
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2013 – 2018

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 07, 2017.

PRESENT

His Honour M. A. CARRINGTON, B.A., LL.B. (Speaker)
Her Honour Mrs. M-J. M. THOMPSON, B.A., M.Sc. Ph.Ed.) (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE, Q.C.
Mr. G. A. CLARKE, J.P., B.Sc., Dip. Ed.
Mr. R. St.C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.)
Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN, (Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development)
Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Leader of the Opposition)
Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P.
Hon. R. D. JONES, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Ed.) (Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation)
Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B. B.S. (Minister of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Water Resource Management)
Mr. D. D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C.
Hon. M. A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of Transport and Works)
Hon. R. L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)
Hon. F. J. STUART, B.A., LL.M. (Prime Minister, Minister of National Security, the Public Service and Urban Development)
Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, M.Sc., C. Eng. (Minister of Health) (Leader of the House)

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT, (Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development)

Mr. J. D. PAUL, B.Sc. (Chairman of Committees)
Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE, Dip. Theology, B.A., M.Ed., Ed.D. (Minister of Environment and Drainage)
Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE, LL.B. (Hons.) (Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs)
Hon. S. A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth)
Hon. D. O'N. INNISS, Dip., B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development)
Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, B.A., M.Sc. (Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)
Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.
Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B.
Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC, MVO, B.A. (Hons.)
Mr. E. G. HINKSON, LL.B (Hons.) LEC, LLM
Dr. M. M. AGARD, J.P., B.Sc., M.Sc., D.D.S
Mr. D. G. SUTHERLAND, B.Sc., M.Sc., MBA (Dist)
Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons.)
Prayers were taken by Reverend Mark Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning Honourable Members, this Sitting of the House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have with me the Minutes of the Meetings held on Tuesday, January 17 and Tuesday, January 24, 2017.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its Meetings of Tuesday, January 17 and Tuesday, January 24, 2017 be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that, Sir. Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.

PAPERS

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

Hon. D. O'N INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the National Policy Framework for the Development of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector in Barbados.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Combermere School has reopened after some weeks of closure due to environmental and other concerns. This was done without much fanfare after the relevant authorities had given the all-clear.

The Combermere School facility at Waterford is one of the oldest school plants in operation, given it had occupied its present site since 1958. The School is surrounded to the north and eastern sides by former plantation properties, and that to the east now accommodating some industrial activity and a horse paddock all separated from the school by busy roadways. A village hugs the south-western boundary. The user group is large with a student roll of 1 130 students, 61 teaching staff, 13 non-teaching staff and 13 ancillary staff. A significant portion of the plant is of coral stone construction, including the main and larger classroom block on the site. The plant is heavily used by the surrounding and the wider Barbadian community at large for a multiplicity of activities year-round. The services infrastructure of the plant is also definitely at a stage where various elements could be expected to manifest weakness or fail and required subsequent further upgrade.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in May 2014, natural gas odours were reported and after investigations by the National Petroleum Corporation, pipeline leaks were identified and resolved during the summer period. This included replacing an entire old pipe traversing the compound. However, in February 2015, the School was disrupted by strong odours coming across the compound into the foyer of the School. On investigation, the smell was found to be emanating from a property east of the school where trees were being cleared. The trees were confirmed to be the source of these strong odours and arrangements were eventually made with the owners to avoid disturbing the trees during school periods due to the impact of their resulting emissions.

Specialists consulted on these species, confirmed the potentially offensive and toxic odours associated with the trees when damaged or disturbed.

At the same time, the internal ventilation of areas of the Administration Section was under scrutiny especially with discomfort being reported particularly in the Deputy Principal's Office and to some extent the Secretary/Treasurer's Office. To provide additional accommodation in this area, subsequent expansion of the Administration Section of the building had increased the distance from windows, limited original airflows and required some dependence on air-conditioning. It would be concluded that lack of adequate air exchange in these areas was in itself a separate ongoing issue but which could also be exacerbated by any odours entering the rooms. The Deputy Principal was relocated for an extended time during the overall period until ventilation was improved with installation of extractor fans. The removal of copying equipment from the immediate vicinity of staff was also necessary along with ensuring the simple practice of allowing windows to be partially opened for periods of the day.

During March to April of 2015, complaints of intermittent odours affecting the entrance to the School, the administrative areas and some classrooms continued. Also in April 2015, the septic tank south of the Principal's Office and east of the main classroom block (henceforth referred to in this Statement as "Sceptic 1") was tested with fog inserted by the Ministry of Health. At this point, a number of critical leaks were evidenced. Excavation of the sewerage lines to "Sceptic 1" identified breaks in joints and on further fog tests, a vent pipe from that tank running to roof level within the wall of the Principal's Lunchroom was found to have been punctured. This has evidently occurred during previous coring through the walls to facilitate installation of electric conduits allowing gases to leak directly into that room. These various breaches were remedied and after testing for contaminants, the surrounding soil fill was also replaced as a precaution. By May 04, 2015, however, the School had been relocated in response to the need to resolve concerns and provide a satisfactory environment for the users. A quality and surface test were commissioned and conducted by REA Envirohealth within the building at this time and confirmed no harmful levels of any contaminants. Also, no presence of extraordinary levels of other chemical gases was found.

However, Mr. Speaker, for good measure at this time, the other septic tanks and manholes of the School plant were inspected, cleaned where required, repaired where any defects were found and covers resealed. During review of the plant a number of these issues were identified for action. These included:

Lab chemicals for disposal needed to be better stored.

Broken and rusted roof gutters needed replacement; the entire plant in need of a more rigorous cleaning; significant pigeon nesting and related issues of concern;

obsolete I.T. equipment stored in classrooms and basement areas; roof leaks in the Home Economics and Art Room block; leaking water storage tanks under the Industrial Arts block causing damp and eroded effects.

The following actions were taken:

(a) Chemicals to be disposed were secured by the installation of a wrought-iron gate to the storage area, pending removal under the guidance of the Environmental Protection Department and their guidelines;

(b) Broken guttering was removed and replaced and downpipes off the main classroom blocks were rooted together above ground level and to arrive south of the building to minimise excessive moisture reaching the base of the buildings' coral stone walls.

(c) All buildings were industrially cleaned internally and power-washed externally;

(d) Pigeon nesting areas were sealed where possible to minimise the recurrence of nesting;

(e) The disposal of obsolete Information Technology equipment was approved and completed.

Mr. Speaker, in July, 2015, a team of consultants from the US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the Center for Disease and Control Prevention (NIOSH) facilitated through PAHO proceeded to review the technical report and steps taken to date to assess the indoor environmental quality at the school, with a number of tests at the site. When concurring with the conclusions of the other studies done locally, including recommended improved maintenance, NIOSH considered that there were no environmental reasons why the buildings could not be reoccupied. The Division of Labour concurred with the satisfactory state of the plant and as a consequence staff and students returned to the school at the beginning of the new school year, September, 2015. The 2015-2016 school year preceded with very few reports of problems after reopening and progress was made to rectify certain other outstanding matters of concerns. The school's Board of Management repaired the Art Room and various windows of the school. Also, repair of the underground water storage tank was completed. Soon after being invited to examine the school in March 2016, recommendations from engineer, Mr. Granville Phillips (Jr.) included the move to install traps in students' bathroom sinks to remedy possible

leakage of gases back from the wells to these bathrooms and surrounding areas on the classroom block. This was also implemented in the course of eliminating any unintended sources of gases. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, Sir, over the course of the two-year period from 2014 there were still intermittent unusual reports of ill health which included instances of dizziness, lightheadedness, nausea and skin irritation and which individuals associated with experiencing the odors or specific conditions in certain areas of the school. The school's operations were constantly interrupted with a full relocation during the third term of the 2014-2015 school year and again with closure during the latter part of the First Term of the 2016-2017 school year. Towards the end of the school year from May 17th to June 30, 2016, the Ministry of Health took the decision to station a nursing consultant at the school to assess and assist any incidents of ailments occurring and to document perceived causes. The nurse's report stated that 13 persons were referred to polyclinics and two to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. However, of the 131 incidents documented only three were assessed in relation to the environment of the school. The nursing consultant noted that there was local irritation reported due to damaged desks and that there was a new set of improvement with the application of the corrected measures. During the summer recess my Ministry undertook fog testing of the sewerage system in August 2016 and the cover south of the Principal's Office which was referred to as the septic one, was resealed and tightened. However, after opening of the school in 2016, there were again complaints of odors affecting section of the main classroom block and also the Secretary-Treasurer's Office. The following discoveries were made on investigation:

(a) On the reopening of the manhole of the septic tank, the tank's cover was found dislodged;

(b) On further examination of the area a ground-level vent pipe to the nearby sewerage well used to insert fog which had been capped was found to have been broken and the cap missing. Gases would have been escaping from this point as well.

(c) At the same time a second-floor vent pipe was noted to be leaking gas from a joint opening. This would have allowed gases to affect nearby third-floor rooms which had, in fact, also recently complained of odors.

