenditure so obviously if you reported all of the expenditure that expenditure will show a high deficit.

What happened previously? If you were to go back and match the deficit between the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) using the same basis you would see that a lot of debt now attributed to the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) would not be on the books of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) if the

Barbados Labour Party (BLP) had done the accrual system when they should.

This is a country known for the West Indies Cane Breeding Station. We used to export our technology in cane breeding to even Australia. It is not only our cricket that we went to high levels, we went with the cane-breeding stations, we were able to export our mahogany furniture, and we are now one of the leading countries as it relates to renewable energy, so why are we badmouthing Barbados. Wherever we go in the world, this small country of 166 square miles can stand up among all other countries and put a case for itself when it comes to economic growth, housing or anything else in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we have to sit back and recognise that we have some problems. What I like about the Democratic Labour Party is that even though the world had its economic problems and we have our economic problems and other people tend to badmouth and behave as if they cannot be solved, we did not run away from the problems, we tried to find the solutions and we found the solutions and we are solving the solutions.

In the 90s everybody decided that they were going to follow the international standards and they went to globalisation, and small developing countries that did not understand what were the negatives of globalisation went to globalisation. Our foreparents understood quite well the importance of import substitution and the importance of recycling and that is why our foreparents were able to build this country and took it to a level but instead of us continuing to do the things we did well we have allowed outside influence to change our character and the way we were doing business and allowed them to encourage us to stop doing those important things and dropped them to develop their culture, which was not right.

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

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes. That culture was not right for Barbados. I am saying I am happy to see how we have now gone back to the windmills and solar heating, et cetera because there was a time in this country when the flying fish season was in that our foreparents used to take the flying fish and put them on the galvanise roof because of the heat and so on to cure the fish. Mr. Speaker, we have to recognise that we had a good foundation and somewhere along the line we have allowed other people to influence us and changed the way we did business, and that has not worked out well for this country.

This Democratic Labour Party has acknowledged that it had to change the guard and that we had to change things from the way they found them and put a new approach and that is why the land-lease project and the

fishing industry is now doing so well, but what we need now to do is to harness the skills within the manufacturing sector and bring them back to the levels they used to be at before and utilise the local resources that we have in country Barbados.

We cannot as a country continue to depend on the concept that was given to us in the late 90s that comparative advantage is the best thing for country Barbados because comparative advantage is to the benefit of those large developing countries not for small developing countries like Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to my people that they would have recognised that we have now moved watersports from being a business belonging to the hoteliers and so on. Just last night I saw on television some indigenous people demonstrating that they have taken over the capacity of watersports and that they have taken it to new levels.

I want to say that we have to understand that country Barbados is ours and that 50 years ago we knew what to do because when one looks to see what Mr. Barrow was able to do in the first five years, the question must be asked: How come he was able to do so much in five years and we have allowed others to break that transition? We cannot allow those same said people to continue to destroy the foundation laid by the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow.

Mr. Speaker, I want to leave this question with this House: How come that we have been able to achieve 50 years of free secondary education and 50 years of independence and yet there are people out there who are criticising this Government for demonstrating how far the people have come in this country because there are some people who still believe that what we did for the people in 1961 we should still be doing for them in 2016. The way to demonstrate the growth and independence of a country is the ability to wean people off what you were doing for them previously and allow them to do things for themselves.

I am saying that this Democratic Labour Party has demonstrated that this country is truly independent by the capacity to pass the responsibility over to those persons whom we have empowered. Why should we continue to offer the same things we were offering our people in 1961 at 2016? If at 2016 we offer the same thing to the people that we offered them in 1961, it means that we have not done anything for them or that the people are selfish. I am saying that our people in Barbados are not selfish, that they have recognised that the country has done a lot, and it is at this time that we must ask ourselves one question: Should country Barbados be doing for us or should we be doing for country Barbados?

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am trying to see if I could at least place some focus on this discussion. I think that objectively our role today should be to give thanks and honour to all those great men in the struggle that has brought us to this important historical point in our development. I will not distort or even truncate logic in order to impress upon anyone that one political party has done more than the other because we will be doing an injustice to a struggle that began prior to the official political parties in this country which began in 1938 and which include the Congress Party, the Barbados Labour Party, the unions, the radical movements of the earlier 20th Century and many other individuals who have played a significant role in this struggle for national independence.