(d) Finally, on excavating the soiled cover of a nearby sewerage pipe coming from upper floor toilets, as a part of the process of mapping the system, a puncture was found and leaking of effluent into the soil confirmed at a point mainly outside of the Office of the Secretary-Treasurer. This leak would likely have given rise to an odor from the ground, compromising the air reaching the Secretary-Treasurer's Office from time to time.

(e) All of these leaks were subsequently repaired and the tank cover resealed and its manhole cover secured with locks.

(f) Additionally, in consideration of reports of an incidence of odors and notable skin irritation affecting persons in the School Hall also during the 2016-2017 Term or the first term of that year, further attention was given to nearby drainage with the intention of also completing the sister mapping process in this area.

(g) After closure of the school in November, 2016, the path of drainage from the sinks of the Main Science Block was fully examined. At this point it was discovered by Mr. Phillips and confirmed by an independent team that this effluent passed through an open-grid covered drain which ran parallel to the east windows of the Hall. The proceeding manhole was also found to be clogged, with a very pungent smelling sludge, making passage outflows slow and clearly a source of possible irritants.

(f) Further work was therefore immediately undertaken to clear this drain and to redirect it within an enclosed pipe to arrive north of the laboratories. This discovery answered the question surrounding the occasional report of odors and skin irritation being experienced in the Hall.

(g) On further consideration of the reports of odors in some upstairs rooms, recommendations were also made by the engineers to raise or to relocate specific vent pipes on the buildings to prevent any drift of fumes into rooms at the upper levels. The vent pipes were always to minimum required levels to ensure dispersion away from the buildings;

(h) Given that the original plumbing drawings for this school which was built in 1954 appeared to have been destroyed due to damage in store some years ago and various changes have been made overtime, engineer Granville Phillips (Jr.) was commissioned to complete an updated plan of the school's overall drainage and sewerage systems to ensure that there was a current guard to the systems serving all areas of the school. This mapping work has also been completed.

(i) Recommendations have also been provided for improvement of the drainage infrastructure of the school at a number of points which will be addressed on a prioritized based, one key area is that of rain water drainage off the main class room block.

(j) Previous steps taken to direct rain water away from the base of this building are to be further enhanced.

(k) A plan is to be implemented with the support of the Alumni to capture some of this water in a tank system

which will minimise flooding and settlement of water to the south-west of the building. An additional well is also proposed to assist with the management of this runoff.

(l) The independent team of voluntary experts facilitated by the School's Old Scholars after the second phasing occurred in November 2016 were approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and Innovation to carry out a further review of the school and the initiatives taken in response to the current issues. The team comprised of environmental engineer, Brian Reece, a chemist Dr. Leon Granum O'Neal, civil engineer Gregg Parris and industrial hygienist Mr. Ian Weekes. The conclusions of this team are providing in a separate report presented to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and Innovation on January 23, 2017. The Report's conclusions generally concur with the findings and recommendations made by engineer Mr. Grenville Phillips Junior, and the process of rectifying problems and returning the buildings to a satisfactory state was also very well informed by the team's further observations and continued involvement and feedback on that process. Starting their investigation after the school had again been closed for a period of about three to four weeks, the internal ventilation and potential moisture issues affecting some indoor areas were noted to have been exacerbated by the lack of normal daily air-flow through the rooms. As a result, mould buildup was found within the administration areas, sick bay, store rooms, staff room and on the standard fabric-covered teachers' chairs in classrooms. The History Room, notable for its absence of windows on its western side which would have better allowed for more ventilation, was also notably affected by evidence of mould. This general proliferation of mould buildup during the closure evidenced the need for continuous management, particularly of the school's sizeable coral stone sections, to ensure adequate ventilation year-round. Fabric surfaces must also be routinely cleaned to remove the buildup of oils and moisture which facilitate mould.

When the independent team and Ministry officials examined the school's science lab in late 2016, the poor state of the old laminated wood lab counters was again noted. Some had broken away from the sinks, and the formerly white laminate was brown with the years of exposure to harsh substances. However, added to this it is evident that those chemicals which should be disposed remained in the labs themselves, with some of these off-gassing due to exposure to the warm air. As a consequence, the independent team and Ministry officials determined that there was an urgent need for attention to the training of the lab assistants and the adherence to best practice protocols for the management of labs to ensure the safety of all users of the facilities. Additionally, there is a need to accelerate the removal of all expired and unwanted chemicals from the school. Plans were activated to hire the necessary professionals to carry this out and for provision

of an interim stage point to allow for the removal off site immediately, pending shipment abroad.

The independent team leader, Ben Reece, and civil engineer Greg Parris, in conjunction with engineer Grenville Phillips, senior Ministry Project Unit officer Andrew Parris, and school artisan 'Ructey' Parris all worked tirelessly to review and address identifiable weaknesses in the school's sewerage and drainage systems. The vigilance and record-keeping of events by the school's principal Mr. Vere Parris was also critical in informing the technical group, understanding circumstances and responding to issues arising. Careful attention to the comments of those, particularly sensitive teachers and staff in general, also contributed importantly to understanding what was happening during operation of the school and its systems.

A number of detailed recommendations have been made and are in the reports of both engineer Phillips and of the independent team. The most critical items have now been addressed. Additionally, various drainage recommendations are also provided which speak to instances of temporary flooding in certain areas and water ponding, which are to be dealt with on a prioritised basis. For the period of the first closure in 2015, approximately \$400 000 was spent on testing, guttering, general repairs, examination and cleaning of septic tanks and various manholes, and overall cleaning of the school. To address those matters noted and arising during the Michaelmas 2016 Term, last term, another \$450 000 was explicitly allocated by the Government and will finally be spent as set out in this statement. The major items executed were off-site storage and professional removal of old chemicals, costing \$40 000; additional toilets for female students, costing another \$40 000; new composite countertops for four of the science labs, costing \$105 000; repairs so far of one prefab unit for additional teaching space, costing \$42 000, and overall cleaning of the plant internally and externally inclusive of mould remediation for specific rooms, costing \$80 000. An outstanding matter for the school, frequently referred to by the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union for attention, was the provision of additional toilets for the school's now larger female student population. Designs for this installation, effectively doubling the complement, were prepared in early 2016 by the Ministry's Project Unit, and with the additional budget mobilised, the project was commissioned and completed for operation by the reopening of school in January 2017.

The following matters requiring attention are to be addressed with the remaining funds immediately provided to the school:

- Installation of roof guttering to control flooding north of the science block

- Replacement of the fume chamber stacks on the science block to ensure adequate dispersion above roof level

- Replacement of your existing kitchen grease-trap which is undersized

- Further elevation and completed cleaning of the kitchen's vent stack

- Relocation of the extractor fan installations to improve and to rectify the ventilation of the school's sick bay and the secretary-treasurer's office.

- Replacement of those termite-infested doors, student desktops and repair of the laminate on the three other science labs to be done.

- Removal of the almond trees which continue to threaten the sewage pipes to and from Septic Tank 1 and the nearby wells.

- Repair of a second prefab unit to add two more classrooms to the school.

Mr. Speaker, the situation at Combermere is still being actively monitored and we are presently giving consideration to undertaking the following additional works during the next financial year:

- Possible reallocation of the refuse collection and pickup area

- Provision of a larger septic tank to serve the female students

- Toilets

- Further drainage improvements around the building, and

- An improved configuration and ventilation of the school's cafeteria.

Sir, in conclusion, Combermere School was confronted with a series of environmental issues impacting users due to various factors from May 2014 to December 2016. These included isolated extended source events of odours, including mobile toxic trees, the burning of refuse, indiscriminate use of pesticides and/or cleaning of grease-traps by neighbours. These incidents served to exacerbate anxiety, fuel uninformed speculation and, at times, despite the diligent effort to find solutions, complicated attempts to assess those issues attributed to the plant, including conclusions specifically associated with natural gas supply, sewerage and drainage issues, interior ventilation and the general maintenance management of the school. In

response, several entities assisted the Ministry's Project Unit and the school's management and maintenance staff through the process of investigation and resolution. These included personnel from the Health and Safety section of the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Environmental Protection Department, and private environmental consultants, REA Envirohealth International. Additionally, in 2015 at the request of the Cabinet, the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) obtained the services of a team of consultants from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to investigate the indoor environmental quality at the school.

From March 2016 consultant environmental engineer Mr. Grenville Phillips Junior participated in providing solutions after assessing the circumstances and issues arising, and also completed a full mapping of the sewerage and drainage systems of the school. Also, from November 2016 another team of local professionals, largely alumni, were paid by the Ministry to independently review the history and solutions being applied in order to bring a second tier of analysis to final recommendations being made. These entities and specialists collaborated closely and tirelessly in the final steps taken to bring resolution to the most recent challenges. The entire series of events at Combermere School have provided an extended and multifaceted set of lessons related to the management of a mature school plant. The combination of factors noted provided the test of knowhow, patience and endurance for all involved. It is with some satisfaction however, that with the collaborative effort mobilised the mysteries attending speculation and associated anxieties have been put to bed and notwithstanding those who may have suggested an unwillingness to respond that there has been a consistent effort to systematically investigate, identify and eliminate the causes of negative impacts. More generally, it must also be noted that we are increasingly dealing with the challenges of the rise of respiratory sensitivity and the need to exercise best practice in the environmental management of facilities.