My concern about the national independence is: Have we reached the level of consciousness that we ought to have reached over the years? I am doubtful about that because unfortunately the early educators and historians did a lot of distortion and put a lot of positive weight on the side of the oppressors more so than on the side of the oppressed who are really the people that we ought to honour in this struggle for national independence over the years. I know that lots of people want to start at 1966 and I know that some people want to start after 1966 but I do not believe that we can do justice to the analysis if we only see the greatness of our people deriving from what occurred in 1966 as much as that ceremonial and constitutional exercise must be respected as an important landmark. I would not go into the details of the different opinions on Independence in 1966 because as I said the Resolution is to do justice and to bring some sense of pride to the Barbadian public in these circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, you must understand that we were deprived even of a basic colonial education. You must understand that we were living in abject poverty. You must understand that as a people we had no persona, we were not perceived as human beings and ordinary working-class black men, not middle-class because there was no middle-class, not black men who were given the opportunity of any social elevation as a consequence of access to any form of education, because we were denied that. Mr. Speaker, I believe it was difficult for us to speak of the first person singular, like we and us, to speak, for example, Barbadians in that context when there was such a rigid class and racial divide that existed in the system. At that specific time the real conspicuous rebels of the time was the oppressive people in the system itself. I think that if we are supposed to develop a harmonious society, those are the areas that

we need to be still persistent and consistent in and not to fool ourselves that these divisions do not exist.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to know that the Barbados Labour Party led for the 24 years prior to Independence by some of the best illustrious leaders in the Caribbean have at least contributed to the struggle for Independence. All of us may not always agree on either ideological or pragmatic positions or even the relationships that exist between Barbados and other Caribbean islands and people go about these different things. I do not believe that this is a time for that kind of contention in the national debate if we are talking about celebrating and honouring the good work of both political parties. The political parties must also extend a hand of brotherhood to the Barbados Workers Union and if you know the history of the Caribbean in general those political parties that did not have a sound relationship with the Trade Union Movement even in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, the political movements that did not work as a twin with the workers unions of the day were almost all failures. One can go back to Bio Butler, to Bustamante, to Manley at all times as you look back at the genesis of the history of the virtual movement of the political parties they could only have done it because it had a mass base which was unionized by the unions of the day.

Mr. Speaker, in giving thanks to all the great work that was done you cannot exclude the Barbados Workers Union in Barbados, but most of the level of consciousness came very early in that 20th century. Sir, I know that the educational system and the black elite would not give any honour and respect of the work of the Marcus Garvey of that period but a sense of national consciousness, black consciousness, collective consciousness across the region came as a consequence of the UNIA, a very black progressive movement in the early half of the 20th Century. It did not start with Marcus Garvey because Sylvester Williams also preceded Garvey in the teachings of the importance of black unification across the region.

Mr. Speaker, it is no need for us to retreat on these arguments because the divide was not just oppressor and oppressed, it was as clear as black and white, so we knew very clearly then who the people who drove us into slavery were. We knew then who the people were who were restricting us and limiting our creativity and our intellect by making sure that they had control over the educational system. They only gave a little letup, not in the 20th Century but by 1833 they decided that they would give a little letup to the basic principles of education where you had the three R's and so on, so that this struggle by us must be well respected, so that it is something that we have to constantly instill and refresh in the minds of our people.

Mr. Speaker, it is only recently that the history books and people making political analysis would touch on the importance of many hidden important characters who

contributed to the changes over the years. I do not know how widespread the details of that education is in the secondary schools but many of us only had access to it when we entered into tertiary education at University of the West Indies. Therefore we had our brains clouded with a lot of mythology and a lot of subjectivity that made us all feel subconsciously that we were inferior to other people in the system itself. Sir, black people could not even look straight into the eyes of other persons who did not look like them and it is still a big psychological problem, they cannot stand and speak one-to-one, man-to-man or whatever to people who do not look like them because they feel a sense of inferiority. Regardless of how many degrees they may have or how much form of wealth they may have accumulated they find it very difficult to speak as an equal, they want to deny it.

Mr. Speaker, I think at the 50th Anniversary of our Independence a new form of education needs to be instilled and a sense of confidence, especially in the younger generation, to let them know that we are a great people. It must not only be about what has transpired since we have been enslaved as a people but even that that has preceded that. Our history is greatly influenced not only by people who were born in Barbados, on many occasion the heroes that we respect, especially in the colonial history, are not even Barbadian-born people, that is why we have to be struggling all like now with the presence of Horatio Nelson, located to the left of these Honourable Chambers and of his being planted and remaining in a National Heroes' Square because it is a major issue with which we have to deal.

Mr. Speaker, there is a significant number of persons with a colonial mind set who still believe that we are doing something sacrosanct if we move Nelson from his present position. There are people at the highest levels of Government who are reluctant to make those kinds of radical changes because they know the reaction from the society. I personally believe that is one of the reasons in 1966 the Independence project could not have been extended even beyond slogans, a Flag and an Anthem because Independence must mean more than that, and when I read the writings and the speeches of the conscious men of the time, they honestly saw beyond that, but you cannot move beyond the society at a specific time. Sometimes you have to wait on the society to catch up with you before you make the radical changes that are so needed. At 50 years after Independence, we are now putting on the national and regional agenda a very fundamental call that ought to have been made long ago. It was made long ago by the left wing and the black radical movements of the 20th Century. There is evidence there of the call for reparations long ago. In 2016, there are few Barbadians conscious of what reparation is all about, which means that we have to have a broad-based educational programme to bring some sense of collective consciousness

to the society because here again we are moving ahead with an extension of that Independence project, but 75 or 80 per cent of the so-called educated elite in the system might not even be favourable to making such a call at the regional level for reparations.

Mr. Speaker, what are reparations? Most people at the basic level of ignorance will ask you, "You expect to get the people money? These are not the same people who committed the act of slavery; these are the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and we are the great-grandchildren. How will you pay reparations?" Some people believe that everybody is going to line up at the bank and receive a large sum of money as compensation and all of that. There are questions such as, "What about those slaves who were dumped at sea? Now that we have a record, who will receive reparations for those people? Will it be the people in the Caribbean? Will it be the people in Africa?" There is an intensive debate going on in these areas at present.

Sir, over the years I think that we have had to be proud of the ideological foundations of nationalism. It is that sense of nationalism which influenced or undergirded the thinking of both political parties, and has made us understand quite clearly the fundamental role of the State in bringing about the changes that we now enjoy. The State had to take the initiative. I am not pinpointing any specific party because, as I said, these Debates preceded the implementation of the programme, the concept of national transport systems and the concept of a broad-based educational system. Although it took an evolutionary growth, the whole concept of arriving at the highest levels of education for Barbadian people was expressed by different parties in the region and in Barbados for the whole national development of our people. The State had a major role to play in development education, complemented by the Church in the early stages; but that is probably a debate for another time. We understood the importance of expanding education, and as we looked at economic growth we had to have a comparative educational system that would at least have helped facilitate the drive in that economic growth itself. We could not depend on the private sector for that, so we expanded the elementary and secondary school systems. Who did it first or second is not the argument today. We also expanded the tertiary education system, but I am a little concerned that now we are at a point where we have begun to enjoy the benefits and recognise the importance of the high levels of tertiary education, we are now faced with an economic encumbrance that has forced us to abandon a noble concept which, you can see, can contribute to the actual growth of our people. I do not think that we can continue to make that kind of momentum in the levels of education if we do not at some point find a way of allowing the State to reclaim its fundamental role in financing education at the tertiary level. This is not an attempt to make any partisan political point; I strongly believe that it

is important. I have the fear that, with all the due developments in science and technology, if we do not at least create new programmes and find a way of giving opportunities sometimes to the most vulnerable people with great intelligence, we might very well start to create a class of academics in the system who might not come from the class of people from which all of us emerged.

Mr. Speaker, the expansion of free secondary and tertiary education gave an opportunity to many great brains that would have never been able to achieve the highest levels of learning if the State did not, through taxation and whatever means, pool the required revenue to be able to honour the payments demanded in order to keep that tertiary education afloat. It is only the main one which we have here, and I think it is a necessity that we understand the importance of the University of the West Indies to the development of Barbados. I would not like to live to see a time like that prior to 1966 when all of those principals were expatriates coming into Barbados and holding administrative positions in this country. I would not like to see a time again when some of our finest financial institutions and other areas of administration are dominated by people who do not look like us because they came from a privileged class or even from a privileged combination of miscegenation. As someone said before, in the banking system of the 1960s if you did not have a red skin, you would not have been able to rub shoulders with the white people of the day. Although some of those people were considered secondary in terms of high-quality education, they were validated because of their pigmentation. We must guard against some of these -- I do not even want to call them "unforeseeable" -- situations, but the chances are that we can easily drift back into that situation if we do not remain conscious of who we are and of that struggle which we have gone through over the years as a people.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the trade union movement is finding itself under tremendous pressure. We have to spend time trying to work out mechanisms for that kind of relationship and that kind of harmony. It is the genesis, as I said, of our existence in Parliament, and we have to find a way of bringing that trade union marriage together again. Sir, this struggle took us from being a landless people as well. I know the Barbados Labour Party brought in the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act, but if you know the percentage of Barbadian people who came here, were born here and died here and never owned a piece of land here in Barbados, that was a great revolutionary effort when the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act was introduced. It had given a sense of ownership not just to the small plots but ownership to nationhood. People feel a sense of pride of belonging and participating especially when they know that they own land, when they have a relatively good job and when they are involved in business. I am not talking about people going to school, passing a few certificates and then have to find themselves down Broad Street or some part of

this country asking the very people who oppress them that probably may not be half as qualified as them to give them an opportunity to participate in the workplace and then you have to be subjected to all types of inhumane treatment in order for you to sustain that job over a period of time or you may even have to inflict pressure on your own time in order to demonstrate your loyalty to your employer. Sometimes some of us are forced to be even more unkind to our own people in order to impress upon the society or the employer that we are trustworthy in the circumstances. I say that there are certain traditional weaknesses that we, to some extent, have been perpetuating and I really believe that we need to try to find a way of addressing these things.