Additionally, the challenge of effectively manning aging infrastructure is also clearly before us however, the challenge of improving the process of ongoing cleaning is one that faces the school as well as every other in the island. There is no substitute of the necessary diligent of those who have responsibility for this routine task. The need to follow the necessary daily protocol even during breaks of ailing wounds, being prudent with the use of water, and attending to adequate dust and grime control are even more critical for such older buildings and must be improved in order to minimise the need for inordinate resource to be expressed on frequent extensive commercial cleaning however necessary this may be at the right intervals. It must also be expected by users that naturally ventilated buildings would allow some moisture intrusion

from the weather and odour from external activities from time-to-time however, the need to permit continued adequate ventilation is also necessary to recover from these intrusions to rooms. Air-condition room must also be vented adequately to control moisture and mould build-up and for fresh air entry. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and this community are indebted to all who participated in the process of resolving the problems and who continue to vigilantly assist the school with monitoring the plant. These included department agencies whose personnel protruded those of the Safety and Health section of the Ministry of Labour headed by Miss Allison Elcock and Senior Environmental Health Officer of the Ministry of Health, Mr. Basil Pilgrim, have stayed the course with us throughout. Special mention must however be made of those private professionals who have given of their time entirely free and without demand for compensation in the process. In this regard, mention must be made of the voluntary work of engineer Granville Phillips and the independent team of Brian Reece, Greg Parris, Dr. Leo Garner-Oneil and Ian Weekes who have all been unflinching in their efforts. The willingness of these individuals to give of their time and expertise on an extended basis is a testament also to the generous community spirit possessed by these individuals. Mr. Speaker, we thank them again.

Let me say Sir, two of our own, the Senior Draftsman of this Ministry's Project Implementation Unit, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Andrew Parris and the school's own talented artisan, Mr. Rutee Parris must also be commended for their unswerving dedication to getting the job done and putting in extended personal time and effort at every stage. The work of all the foregoing persons has been invaluable and has been the silver lining behind the temporary cloud that hung over Combermere but which now, we trust, but dent of diligent collaboration effort effectively have been removed. We can be confident that with the continued corporation from all concerned that there will be no untamed mysteries compromising operations of the school.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to close by stating that since the conclusion of these various reports and activities, the attention of the Ministry and partners has been drawn to what appears to be a deliberate attempt to sabotage the work which has been taking place over the last several months. On Thursday, 26th January, 2017 handtowels and children's book leaves were found to be blocking drainage pipes from a toilet in the area where some complaints had originated. This act would have allowed sewerage gases to have been released into those spaces. If they were not identified and corrected by an external plumber and artisan of the school. Then on Monday, 31st January, a similar incident occurred which have had the same effect. I am sad, Sir, to report that last week we found after closure of one of the lab where natural gas is present in that lab that on return

of the teacher to that lab, it was found, and that was some 45 minutes after her exit that two of those natural gas pipes were turned on and left in that lab. Vigilance, nevertheless, has ensured that it's impact on the school was nullified.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER No. 15 -- NOTARIES PUBLIC BILL 2017

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise, of course, to introduce this Bill which relates to the Government's desire to increase the number of public officers who could perform the function of notaries public in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, this must be seen within the context of the Government's efforts to improve upon business efficiency in Barbados to ensure that those who come before the various State agencies are able to have their business addressed in a very timely and cost effective manner. It is also a manifestation of the extent to which the Barbados business community and others have become intertwine with the global arrangements as well. This Bill, fundamentally, addresses the challenge that we have been having over the years where there has been a limited number of individuals performing the function of notaries public. May I start, Mr. Speaker, by perhaps reflecting upon the functions of notaries public in the context of Barbados because oftentimes we can just stand and summarise the purpose of the Bill without weighing in a bit on the rationale behind it, the importance of it and basically to explain, not just to ourselves in this Honourable Chamber, but generally speaking, the public at large as to the importance of the functions and the reasons the functions are performed. In our context in Barbados, notaries public generally speaking administer oaths of affirmations, the protesting bills of exchange for non-acceptance and non-payment, receiving and entering protests and mercantile matters and taking depositions arriving thereto, witnessing the execution of certain classes

of documents such as deeds and other conveyances, witnessing the execution of documents relating to property situation outside of Barbados such as conveyances and transfers, witnessing the execution of documents such as applications for passports from foreign Governments, job application witnessing and a whole other set of functions that they are required to

When this matter first, it was in great part because of the pressures that were faced by the current Notaries Public of Barbados in performing their other functions, while at the same time performing the functions of Notaries Public. I think we have had about 13 Officers providing such functions as Notaries Public. In the Registration Department you had the Registrar, 2 Deputy Registrars and an Assistant Registrar. In the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office the one Registrar post with 3 Deputy Registrars and one Assistant Registrar, and in the Land Registry, 1 Registrar, 1 Deputy Registrar and 2 Assistant Registrars that would perform the duties of Notaries Public.

Mr. Speaker, what we are doing is increasing the number of those officers who can perform such functions and we are adding to that list the office, Ex Officio by virtue of the office that they hold. The Permanent Secretary and Deputy Permanent Secretary, the Office of Honourable Attorney General, the Permanent Secretary and the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Permanent Secretary and Deputy Permanent Secretary in the ministry responsible for international business, the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Supervisor of Insolvency who currently resides within the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, International Business and Small Business Development.

Mr. Speaker, from my own experience, particularly with the Corporate Affairs Intellectual Property Office that actually do perform most of the internal functions in Barbados on a daily basis, you will find invariably that applicants who wish to have such documents notarized will have to schedule an appointment to the appropriate officer to get them done, or sometimes you spend an inordinate amount of time waiting to have the documents prepared by junior officers then to the notarized. It has not really been a cost issue in terms of what it cost the Government or what it cost applicants to get it done, because I believe we are currently through the Corporate Affairs Intellectual Property Office receiving less than \$30 000 a year for the functions, but the functions are very critical because those who work in the field, not just on Business, 7:14 but even ordinary citizens going about their own affairs domestically, regional and international, are cognizant of the fact that if you do not have documents notarized then they are not accepted and cannot be used either in this jurisdiction or elsewhere. Certainly where law, customs and practices accept that this is necessary, we have to

assure from the State's end that we provide the right quantity of officers to perform the functions and make it a little easier. I expect, Mr. Speaker, that this action will indeed result in an ease doing business to some extent, albeit not necessary the magnitude that we want to cross the border spectrum, but certainly will make it a little easier. Therefore, we expect now that once the word gets out there and of this is formalized, lawyers and other stakeholders recognize that there are other officers who they can go to, to have documents notarized and you will get a faster turnaround in terms of the service therein.

I should add, Mr. Speaker, because I believe the question will be ask why is it that we have limited this to the public sector? Why is it that only Notaries Public in Barbados can be found in the public sector of Barbados? Those who have raised these queries with me are reflecting on the fact that sometimes in the US you can go to the corner shop and encounter a gentleman, for whom English is obviously the second language, performing the functions of a Notary Public and there are seemingly all over the place. Perhaps we accept we do not need such a large quantity. May be the demand is not there. I do not know. I would suffice to say, Mr. Speaker, and will be cautious and that the Government is giving active consideration to increase in the numbers...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member just a moment. I am sorry to interrupt you.

At this point Madam Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member please continue.

Hon. D.O'N. INNISS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

As I was saying, the Government has recognized that we may need to increase the number of individuals of the society to perform the function of Notary Public and to get that increase by way appointing individuals in the private sector as well. Or rather outside of the public sector. It is a work in progress in terms of wrapping our minds around the criteria of such. There are those who argue that selecting Queens Council, for example, should be made Notaries Public. That longstanding accountants, but ...a notary public now performs functions in relation to non-contentious matters and therefore you want individuals of great repute, some wide range of experience who would take pride in the functions and recognise that there is some risks to reputations in performing such functions.

Less the Government be accused of limiting to public officers, I would say all and sundry that active considerations are given to expand the notaries public to

include others. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, our conversations thus far, I have been quite adamant that we must disabuse our minds of any belief that it ought to limited to the legal profession. I do not believe that ought to be the case in Barbados. Certainly it is part of Government's overall thrust to expand and enhance the services therein.