Sir, collective consciousness in a society can only come through education. To feel a sense of oneness as a people can only come through education and the teaching of history is fundamental to all of that.

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Okay, Sir. I think that the Government needs to look to see if we are doing justice in our educational programme to bring that level of consciousness to Barbadian people to make them feel that we are all one and when we speak as Barbadians there is a spiritual consciousness of us as a people. You cannot have distortions of revision inside the history that is being taught to people and expect those people to develop that level of understanding or of appreciation of each other. It also inhibits the drive for productivity. If everyone sees him/herself as an individual then my rewards in the workplace is exclusively about me. It is about my salary. When there is a national spirit and you can see it in any activities whatever mechanism used to determine it in activities that when people feel that national spirit, that consciousness that the tendency for great enthusiasm and to push of greater energy and higher levels of productivity but if each individual believes that he is separate and distinct from the other persons in the society and this concept of a Barbadian national is only something that you see on a passport or on some level of a certificate, then you are not going to have people trying to achieve high levels of productivity in the society itself.

If you read the sociology of most people who became extremely productive over the years you would see that when that national consciousness becomes part of the inner being they begin to produce over and over even if they are driven by a religious belief of a collective consciousness, it happens. If you are driven by a heavy national consciousness that is even better for the development of the society itself. I still believe that we have a lot of work to do and I think that to motivate and to elevate these concepts we have to rely heavily on our educational development over the years to come.

I want to thank all the movements, all the political parties and all the great individuals. Maybe we can talk today about Hope Stevens, we can talk today about Richard B. Moore, we can speak today about many of the great people who have made significant contributions and very little is mentioned about them. We can talk about the struggle of Israel Lovell and T. T. Lewis, we could talk about great academics and major significant contributions to Barbados and those names that I have not mentioned I want to say on the behalf of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and on the behalf of many great progressive Barbadians that we do respect them for their contribution which they have made over the years and it will serve as a motivation for us to be able to do greater things in the near future. I try to go beyond the thoughts of fanning on these issues to let you know that I too believe that independence is more than a slogan and it is more than a national flag or just a simple symbol of our development. Independence is at the core and the driving force of us as a people in understanding, not only who we are, but even in achieving great things in life from here on.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to support this Resolution and I believe the Resolution place in its rightful context is really a very simple resolution. The Resolution calls the attention of Barbados to the significant achievements of Barbados over the past 50 years and it invites the Parliament of Barbados to congratulate Barbados on the attainment of 50 years of independence.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the important word there is the Parliament being invited to congratulate Barbados. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, the Resolution clearly does not invite partisan debate. It invites the Parliament to soberly reflect on the key achievements of the country over the past 50 years and to project towards the next 50 years in a manner that, I think, Mr. Speaker, is befitting of the historical significance of the Parliament of Barbados. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the very rich political history of Barbados, it is really a humbling thought that Barbados has gotten to the point of celebrating such a key milestone in a very long distinguished history and notwithstanding the challenges that the country may face from time-to-time. Indeed Barbados has always been known to rise above economic, political and social challenges therefore, if I were to place debate, Mr. Speaker, within a context I would have to say that irrespective of the challenges that Barbados has faced over the years Barbados can certainly stand very proud in the international community.

and say to its citizens not only in Barbados but across the diaspora that we really should be very proud to have reached this significant milestone.

Mr. Speaker, we could not really conclude this debate without examining the very fabric of our constitutional experience. Indeed, when one examines the Preamble of the Barbados Constitution and we place that within a context, particularly when we recount the story leading up to the Independence Declaration, we recognise that even when we were approaching that very important constitutional conference in the United Kingdom that our first Prime Minister and National Hero, the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, captured the essence of the Barbadian reality. I think that essence of the Barbadian reality which was cast within the context of the freedoms which Barbados would have held dear for so many years represents the current reality of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about or reflect on the past 50 years of independence, we recognise that the political institutions of Barbados had a significant role to play within the context of the global political history. In fact, the Preamble of the Constitution of Barbados refers very early to the convening of the first Parliament of Barbados in 1639. It was from that time, notwithstanding that Barbados was part of a systematic system of the enslavement of our ancestors, that Barbados held fast to a number of freedoms and privileges which continued to be part of our political landscape up to now.

What this debate certainly means to me, Mr. Speaker, is that we still exist in a country that is governed by a written Constitution. In fact, we know that the Constitution of the United Kingdom is not a written Constitution. Barbados enjoys a written Constitution and therefore all of the fundamental rights and privileges which were claimed in the Constitution of Barbados, and in fact the Preamble, did not only connect with 1966, but went as far back as 1639. When we consider too that the first Sitting of the United States of America Congress was in 1774 after the first Parliament in Barbados sat, we recognise and connect with the solemn nature of this debate, and I believe that has to be the root of any consideration of the story of Barbados' independence. Anything else, in my view, must flow after that.

These buildings in which we stand, Mr. Speaker, have got to be considered to be part of the sacred story of the journey towards independence. Parliament Building was built in 1870. Of course, the Parliament in Barbados is the third oldest in the Commonwealth. The only other two nations that can boast of having a Parliament established before Barbados would be the United Kingdom and Bermuda, so therefore the institutions upon which the independence story of Barbados rests ought to be a claim as being of ancient vintage, and that is why when the Right

Excellent Errol Walton Barrow went to discuss the whole question of political independence after the failure of the federation and the failure of the smaller islands in the Caribbean to even form a union, he did not go to England to beg for independence but did so upon the argument that - Barbados and Barbadians though of course within the context of an environment and a society that did not give the kind of freedoms to our ancestors - that those ancient rights which were confirmed certainly in the Declaration at Oistins which, Mr. Speaker, as we know later informed some very important aspects of the American Declaration of Independence. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that his story has got to be grounded within this reality where our institutions by and large remained very intact. Mr. Speaker, as to what Governments do from year to year within the context of those institutions are based on the economic and political climate of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should not become confused when we are debating this kind of Resolution in the year 2016. I speak, Mr. Speaker, within the context of the great strides that Barbados has made. Certainly Barbados upon becoming independence became a part of a world community. Barbados' role within the United Nations became very revered. In fact, Barbados continues to hold the envy of many nations. Though a small country producing some of the most brilliant brains, Barbados would have helped to shape global policy and have influenced international dialogue on some key areas of social engineering. Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the issues have, and I felt that we have to put this debate within its context, we have an opportunity as we celebrate 50 years to reflect on a country that continues to be revered in the international community in so many areas.

I reflect, Mr. Speaker, on the journey towards independence as a young man who was probably in diapers at the time, but the story of independence is so profound within the context of what it meant for a Government striking out at a time when of course it had very little to hold on to in terms of its own natural resources. Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, I reflected only recently in giving a lecture at the Democratic Labour Party Headquarters on the stories of both Barbados and Singapore. Indeed, last year Singapore would have celebrated 50 years of political independence as well. Of course, the two leaders at the time would have met in England while studying but they went in two different directions. The story of Singapore is that of being one of the most successful centres of commerce and international business and perhaps one of the most successful economies in the world but the two countries followed two different political system. The kind of freedoms that Barbados claimed within the annals of its Constitution are not freedoms that can be claimed by the citizens of Singapore. However, the models upon which both economies were built were very distinct but the achievements of Barbados...

If we look at one signal achievement, Mr. Speaker, within the context of what Barbados was able to achieve and the use of education as a means of social re-engineering, how of course we would have then carefully crafted the development of a number of ministries and institutions to achieve social and political equality were very important developments within the context of Barbados.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the early establishment of a Parliament in Barbados afforded a number of individuals though representing different interests through the banter of casting different views to shape different and new policies in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I think we should celebrate the fact that Barbados has been able to produce some outstanding citizens, many of whom we have actually loaned to the international community, many of whom are still contributing immensely to the development of other countries but of course they are intelligentsia Barbados created, by and large, who are directed to the story of Independence.

Mr. Speaker, we should never forget that because in telling the story we recognised that Barbados even today remains at a very high level on the Human Development Index, that can be traced from very carefully crafted institutions that were designed to develop the human capital in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I reflect on the development of a number of things, Barbados can boast of being a very high literacy country, a level which is extremely high. Mr. Speaker that was not by happenstance, we were able to establish a National Library Service, which, interestingly enough, was developed in 1847, Sir, 13 years after Emancipation. Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that certainly respective Governments recognised the importance of establishing these systems and ensured by policy and by the allocation of public expenditure over the years that these institutions ought to be preserved. These, Mr. Speaker, are elements upon which we have to reflect. Mr. Speaker, this has occurred over different Administration. I do not think the debate in which we are asked to be engaged has anything at all to do with the partisanship of the day. I think we are called in this debate to reach a very high crescendo of thought and reflection. Indeed, to cast where Barbados needs to go over the next 50 years cannot be an exercise that is trivialised. I think the country needs to be inspired by where we have come from and if we are to become dreamers of where we are to go, then we have to solemnly reflect on the significant achievements of the pass.

Mr. Speaker, our legal systems have largely been protected by the fundamental rights and privileges that are made sacred in our Constitution. Indeed, the notion of separation of powers has largely been respected. There are, of course, several areas of reform on which we need to

embark in relation to the exercise of executive authority and of course the exercise of judicial authority in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I believe that those are the areas that require fruitful thoughts and collective wisdom as we move forward in shaping Barbados going forward.

Mr. Speaker, the institutions have largely served us well. We have been able to have a public service that has produced some of the most brilliant sons and daughters of Barbados who have inspired executives, whether they be from one side of the political divide or the other, to craft policies that have helped to inspire Barbadians and to help to protect our basic fabric of society.