I will also, Mr. Speaker, that within a similar vein, in terms of functions perform and non-contentious across the system that can enhance the way and quality of life we are living and services sector that we also have to give some consideration to the issue of the Justices of the Peace. That I know I have spoken to those who have the responsibility and such, because there are various concerns over the length of time it takes to get someone appointed as a Justice of the Peace I Barbados. There are some key offices outside of the civil establishment that do need JPs readily available, given the volume of work that requires Justices of the Peace to sign documents for example, and there are also in communities we find that sometimes you can have a challenge a JP to perform certain functions. That too is a matter, looking at it within the same context of these non-contentious issues that we have to find ways of having a faster turnaround on these appointments, netter managing the situation and to ensure that at the end of the day our citizens, corporate and private citizens, are able to get on with their business in almost seamless and very cost efficient manner going forward.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe that this matter is not a matter that ought to engage the House a lot today. I will leave it up to the others to take that forward, but I just want to close by reiterating the point that the decision to increase the number of Notaries Public of Barbados is in response to the demand that has been placed upon the current office holders. It must be seen within the context of Government's desire to increase business efficiency in Barbados, make it far more cost effective to enhance our reputation as a domicile of serious business, given the fact that a lot of these documents are required for transactions outside of Barbados as well as transactions that may engage parties from outside of Barbados. It is not to be seen necessary as a revenue earner for the State. Anyone who may want to posit that view, let me disabuse your mind of that now. It is not designed to be any serious revenue earner because I do not expect there will be any increase in the number of request for documents to be notarized, but certainly those who want to have the service done now know that it is more readily available.

Madam Deputy Speaker, with those few words I now beg that this Bill be read a second time.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph:

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: Madam Deputy Speaker, I really have occasion to agree with the Honourable Member who just spoke, but to be the extent that he posited that this is not a matter that should not detain this Honourable House long I am in total agreement. I think that one of the things that bedevils Barbados and has bedeviled Barbados for many years is the question of how efficient we are as a commercial domicile and how efficient it is for people who really want to do business in Barbados to do so. There are a number of things that continue, Madam Speaker, to be patent to the commercial landscape. We have, I think the Governor of the Central Bank has just spoken about the vastness of our public service, but somehow or another Barbados' international reputation in terms of our competitiveness and in terms of our efficiency has slipped over the years. Madam Speaker, it is not that in many instances we need to revolutionise the things that we do. There are many instances where through tweaking certain practices, putting certain things in place, we would present ourselves to the international community as a place that is convenient and good for doing business. I could regale this Chamber with the many stories of horrors that individuals experience at the Corporate Registry. Simple little administrative things, Madam Deputy Speaker, such as the availability of a cashier on perhaps some of the busiest days in the year to accept receipts. Madam Deputy Speaker, the deadline for filing many documents, annual returns for companies for example is January 31st. Therefore the public service and the powers that be ought easily to anticipate that in with so many thousands of companies on our books, on the eve of the last day of January there will be a deluge of people trying to get their filings in, but the reports are that at one Government department there was a single cashier and that the computer system was down, so receipts had to be handwritten. Now these are the things that get in the way of Barbados' business efficiency and it happens year after year after year, and one has to wonder if we are serious about doing business or not, because in many respect it is not the high level services that will be provided by the major accounting firms or by the lawyers or any of those major players. The thing that often brings us down and challenges our reputation is the interface that people wishing to do business will have with our administrative practices.

This Bill, I believe it is timely but frankly -- I am happy that the Minister and I agree on this, it does not go far enough. I wonder when are taking up the Chamber's time to have to do something when we really ought to have thought more carefully about what we are going to do and bring to this Parliament the full measure of the proposals that the Minister clearly has in mind. I agree that perfect is often the enemy of progress, but I am not excited when the Minister said that we really have in mind to do more. We really have in mind to extend the categories of individuals who can be notaries and we really have it in mind. We want to do it. Mr. Minister tell the Chamber why it is that it

cannot be done now. We can go into Committee, we can adjourn this until next week and we can get it right the first time.

The fact of the matter is, the reason this Bill is here in the first place is because people experience horrors trying to have documents notarise with the limited cadre of officers who are available. Madam Deputy Speaker, when you think about this, the Registrar of the Supreme Court has the full responsibility for the registration department, its sub offices in various magistrate courts, all of the property elements in relation to the judicial system and also in a sense as the Administrator of the entire Supreme Court Complex. I do not just mean the physical complex. She has two Deputies and there are a number of Assistant Registrars, but each one of them is tied up doing judicial functions almost every day. So the Registrar and the Deputy Registrars serve as taxing officers and so on.

Now an individual who needs to go before a Notary Public presents themselves at the Registry and with the best will in the world the officer before whom you must attend is already engaged on significant business. So what happens is, you cannot keep poor John Brown out there waiting for an hour or two because it is unfair to him or her. The Registrar or her Deputies or Assistants must interrupt whatever it is they are already trying to do to try to help to keep the business of justice running smooth on the pothole landscape of our judicial system. However, they must stop what they are doing to notarise a document. That practice simply has to come to an end. Madam, instead of solving the problem, all we are doing is spreading the problem now across a wider swath of public servants.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I served in Cabinet and I well remember the burdens that were placed on the Solicitor General and the Solicitor General's Deputy because they were under my portfolio as Honourable Attorney General. I also well remember, Madam, the burdens that the Permanent Secretary and DPS in the Ministry of the Honourable Attorney General's Office has to carry. It would have been near impossible if you take into account the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So what we are doing now is saying to the public we are now providing for you more people whom you can attend to have your document notarized, but in each the ability of the average person on the street to access these individuals instead of being better it is worse.

One Permanent Secretary or Deputy Permanent Secretary trying to prepare a Cabinet Paper to meet some Cabinet Meeting or something like that is really going to be able to stop and deal with a notary public. All we are doing is complicating the lives of the public servant. They do not want to do this duty, so it is incumbent on the Government to solve the problem, not come in here and give us a

palliative or halfway solution, or to try to put a plaster on a sore. We are happy that there are more, but the truth is, this represents the typical attitude of this Democratic Labour Party. So that we cannot be criticise of doing nothing, let us half do the job. Madam Deputy Speaker, how is an individual going to get to see the Solicitor General, the Deputy Solicitor General, the Permanent Secretaries in the ministries responsible for foreign affairs, home affairs or international business or the Office of the Attorney-General or any of their deputies to have a document notarised? Madam Deputy Speaker, the Supervisor of Insolvency spends half of the day in court. I have been involved in bankruptcy actions with the Supervisor of Insolvency and we have been in court from morning until night. This, Madam Deputy Speaker, is really not the solution.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I recently was overseas on business and I was required to notarise a corporate document and send it back to my office. It was a Saturday morning, Ma'am, and I googled and found out where the nearest Notary Public was and it was a Clerk in a UPS Office. Whenever you go to see the Registrar you feel you must dress a certain way because you are going to a prestigious department. Madam Deputy Speaker, I had an important document to be notarised and I walked into the UPS Office and there was a man standing there in short pants and polo shirt with UPS written on it and I asked for a Notary Public and he said after I am finished despatching this customer I will attend to you. He proceeded to serve the man what looked to be three packing crates and he then came to me and notarised my document for which I paid a handsome fee of \$10, that is what happened. Every single UPS store in that city had the services of a Notary Public available.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we may not wish to install everybody at every level as a Notary Public but the fact of the matter is that in the year 2017 there is no mystique to this. If the Honourable Minister troubled himself to see what the practice is in England, the files I go of pretty much all that we do, he would discover that the geneses of Notaries Publics really is empowered as a church office but you simply apply to be a Notary Public, you are vetted in some way and as long as you are an individual of some character - and if you had some legal training you are fine, if you do not have legal training there is a programme of course work that you have to do, you learn a little law of contract and some Tort and so on so that you understand the rudiments - then you are appointed as a Notary. Now, that is really the stage that we need to reach and quite frankly I am not excited about the idea that it should be lawyers. I believe that for the purposes of notarising a document, if it is something an individual would want to do, that they must subject themselves to a certain minimum level of legal training because when a fellow comes to you and say well I want you to notarise this Deed he must at least be able to understand what it is, but what is in it is no

business of his or her. All a Notary does is says: Appears before me this day John Browne and executed this document, that is all a Notary does. A Notary says that somebody came before him or her and signed this paper and they now append their signature to it as a witness, that is really where we need to go. I quite agreed that there is not going to be a surge of people who want to become Notary Publics nor will there be a surge of people who require documents to be notarised.

It is a small thing, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I repeat, there are the small things that are irritants and impediments to our business reputation. Madam Deputy Speaker, there is no company that will praise the advice that is given to them by the tax planners, the lawyers and the other business advisory services and so on if the document cannot get executed on a Saturday morning in time to get where it got to go on the Monday, that is the reality of it. It is those little things, Madam Deputy Speaker that will affect us.

We support this initiative but we are disappointed because we think it takes us in the wrong direction. Nobody at all is able to get rich from this, it is about business facilitation. I think if this Administration were serious about business facilitation it would do the right thing at the right time and the right time is now. Do not tell us that you really had hoped. I suspect that the reason the Honourable Minister had his difficulty is because his Permanent Secretary and so on were so busy that they could not get around to the policy paper and they opened it up to everybody else, but if that is the case why are you going to put a Permanent Secretary to be a Notary.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we support the Bill but in the same way the Government has brought a half-hearted Bill, our support is limited to half-hearted support because now is not the time for half measures. Let us do the right thing the right time and carry it the whole way.