Mr. Speaker, I think that these are elements that we need to revere and celebrate. I too agree that we have also to use these achievements to craft the stepping stones upon which, of course, the new Barbados has got to evolve and how we are going to so enthused our young people to become craftsmen of their fate. Indeed, the new global order has shaped, to a large extent, some of the things that we considered to have been sacred of the past, we are now living in a rapidly evolving world that calls for rapidly evolving policies. Mr. Speaker, in fact, when I look at what is required to be done within the context of a new Barbados reality, the need to rebuild and to reshape, a new economy that is influenced by a number of impactful forces, most of them are shaped and fashioned in parliaments that are outside of Barbados, but we have to become bold in our thinking, we have to become visionaries in our thinking as well, but we have to shape how we are going to become more innovative and productive as a country and how we are going to shape policies that will inspire our young people to think that they can be the new innovators of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the fundamentals of that have been put in place. Certainly we came to this Parliament with a very progressive National Youth Policy but that becomes part and parcel of the challenges with which we have to be able to grapple; policies while put on paper will have to be unraveled much more rapidly than we have done in the past. Mr. Speaker, I think that our young people will really be the ones who have got to be enthused and tooled towards shaping out a new Barbados economy. Many of the challenges, of course, that we face, Mr. Speaker, are as a result of shifts in our not only domestic market space but shifts in terms of those nations with whom we have traded in the past, those that we have to trade with now, but where the rules of the games have changed, how do we exist within the turmoil of this very rapidly changing environment.

Mr. Speaker, the priorities that will have to engage national dialogue are issues that we have to debate within this Parliament. Those national priorities are based on a whole intricate system of stabilising an economy that has

been rot by tremendous stress and we can spend time debating how that stress occurred without really adding any little value to shaping what we have to do going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that one of the things that we have been able to achieve, and this is something I believe that when you look at several of the country's reports which would have been crafted by the International Monetary Fund, certainly before we came to office no other Government would have put in place a debt management policy that was being required of us because of the need to manage our debt situation. Of course, we now have Debt Management Unit in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, the pillars of economic growth have got to be reshaped. The Right Honourable Prime Minister referred to the focus on the cultural industries and what that means for a small open economy such as Barbados, particularly when we are still having to hold onto some very traditional sectors such as tourism, manufacturing and agriculture. Mr. Speaker, most of this can, of course, be subsumed within the creative sector and indeed we brought a very purposeful bit of legislation to this House, the Cultural Industries Development Act.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have got to recast the way in which, of course, we are going to build out the new Barbados economy. I happen to feel that we have to cast that within the context of how we are going to leverage the creative talents of our young people, some of whom are not interested, really, in some of the traditional areas in which we have toiled. Our young people are now crafting for themselves new vistas of activity which are connecting in a more rapid way to converting their talent into hard-earned dollars, converting their talent into new revenue streams that are largely connected with creativity, Mr. Speaker. These revenue streams are driven by intangibles and not necessarily by mass product, not necessarily by physical resources, so to speak, but driven by a capacity for utilising one's intellectual talent to create services, in particular, that are highly efficient and that, of course, the world requires. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that we have built a very solid foundation and the Independence story is one that helps us to review that foundation and to say, quite frankly, to Barbadians that they have got to come on board in helping this Government -- which is the Government of the day, and in fact any other government to come, as we project toward the next 50 years -- to start thinking in a much more transformational way. Mr. Speaker, I think the requirement to think proverbially out of the box is really what is going to inform the shaping of a new Barbados. It is what is going to connect again the dots that the preamble to the Constitution of Barbados would have started in reflecting on the Year 1637 and moving forward, of course, to the very important Charter which was crafted in Oistins. This would certainly have been a predecessor to any thought of crafting a new Barbados Constitution which was crafted, by and large, by persons of African descent. The new focus

in my view, Mr. Speaker, must be on providing enablers that will help our people to become, as I said, crafters of their fate.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there are a number of new systems that we have to put in place, and much of it will have to be driven by people empowerment models. Mr. Speaker, our communities frankly must be brought on board and brought to the centre, and we have several institutions designed to do that, whether they are the constituency empowerment model, the Rural Development Commission or the Urban Development Commission. We have put before our young people the whole context of establishing youth empowerment centres that are innovation centres designed to establish Barbados as a centre of innovation....

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

Hon. S.A. LASHLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A centre of innovation that can help to create important areas of development; models, of course, that are highly required in the industrialised world. Mr. Speaker, the experiment of industrialisation by invitation must now become one where, having invested the millions of dollars in education and in various areas of endeavour, that investment must now be translated into creating young people who are not afraid to manage wealth and who can become wealth creators. In fact, we are required to think of generating new streams for foreign direct investment and earning foreign exchange in different ways; ways in which we have never earned before. Mr. Speaker, that must be driven through the creation of innovative policies, established by the Government of Barbados, but we have to bring our young people on board much more rapidly. In fact, we have to create in them the ability that they can be anything that they want to be.

Mr. Speaker, many nations are building their wealth capacity on the ability to inspire young people to believe that they can transform the world. Capital investments, certainly in densely populated cities and commercial centres of the world, are largely driven by highly enthused young people. Our focus on an education system that may have served us well in the past must now become a new driver for innovation. Mr. Speaker, we have to focus -- and I am convinced of this -- on establishing new centres of excellence which connect with what our young people are experimenting with. The experimentation has started with using the Internet in a way that has never been used before, Mr. Speaker. Access to key markets no longer is dependent on getting on a plane and going to London or New York. Mr. Speaker, we have young people, many of them whom we have discovered through the very innovative programme called the SIRIUS, the Social Identity Renewal Integrated and Upliftment Strategy, within the Commission

of Pan African Affairs, in which they have created products that can be patented and sold to the rest of the world. In other words, where we reallocate our capital must be critical as key drivers of that intellectual thought and that capacity to invent and to create. Mr. Speaker, though we may not have the physical resources, we certainly have the intellectual capacity, and that, to me, is where we have to position Barbados over the next 50 years; where our young people can be repositioned to become wealth owners and key movers of international commerce.

Mr. Speaker, we have an international business sector which itself offers a tremendous opportunity, through the use of the expansive treaty framework of which we would have been a part for many years, to use it in a way that is more purposeful in terms of driving the earning of new streams of foreign exchange. Mr. Speaker, this will have to be how we can develop and grow new revenue streams to build out a social network of services which we complain about every day. Those social services can only be sustained if we develop new streams of wealth and revenue generation, Mr. Speaker. This has got to be the debate that we place at the domain of Barbadians.

We have accomplished a significant amount of which we should be proud, Mr. Speaker, but the story of Independence cannot only reside in considering the domestic landscape. Mr. Speaker, in our Diaspora we have scientists who have been able to transform systems in the world and, therefore, our story is a big story to be told. Our story must be used to inspire new thought and new thinking, Mr. Speaker; to inspire a more confident society, to inspire a more confident private sector. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, in the next 50 years we must concentrate on developing largely a more enthused, indigenous business sector that can craft and develop the kind of products and services that can support the policy agenda of the Government of Barbados. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, while we are required to examine new systems that create new governance structures that protect the transparency of governance, I believe by and large the role of Government in the economy, moving forward, will become smaller; but for that to happen we have to start building out a new private sector that is largely driven by innovation. We have begun that task, Mr. Speaker.

We have begun the task of establishing Barbados as perhaps the number one entrepreneur centre of the Western Hemisphere. Mr. Speaker, that would be critical towards how we establish ourselves and the pillars upon which we build to establish what I speak of as the new Barbados economy moving forward in the next 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, I want as I end up to congratulate Barbados on achieving 50 years of political independence, to congratulate every single citizen of this country and within the diaspora and to offer to them a lifeline upon

which they can hope to build and to strengthen the capacity of Barbados to not cry over spilt milk but to use our collective wisdoms and energies to crafting new paths for social, political and economic development.

I am obliged, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that consideration to this Schedule be postponed.

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

On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, consideration that the Schedule be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Recommit to announcements please.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Recommittal)

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, just to announce that the Honourable Member for St. James North has by letter dated November 2, 2016 informed the House that he would be absent from the island until November 18 and will therefore be absent from those Sittings being held before that date which includes today.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, with that we have come to the end of Government Business for today and I beg to move that this Sitting be adjourned until Tuesday, November 15 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE.....	2
Hon. A.D. Brathwaite, 2.	

PAPERS

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE.....	2
Hon. C.P. Sinckler, 2.	

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER.....	2
Hon. J.D.E. Boyce, 2.	

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE.....	2
Hon. A.D. Brathwaite, 2.	

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 14.....	2
Hon. M.A. Lashley, 2, 4; Hon. C. P. Sinkler, 5; Hon. C.P. Sinckler, 8; Lt. Col. J.D. Bostic, 9; Hon. F. J. Stuart, 10; Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe, 13, 16.	

RESUMPTION

ORDER NO. 14 (resumed)

RESOLUTION THAT THE PARLIAMENT OF
BARBADOS
CONGRATULATE BARBADOS ON THE
ATTAINMENT OF ITS

AND HAIL THE EFFORTS OF ALL BARBADIANS

FOR MAKING THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT POSSIBLE

Hon. F. J. STUART.....	16
Mr. K. D. Symmonds, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, 37, 40; Mr. T. A. Prescod, 41, 44; Hon. S. A. Lashley, 44, 47; Hon. J.D.E. Boyce, 48; Hon. R. D. Jones, 48.	