I am obliged to you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not plan to be long on this matter. Why I rise today is to ask the Government to support the Honourable Member for St. Joseph considering that he was the Attorney-General and he had the golden opportunity to put in place those things that he has just requested, so I am liking the assumption that he had an opportunity to reflect on not doing it and that he has now studied the situation and he is now making a valid point and I think that we should support him on that particular matter. If he is repenting of his sins, then I think we should support him. He is now telling me that what he said not to take it for granted that it

does not make sense even though I am supporting what he said, but I am saying that we need to reflect because he had time enough to look at it and I think he has analysed it and he has recognised that during his tenure that these are things that he should have put in place. Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to support him on this particular issue. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Madam Deputy Speaker, just a short intervention here on this Bill. The genesis of this change actually comes from some complaints from certain actors in the international business sector about the unavailability of Notaries from time to time. In considering their proposals, we looked at several jurisdictions, for example, we looked at the British Virgin Island, The Bahamas, Cayman Islands and even the United Kingdom, in terms of the practices. At the end of the day we took the decision that given the volume or lack thereof that in fact that we will simply enhance the numbers having already increased the numbers by our amendment to the Companies Act in 2015. I think the Members were increased by five then with certain other functionaries in the Corporate Affairs Department being able to notarise documents. I believe that there are presently about seven or eight individuals who are able to notarise documents at the Corporate Affairs Department.

In looking at the Solicitor General and the Deputy Solicitor General, in many instances what happens is that when one wants documents notarised, then they also want them to be apostilled which is under the Hague Convention. The Solicitor General and the Deputy Solicitor General and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade have always been able to apostille documents so because it is usually the next step we thought that if we provide the facility for persons to have documents notarised and apostilled in the same environment then that should make it easier for them to do business and stuff in that regard.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I understand the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and we may look at it, depending on the volume. Madam Deputy Speaker, let me say this, I cannot resist this point because I like the initiatives coming from the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. The Honourable Member was Minister with responsibility for international business, I believe, for about two years. The Honourable Member was busy doing other things because something like this I am sure that all with all his clear ideas there was no amendment to the Act, no new notaries were added to my recollection, but I think there is clarity of vision when the Honourable Member is in the Opposition side of these Honourable Chambers and long may the Honourable Member remains there because if

the Honourable Member is able to be more insightful from that side of the divide, then that is how it should remain. Madam Deputy Speaker, yes, we are trying to increase the numbers but it has also been strategic in terms of where these officers are presently located and the services that they offer at this point in time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as a general comment, just this morning I saw a clip You-Tube by the founder of the Standards Group, who was praising the ease of doing business in Barbados. Indeed, we sometimes focus so much on the negative things that we experience or that we hear about that we do not look at the bigger picture in many respects. Yes, there are lots of irritants, we have not gotten it perfect as yet, but where there are hindrances, this Administration has been trying its best to ensure that we can remove those hindrances and this is but one of them. Madam Deputy Speaker, as they come to our attention we agree that we will take whatever steps that are required because those of us who are in the practise of law or international business do understand the irritants and the need for us to remove them.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think I can speak on the behalf of the Honourable Member for St. James South to say that in all sincerity we stand ready at any time to sit with the Opposition if they have any serious recommendations that we can take which would ease the way of doing business, we are quite willing to do so. We really want Barbados to have this signalled reputation as the best place to do business not only in the Caribbean but hopefully in the world. We need to work towards that and I believe that we can work towards that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this morning I was listening to the radio and I believe that we are looking at having a single window for transactions, in fact, the pilot project has started and I commend the relevant Ministry in that regard. The Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office has already moved to an electronic platform in terms of being able to pay by credit card and to file certain documents electronically. They have not gone the whole way as yet. In my own Ministry, I have said that at a time when we have so many electronic platforms available to us, that we need to move away from the use of so much paper. Let us look to see how we can reduce the amount of paper so that we can become more efficient. I think that is what we all are supposed to do, both in Government and in the private sector, to see how we can, in fact, look at our own processes and see how we can try to be more efficient. Madam Deputy Speaker, we are not perfect, this is but one small step, we will make the necessary adjustments if required but I am glad that at minimum we have the support, even if it is half support, of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and I dare say for the Opposition.

I am obliged to you, Ma'am.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James South.

Hon. D.O'N. INNISS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to stand by thanking those Honourable Members who have spoken on this Bill for their comments and guidance which I think is all taken in good stride. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph, of course, alluded to the point that this a step in the right direction but that this is a bit half-hearted. Ma'am, I guess with the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that most things are indeed half-hearted. Madam Deputy Speaker, the reality about it is that this matter speaks specifically to Government's decision to increase the number of officer holders available to perform the function of Notaries Public of Barbados. As I said at the very beginning they must be seen within the context of enhancing business in Barbados, making it easier.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as a Government we have not ran away from accusations of inefficiencies, deficiencies, tardiness, cost efficiencies, et cetera. As a matter of fact, if we do not confront these issues head-on, first by unravelling whether there is any bit of truth in what is being said. Secondly, if there is a modicum of truth, what do we do about it? We cannot kick the can down the street, we cannot bury our heads in the sand and say all is well when, in truth and fact, there is a measure of inefficiency.

Ma'am, it is not a matter of casting blame one side or the other, the truth of the matter is that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who had the pleasure of drawing a salary as a Cabinet Minister or was not performing for it, did not do anything to address this issue. This was an issue way back then but I mean, I am not going to sit here, it is not my style to say you should have done this back then, et cetera, but if you are going to come and want to pour cold water over us addressing frontally some steps, then so be it.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am a little taken aback when the Honourable Member for St. Joseph says that this takes us in a wrong direction because no one would get rich from this. I would like to apologise on the Honourable Member's behalf.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this House. I think Hansard will show that I did not in any rise make any such comment and in fact what I was saying to the Chamber was that it is not an issue, it is not something that people will run to do because simply it is just like being a Justice of the Peace, it is a public service, nobody is going to make any money off it and that is how it should be.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, that is what you said. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. D.O'N. INNISS: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member has just repeated what he said, no one will get rich from performing the duties of Notaries Public and therefore I apologise on the Member's behalf, I think the Honourable Member had a groggy morning coming here today. Madam Deputy Speaker, the truth of the matter is that it is all part of a drive to improve efficiency in this country.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I can defend the actions of the Government and any Ministry for which I have responsibility, because while there are those who talk about business efficiency -- and I will be the first to admit that we still have a long way to go -- there are some solution that lie in us coming to Parliament with legislative reforms but there are far more solutions that lie on the administrative side, and then there are solutions that lie in utilising both. Ma'am, I am not going to fall prey to a call to have a bipartisan committee on debating some matters and bringing things to Parliament because we have a lot of laws already, many of which are quite relevant and applicable. The challenge sometimes lies in the administrative arrangements therein.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office, which is oftentimes one of the Government's department heavily criticised and quite frankly constructively by stakeholders and accusations of being slow in processing some things, how it is frustrating, the whole nine yards. I have listened to them, Madam Deputy Speaker, and have said that there is some truth in what is being said but what can we do, we cannot beat our heads up against the wall. Ma'am, I understand the challenges of the public officers in that department, for example, you never know what is going to hit you when you enter on mornings, sometimes there are challenges in getting the requisite quantity and quality of staff, so that key departments like these sometimes suffer from the lack of true reforms in the public sector, which could be another debate in which I am willing to participate here or anywhere going forward. Sometimes we can be victims of circumstances, sometimes you need a staff member urgently but the process itself takes time but there is a process that has to be followed. What have we done over time? In 2015 we brought the Corporate Miscellaneous legislation to Parliament which made some serious legislative reforms addressing the issues of the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office. We have for the last two years or so instituted and administered electronic filing systems within the office of the Registrar of Corporate Affairs. I want the Honourable Member for St. Joseph to take note because his private firm is one of the heavy users of the electronic system of corporate affairs, and I want to thank him for making use of it. I only wish he would thank that department for being bold and innovative. The truth of the matter is that now service providers - about 280 of them thus far, I am told -- use electronic filing

systems to do their searches and filings and to effectively communicate with the Corporate Affairs Department. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is not perfect. Let me be the first to admit that. Sometimes when you introduce an electronic system and the human interaction and interface on the other end has not moved in the same direction with the same speed, then sometimes you find yourself with a bit of a challenge. We also had an incident late last year in terms of malfunctioning of equipment, and the department was relocated from the seventh floor of the Baobab Towers to the ground floor, and in there you had some challenges along the way. I think they have pretty much now been ironed out. Certainly the staff are a little more comfortable because they are in closer proximity to the vault where documents are kept, so one does not have to go up and down seven floors with documents and so on.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think I should say that the work continues. I believe that there is a need for reform in some areas. The Corporate Affairs and the Registrar's office has been handed more and more responsibility through legislation and the new products we have created due to demands in the international business and domestic business sectors. A lot more has been added, but what we have not been good at on the Government's side during the decades in which we have had public sector administration is being unable to say what are the human resources implications as a result of legislative reforms and bringing new products to the market. Are we able to frontally address the demands that would now be placed upon those public officers and the system which they work in? For example, I have been candid in terms of the Corporate Affairs Department. The top-tier staff there are required to be attorneys-at-law, but do you know what? It is their serious administrative functions which have to be performed. I do not see why a Registrar of Corporate Affairs should be bothered about sick leave, administrative leave and study leave and those matters. There really should be a senior public officer, a senior manager, however styled, and appropriately compensated, who can manage an institution with maybe 80 or so employees who have major interaction with the public at large, and who would be seeing things not only through the lens of an attorney but through the lens of an administrator and manager. Madam Deputy Speaker, this, to my mind, is a major challenge we have throughout the public sector sometimes, where you have technocrats who are tasked to head up departments, which is albeit fine, but then you do not give them the administrative support or you expect them overnight to become leadership gurus and management experts. I think that is sometimes invidious, Madam Deputy Speaker. Sometimes you have to step back and say, "You have been doing this this way for many years, but is it the way it must continue to be done?"

Who looks at business process re-engineering, for example, in these departments? Who looks at the way

things are submitted, the format, the various steps to go through before they are looked at, et cetera? How do you measure customer satisfaction when you have a disgruntled person who comes before a Government department and the person feels as though his or her hand is in the mouth of the lion and they cannot complain, because something will be pushed in File 13 or put on the backburner? That person leaves in there very dissatisfied. Quite often, the criticism is not always to be taken personally. We have sometimes to listen and ask ourselves, "Is this complaint not justified? Is there not a simpler and more cost-efficient way of doing things?" Are we ever mindful that when an individual has to come before one of our departments to submit an application or wait for a decision to be made, those two or three hours waiting are costing somebody money? It is causing maybe delays in making a corporate decision elsewhere, which can have an impact upon our ability to get more jobs in the country to earn more foreign exchange, et cetera. That is why I am saying that we have to be open-minded, take criticism in stride -- a lot of it is quite constructive -- and ask ourselves how we can be more efficient. We do not need a World Bank Doing Business Report to tell us the areas which we are weak in. We need to face reality. There are areas which we are just not very efficient at; and where we are, let us ask ourselves how we can become more efficient.

Certainly, from my Ministry's end, we are committed very much to the use of technology in every aspect of our work throughout the Ministry. Barbados is No. 3 in terms of access to the Internet and mobile phones and so on in the Western world after the United States of America and Canada, but I do not know that the Apps are available or that we are challenging our young people enough, for example, to create the kinds of Apps which can make Barbados a more mobile economy. This is part of the eco-system that we must wrap our minds around, Madam Deputy Speaker; not just coming and talking about notaries public. Yes, Honourable Member for St. Joseph, unlike yourself, they are not going to make money because they are not in it for the money. The reality about it is that it is going to lead to increased efficiency in the system; so how do we inspire our young people to design, develop, maintain and sustain the level of Apps, for example, which can make Barbados a more mobile economy? There is a lot more we need to be able to do, to sit in our comfort zones at home, at work and wherever, and do online. It is necessary, Madam Deputy Speaker. We should not be asking for this to be done. It must become a *raison d'être*. It must become a way of living. It must become a reason for living in this society and economy.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there is a lot more that we have done to address many of the challenges, and we have not sat back and said, "Let us wait until we get it perfect before we embark upon expanding things." Over the next couple of days I am going to address the country on matters

pertaining to the international business sector, but what I will say is that in spite of the criticisms and condemnation, if you look just at the statistics in relation to the number of licensed entities operating in the international business and financial services sector in Barbados, there was a significant increase in the year 2016 over 2015. There was almost a six per cent increase in the number of licensed entities operating in the international business sector in 2016 over 2015; and in terms of the cumulative total of licensed entities operating in Barbados in 2016 over 2015, there was almost a ten per cent increase. I am going to share those statistics with everybody. More importantly, the march must continue, and that is why we have been able to create new products to address the demands of the industry. That is why, for example, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is able to get more clients in the business, because he is now required to be a corporate trust and service provider under the Corporate Trust and Service Providers Act of 2015 or 2016, I think it was, where we said, "Let us ease some of the pressure off the administrators in the public sector, and shift more responsibility onto the service providers, so that they now can take on that responsibility in terms of compliance and regulatory issues." We work with you, and create a much more seamless environment, and you are better able now to service your clients and demand an increase in fees from your clients, including what is paid in foreign currency and in accounts elsewhere. The bottom line is that we have added more and more to the mix, Madam Deputy Speaker, and we recognise that it has to work in tandem with the desire of the public side to recognise its role as a regulator and facilitator. Our task is to facilitate business, not to frustrate it, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is where we operate from. So this Bill before the House today, yes, looking at it just with the naked eye you would see it as just the Government increasing the number of individuals who can perform the duties of a notary public in Barbados but when you look at it a little bit askew you would recognise that it is also about how we can make it a little bit more comfortable and easier for individuals to get work done. Almost every document coming before Corporate Affairs has to be notarised or signed off or something.

I really want to mention, Madam Deputy Speaker, for example, I am sorry but one of the good points raised by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is in relation to the annual returns that has to be filed in Corporate Affairs. I know a lot of these issues are not the flavour of the day to the average person. As you sit on the block with the boys you cannot talk about filing annual returns. If you walk down Broad Street and you have a conversation nobody is going to talk to you about filing annual returns. That is something that perhaps is exciting on understanding more to the accountants, lawyers and the corporate trust people who deal with these matters but it is a significant matter, Madam Deputy Speaker, because I recognise, as Minister, that it is causing a bit of a problem to many entities. I am

the one who, in 2015, brought the amendments to the legislation that certainly spurred the greater use of the need for the filing of annual returns to the Registrar of Corporate Affairs.

In retrospect, I look back and listen to the complaints the last couple of weeks. It is costing many individuals quite a bit of money because the penalties are quite high. I am not going to run away from that because I listen. Now I understand on the other hand, the need for regularly compliance to be addressed and protecting the name of the jurisdiction and so on, but then I asked myself is there a way in which you can find a balance. One of the considerations that I am giving, Madam Deputy Speaker, is looking at the legislation to see whether it is absolutely necessary. Is there another way in which that in which that information can be captured? Can we place the onus on the company secretaries and others to keep it? Is some of the information available to the Revenue Commission as to the BRA? In other words, I wish to give the public, who is concerned on these matters, that there complaints and concerns are being listen to and will be addressed in a frontal manner to ensure order because at the end of the day, these things are costing companies and individuals quite a bit of money and a lot of frustration.

On the other hand, I have a duty to protect the reputation of this domicile because when you try to cut too many corners and just appease one or two you may find that you cause a further damage to this economy and society so we are going to find the right balance. Also, let the Honourable Member for St. Joseph know that I have to ask a question. In 2017, is it still absolutely necessary for one to engage an attorney-at-law to incorporate a company in Barbados? I do not think that is the case. I am prepared as Minister to fully engage John Public on that issue. The amendments to the Companies Act CAP 308, Section 4, Subsection 3 that requires that a lawyer must certify that you are of sound mind and you are not battered up so that you can file for the incorporation of a company. I think everybody over the age of 18 ought to be able to go and incorporate a company themselves.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: We can do all of these. I am not saying, Madam Deputy Speaker, that is our decision, I am putting it out there because I am going to hear all sorts of things about it but I am putting out there and I am telling you how I feel about it. If you want to convince me otherwise so be it.

The Honourable Member for St. James Central is saying that he would only lose \$20 000 a year but could afford to lose that. It is not a big thing. He can afford to give up \$20 000 a year so it is not a big thing to him, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: I am happy that you are urging me on today so when this matter gets out in the public domain, I expect that the seven and a half lawyers that are in the Opposition Benches would come out in the public domain and support this here. All seven and a half of them, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas thinks she is a lawyer but not yet admitted to the Bar. That is my friend. Madam Deputy Speaker, seriously though, we have done quite a bit of legislative reforms over the years. We have done some administrative reforms as well, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is a dynamic environment, I admit there is much more to be done. There is no room to rest on our laurels, we do not need to beat our chest up or clap our backs, et cetera, we just need to constantly grow and keep our eyes fixed on the gaze, never lose sight of our goals and ensure that Barbados becomes known as the domicile of choice for business in the western world.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have, unlike the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, this Government laid in Parliament a five year strategic plan for the international business and financial services sector. We have a plan there and it is being followed, clique is being visited. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph walks with it as his part of his Bible collection on a daily basis. We have just laid in Parliament today, Madam Deputy Speaker, the national policy framework for developing the micro, small and medium enterprise, this Government is working. We have captured in a document involving all of the stakeholders the plan for the micro, small and medium enterprise sector and I am going to shortly request that I have a meeting with the Shadow Minister of Small Business that we cannot present but discuss it. We are going to discuss it further with the stakeholders and implement it but at least, Madam Deputy Speaker, ...