SUSPENSION.....	16
-----------------	----

ADJOURNMENT.....	48
------------------	----

Hon. J.D.E. Boyce, 48; Hon. R. D. Jones, 48.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BOSTIC, Lt. Col. J.D.
BOYCE, Hon. J.D.E. (Christ Church South)

BRATHWAITE, Hon. A.D. (St. Philip South)
JONES, Hon. R. D. (Christ Church East Central)
KELLMAN, Hon. D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. M.A. (St. Philip North)
LASHLEY, Hon. S. A. (Christ Church West Central)
LOWE, Dr. the Hon. D. S. (Christ Church East)
PRESCOD, Mr. T. A. (St. Michael East)
SINCKLER, Hon. C.P. (St. Michael North West)
SINKLER, Hon. C. P.
STUART, Hon. F. J. (St. Michael South)
SYMMONDS, Mr. K. D. (St. James Central)

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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. Order No. 23 and the end of the Sitting. The source carries the whole afternoon twice: after the adjournment it repeats the heading ‘THE 92ND SITTING OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY’ and the convening sentence, then the Resumption, the debate on Order No. 23 and the adjournment again, word for word. The first copy is printed and the second (about 33,600 words) has been left out. Please confirm.

Q3. Order No. 23, end of debate. The Speaker calls the Member for Christ Church South, but Hon. J. D. E. Boyce then moves ‘that consideration to this Schedule be postponed’, and the Resolution is not put. The procedural line refers to ‘the Schedule’. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 14, speech of Hon. M. A. Lashley. The Member gives ‘121 vending operations at the River Terminal’ and later refers to ‘the 127 operators out there’. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 14, speech label. The Minister of Finance is labelled ‘Hon. C. P. SINKLER’ for his first speech and ‘Hon. C.P. SINCKLER’ elsewhere. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Announcements (Recommittal). Before the adjournment the source carries the lines ‘Recommit to announcements please.’ and ‘ANNOUNCEMENTS (Recommittal)’ as text. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Friday, 11th November, 2016 at 10.25 a.m., with His Honour Michael A. Carrington, the Speaker, presiding; prayers were taken by Reverend Father Mark Harewood. The Minutes of 1st November were deferred. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce laid the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust Limited 19th Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 30th June, 2012, and Hon. C. P. Sinckler laid the Duties, Taxes and Other Payments Exemption Barbados Film and Video Association Order, 2016 and the Value Added Tax Waiver Order, 2016. The Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and

the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 were read a first time, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Order No. 14 resumed the debate on the Resolution on the Barbados Green Economy Scoping Study. Hon. M. A. Lashley, Member for St. Philip North, outlined a clean transport policy, noting some 110 000 vehicles on the roads, spoke of abandoned vehicles and described a report by the Ministries of the Environment and Health that found conditions for vendors at the River Terminal deplorable, saying construction would start in January. Mr. Sinckler associated the Government with the aim of making Barbados an advanced green economy. Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic spoke of the vulnerability of the urban corridor, noting that about 90 per cent of hotels lay within one kilometre of the high water mark. The Prime Minister, Hon. F. J. Stuart, recalled the part of retired Permanent Secretary Lionel Weekes in the Study and explained carbon concentrations and global warming. The Minister of the Environment, Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe, replied, and the Resolution was agreed to.

After the luncheon suspension the Prime Minister moved Order No. 23, the Resolution that the Parliament of Barbados congratulate Barbados on the attainment of its 50th Anniversary of Independence and hail the efforts of all Barbadians. He noted that Parliament had sat unbroken for 377 years since 1639, marked Sir Garfield Sobers’ 80th birthday and the centenary of Dame Nita Barrow, recalled the Lancaster House conference, and described the transformation of an economy that produced 175 000 tons of sugar in 1966 through tourism and international business.

With Madam Deputy Speaker in the Chair, Mr. K. D. Symmonds, Member for St. James Central, associated the Barbados Labour Party with the Resolution but regretted the Prime Minister’s treatment of labour leaders such as Sir Frank Walcott. He cited the Party’s ‘Covenant of Hope’ on good governance and the rule of law, and argued that Barbados was not the country it used to be, referring to Government bonds, Cahill Energy and the Shiprider Agreement.

Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, Member for St. Lucy, recalled that his constituency had given the Democratic Labour Party Sir Theodore Brancker, Sir Cameron Tudor and Errol Walton Barrow. Mr. T. A. Prescod asked whether Barbadians had reached the consciousness that Independence required and spoke of reparations and education. Hon. S. A. Lashley said the Resolution invited the Parliament to congratulate Barbados rather than partisan debate. On the motion of Mr. Boyce, further consideration was postponed.

The Speaker announced that the Member for St. James North would be absent from the island until 18th

November, and the House adjourned until Tuesday, 15th November, 2016 at 10.00 a.m.

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