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Whoever, Madam Deputy Speaker, the bottom line is that the international business sector has prepared a plan, we have now laid a plan for the micro, small and medium enterprise sector in Barbados and anybody is free to critique it but at least the Government has clearly enunciated its policies in respect of these two key sectors in this economy and I am not afraid as the lead Minister in this matter to take the matter to the public domain as we shall continue to do.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as I close, once again I wish to thank all of those who have spoken. I have to recognise that it is part of a larger movement that is going on. The Government will stay focus and address a lot of these issues and ensure that we become the domicile of choice for doing business.

Madam Deputy Speaker, with those few remarks, I beg that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that, Madam Deputy Speaker.

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee for further consideration of this Bill.

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. J. D. PAUL: This House is now in Committee.

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Stand Part.

Clauses 1 -- 8 inclusive were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed.

The Second Schedule was called and passed.

The Third Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. O'N INNIS, seconded by Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Her Honour the DEPUTY SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee and MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motion of Hon. D. O'N INNIS, seconded by Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Notaries Public Act, 2017.

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

ORDER No. 18

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH
SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING
AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, THE
VESTING IN THE BARBADOS JEWISH
COMMUNITY INC. OF THE PARCEL OF
LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN,
SITUATE AT PINFOLD STREET AND
MAGAZINE LANE IN THE PARISH OF
ST. MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND TO
FACILITATE THE COMPLETION OF
THE SYNAGOGUE RESTORATION
PROJECT

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Minister.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This Resolution before the House in accordance with Section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act seeks the approval of the House for the vesting in the Barbados Jewish Community Inc. of the parcel of land, which is the property of the Crown, situated at Pinfold Street and Magazine Lane in the parish of St. Michael, which is just approximately 534.5 square metres for the purposes of the completion of the Synagogue Restoration Project.

Mr. Speaker, the Resolution speaks to the description of the land area which, of course, represents the current land in the vicinity leading to Whitepark Road and abutting and bounding on the area which is currently occupied by the Jewish Synagogue and of course the Cemetery area, with which Members of Parliament will all be familiar.

This Resolution before the House, of course, is to my mind of profound importance because of the nature of what it deals with. We have, Mr. Speaker, for quite a while been talking extensively in the House about the role of the creative sector and the role of cultural heritage within the wider context in particular in relation to Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison. This particular project falls within the UNESCO World Heritage Property and therefore it is of immediate significance particularly in relation to the Government's overall policy direction which we have articulated in this House leading up to the debate and the enactment of the Cultural Industries Development Act.

I would first of all, Mr. Speaker, like to compliment the developers who would have been involved in this particular project. This project is of significant cultural importance to Barbados. Certainly for those Members of Parliament who have not yet have an opportunity to visit not only the expanded project but of course the original Jewish Synagogue, I would invite them certainly to do so.

The property, Mr. Speaker, stands on a very historic piece of real property in Barbados more particular in relation to Bridgetown. The Barbadian cultural landscape has indeed witnessed over 300 years of change and adaptation particularly in an urban and military context. Of course, Barbados' capital city is historic because it really is one of the earliest town sites and ports established in the Caribbean network of military and marine mercantile settlements, and that would be one of the key reasons why Barbados would have moved very swiftly towards having Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison inscribed on the World Heritage List. That inscription, of course, took place in June 25, 2011. The restoration of the buildings which comprised this project is of particular importance because of the fact that certainly within our historic City and the Garrison there a number of very historic buildings over the years that have fallen into disrepair and for various reasons, Mr. Speaker and indeed because of their importance to the cultural landscape of Barbados the Government would have sought in various ways to ensure that they can be preserved and restored. One of those ways, Mr. Speaker, would have been the enactment of the Cultural Industries Development Act which would have provided for the first time in the history of Barbados a slew of tax incentives to drive renewed interest in relation to the restoration of historic buildings.

The Act has within its provisions the wherewithal to create certainly the kind of interest, both in terms of persons who own building of a historic nature, not only Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison but certainly across Barbados, to be able to feel that they can proceed to restore those buildings with the full knowledge that they can then access the various incentives under the legislation, both in terms of the importation of relevant materials, as well as in relation to the use of professional services that would be necessary in relation to those restoration efforts. Mr. Speaker, this particular project, given the nature of it, will, in fact, become one of the first substantial projects that will certainly obtain the incentives under that legislation, therefore, it is within that context that I described it as being of particular historic importance in relation to what is desired within the context of Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison.

Mr. Speaker, this project fits very neatly of course within a very important cultural area. In fact, several years ago the Government of Barbados and the Cabinet in particular would have put in place a very important Task Force, the Task Force for the Restoration of the Built Heritage of Barbados. That Task Force, along with a Trust, would have been put in place and have been in existence for, I believe, maybe about three years. We have made some changes to the Task Force in recent times, it is now styled the Barbados Task Force for the Restoration of Built Heritage. The main reason, of course, for establishing that Task Force would have been to provide for the very

important task of raising funds for the restoration of key historic buildings across Barbados but more particularly in relation to Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison.

Mr. Speaker, the task of raising funds is not an easy one, it is an ongoing exercise, it requires persons of goodwill who have the necessary financial resources to make those resources available for the important work of restoring cultural sites. The Task Force, of course, would have been involved in several efforts along the way. The amount of funds raised over the period of time certainly does not place us within the threshold that we would have wanted to reach in order to start the first of those projects which would have been earmarked to be the Carnegie Library which, of course, sits at the top of a priority list of projects that the Task Force has been given the mandate to raise funds to secure their restoration.

Mr. Speaker, we are certainly still very determined to proceed along those lines. In fact, oftentimes when fundraising efforts are started in relation to the restoration of our historic buildings, the question, of course, raised by the private sector or even potential donors will be what amount of money is the Government itself going to be putting in this particular project. That certainly has been the experience of members of the Task Force and certainly I believe in relation to this particular project the question would have asked what is the Government going to be providing.

Mr. Speaker, because of the huge amounts that are obviously required to do this restoration, while the amount of actual money that the Government, from time to time, would put would not be sufficient to meet the full cost of the project. Certainly the Government is committed to providing funding for key projects but most importantly to note, Mr. Speaker, is that this is precisely the reason we would have enacted the Cultural Industries Development Act and we were bold enough to put within that Act some very important incentives that relieve potential developers of cultural projects of huge amounts of money that would normally have to flow into the Consolidated Fund through the mechanism of taxation on goods and services that will ordinarily be required for these projects to succeed. Therefore my answer to that would be to quantify the incentives embodied in the legislation some of which of course include relief from VAT and other imposts, as well as import duties. These are very substantial sums and therefore this Government by virtue of the enactment of that legislation would in fact be foregoing that revenue but we believe that in foregoing that revenue it creates the opportunity and certainly gives the encouragement to potential developers to proceed along the very important task of the refurbishment of cultural buildings and certainly sites of historic significance.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I have determined that I would spend some time on this particular project because I think it is important that not only Members of Parliament are aware of certainly the fact that this is an example, in my view, of a policy that has been embraced by the Parliament of Barbados in the form of legislation but certainly an overall national policy that has begun now to certainly secure some very substantial interests and that the response to the policy of the Government - the private sector has certainly come on board in relation to this project - to really not only invest dollars but to concretise a very important element of what is required to certainly create the kind of forward thrust for the creative sector to proceed to contribute meaningfully to the economic development of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I say this because certainly within the context of the policy of the Government of Barbados, we have enunciated and have said quite clearly that the cultural industries sector must be seen as a key pillar upon which the Barbados economy will be transformed. In my view and certainly in the view of the Government, the cultural industries sector represents that next frontier that will allow for greater expansion to the Barbados economy. Mr. Speaker, it was almost within the context of a leap into a new dimension for our economic planners.

Certainly the Cultural Industries Development Act represents an opportunity that new economic policy can be crafted in a way that is non-traditional. We have embraced it already at the level of the Government and have certainly sent a very strong signal that we will continue to use this legislation as a key means upon which we will grow the cultural industries sector. Mr. Speaker, of course, this legislation is new and I would say to this Honourable House that one of the things we have found -- and I have had already some discussions with the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs -- is that the move towards or the access to incentives has not been as quickly as I certainly would have expected it. We recognise, of course, that we have to do a bit more. Perhaps we have to carve out within the Ministry of Finance a more rapid response to applications to access the incentives under the legislation. Mr. Speaker, I say that within the context that once we are going to be relying on private interests, philanthropists and other donors to provide hard cash for the restoration of our projects, I believe that the Government, in particular, and the Ministry of Finance would have to recognise that there will be a need to respond in a much more rapid way; once the signal has been sent through an application that funds would be made available for the restoration of key cultural projects in Barbados. We are agreed, both myself and the Minister of Finance, that going forward we will have to map out a more rapid response to applications under the Cultural Industries Development Act. This is absolutely necessary if the key objectives of the legislation are to be met.

Mr. Speaker, in this case I am assured that the application which was made in relation to the Synagogue Redevelopment Project has already been approved by the Ministry of Finance, and that the project will get the benefit of all of the requested incentives under the legislation. They would have asked first of all that the project be declared a cultural project; that certainly was approved by me. They would have asked also to access the tax incentives and the duty-free concessions available for qualified cultural projects under Part 4, Section 21 of the Cultural Industries Development Act. Of course, they would also have asked for certain Value-Added Tax (VAT) exemptions in relation to relief from impositions in terms of importation of materials used in the project's development. Of course, the incentives are wide enough to cover the gamut of consultant fees, legal fees, architect fees, et cetera, in relation to projects of such key importance to the cultural development of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, in relation to the project itself, as I said, its location is opposite the Central Police Station, bounded of course by James Street, Coleridge Street, Magazine Lane and Synagogue Lane. It represents an additional phase in the development of the Nidhe Israel Synagogue, otherwise known as the Jewish Synagogue. There is also its adjacent museum. I want to speak a bit in relation to what the project comprised, because I believe that once Barbadians hear of what this entails, it certainly justifies the fact that the Government is moving in the right direction in relation to recognising the key importance of cultural heritage within the context of the present and future development of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I think an analysis of the impact of the cultural industries sector and cultural heritage on the fiscal dynamics of Barbados will force us to consider; certainly from a policy level and certainly examining what has been the experience globally in terms of the impact of the cultural diversity of a country and the impact of the cultural heritage on the economy of a country. I believe we are on the correct path from a policy perspective, and given the response from key donors and, by extension, the private sector, I believe we are actually witnessing the potential of significant impacts in relation to the ability of the Barbados economy to grow exponentially and to respond both internally and externally to what really could be seen as fiscal measures being made possible through legislative means, Mr. Speaker. Within the context of the project, the primary objectives were to create a multipurpose heritage attraction in Bridgetown, Mr. Speaker. For quite some time there has been the clamour, and certainly many persons have been talking about the fact that Bridgetown is fast becoming a dead city. Persons have observed that buildings are not being restored, and a host of comments which, to my mind, were designed to bring attention to some real issues facing Bridgetown. I do not think we can put our heads in the sand and not recognise that over the years neglect has set in where the look and feel of Bridgetown

are concerned. Mr. Speaker, that is why, given the historic nature of Bridgetown, we sought to elevate this part of global heritage onto a place where internationally it can be recognised as a World Heritage Site. Mr. Speaker, we did that for a number of reasons, because within the context of World Heritage Sites there still remains an imbalance between the so-called developed world and the developing world as it relates to those sites of cultural heritage which have been recognised at the level of UNESCO (United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation). Indeed, within the context of the Caribbean one would recognise that there are not many sites which have indeed been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Barbados sought to ensure it had such an inscription, along with other Caribbean neighbours, some of which have applications before UNESCO; but the move to inscribe Historic Bridgetown has to be seen within the wider context in relation to the need to not only secure the patrimony of Barbados in terms of what we can say to world of what Historic Bridgetown represents. Certainly those who are familiar with the history of Bridgetown would recognise that Barbados has a story to tell to the rest of the world. As small as Barbados is, Barbados stands very tall within the global history in relation to the role which Bridgetown played certainly in the early 17th and 18th Centuries, and which led to the transformation of the Americas. That is why the protection of the cultural aspects of Bridgetown must not be taken lightly. This project, therefore, has to be seen within that context.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the primary objectives of the project were to create a multipurpose heritage attraction in Bridgetown and to encourage cultural activities, to enhance the World Heritage designation of Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison, and importantly to support micro-enterprise opportunities in Bridgetown, Mr. Speaker. It was also designed to create new safety and security arrangements through the proposed redevelopment of this important part of the cultural landscape of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, if we analyse that, we have to recognise that before this project came to the fore and one would have examined this area which is located right opposite the old Barbados National Bank, one would have recognised that not many Barbadians might have been aware of the significance of many of the components of this heritage site. In fact, many of the areas such as the old Fire Service section, the shoemakers' shop and so on, were derelict. In fact, they had to be rescued literally because of their importance. For many persons who would have gone on tours of Bridgetown, it was oftentimes unfortunate and sometimes embarrassing; because you would be taken along the pathway by tour guides and told of the rich history of these areas, but they were there lying derelict. Mr. Speaker, if as a result of this project you were to go and visit that area, you would recognise the true transformation that has ensued. I will pause here for lunch but I will come back to

speak more fully on the importance of this project and to give more details on the execution of the works and its significance to Barbados.

I am obliged, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2:00 o'clock this afternoon.

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

The question that the House do now suspend until 2:00 o'clock was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon Honourable Members, this Sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 18 and with that we shall continue.

ORDER No. 18 (Resumed)

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I resume my contribution by focussing the attention of the House on some of the features of this very important project at the Jewish Synagogue.

The project also features the restoration of the old Fire Brigade Station. Of course, the original Fire Brigade Station, in addition to the former Weights and Measures Buildings, would have been built around 1858 and they are both situated at the compound there at James and Coleridge Street. They have also been restored in accordance with archival photographs which meant that the architects would have had to spend quite a lot of time reflecting on archival photographs to be able to restore this particular property. Those of you who are familiar with that part of Bridgetown would recognise that it was certainly in a state of total disrepair over many, many years and therefore the restoration of this particular part of the heritage should certainly be commended.

Mr. Speaker, you would be aware that certainly the older models of the fire vehicles, there is only one I believe remaining in Barbados which is currently situated at the Museum and the intention of course is to have that particular artefact reside in this restored facility... The proposals for the Fire Brigade Station which has been

restored comprised of a number of important aspects. The intention is to have the Museum, to which I referred, adorned with interpretative artefacts and exhibits illustrating the history of the Barbados Fire Service in Bridgetown. There will also be provision for the entrepreneurial side of things. A number of cafés are planned to be installed in that particular facility as well as an art gallery to promote the visual arts in Barbados. Certainly with the plans at a very advanced stage for CARIFESTA, I can say to the House that this particular restored facility will be one of the venues for CARIFESTA as well. I think it offers a tremendous insight into a number of important facets of Barbadian history. This will perhaps be the first opportunity or the first occasion that the actual history of the Barbados Fire Service in a practical way will be made available to not only members of the Barbadian public but certainly to visitors to Barbados.

The other aspect, Mr. Speaker, is the restoration of the artisans' workshop. The original shoemakers shop as we know it would have been originally developed around 1869 but would have gone into a whole state of disrepair. The restoration in 2016 going into 2017 would have retained the character of the building with an upper parapet walls and original doors along James Street and the improved streets giving access for the internal pedestrian arcade.

The new layout as well created new artisans areas and a management office for administrative personnel in that restored facility. Now, I would have had the opportunity of touring it and certainly it is really a restored facility that I can say seems to be all adorned with washrooms for members of the public.

During the 2016 restoration they were able to discover a number of Jewish graves beneath the former building dating back to the early 17th and 18th Centuries, so for example for many years the old shoemakers' shops were actually occupying a space on top of Jewish graves dating back to the 18th Century. That now has been restored and after being hidden from the public's view for over a century it has now revealed to the public some very immaculate gravestones retaining of course their original inscriptions and so on and is now part of a phenomenal heritage attraction. The building has also been restored in its original design and lime paint colour to recapture what it would have looked like more than a century ago.

The architects should be complimented for having gone to lengths to ensure that the lighting that is being used in the restored complex is also the kind of lighting that reflects the time that they wanted to capture.

There is also a social hall in close proximity to the Synagogue. The new social hall, as I understand it, has already been used by several persons coming to Barbados

for weddings in particular. Several Jewish families have used it already. The intention, of course, is to have a facility for special events such as weddings and the education and teaching of Jewish faith among other related matters.

Mr. Speaker, that total area which comprised this new building is about 1 740 square feet and the total store area will compliment activities adjacent to the Nidhe Israel Museum. There is also the Cobbs House Monument on the site. This was once a Quakers Cemetery. Of course, it belonged to William Cobbs, which later became known as the new Town Hall and the site of course of the Parliament of Barbados from 1837 to 1849, itself a tremendously important aspect of Barbados' history and there is now a monument which stands to remind us of that early Parliament. Of course, that was also the place where the signing of the Emancipation Act took place in 1834 followed by the full freedom which was planted on August 01, 1838 when the Apprenticeship System was terminated and completed the emancipation of all citizens.

Mr. Speaker, this particular aspect, I believe, will even be taken further with plans to perhaps use other interpretative signage to tell the history and the story of that important moment of the emancipation of the slaves and the role that the Right Excellent Samuel Jackman Prescod would have played when he entered Parliament for the first time on that site in 1843. As the leader of the Barbados Labour Party he would have been very instrumental in fighting for the rights of the underprivileged, and therefore there is a whole opportunity to tell the story of his role in that struggle as well as the kind of Parliament that existed at that time.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we have the extension to the cemetery. What would have occurred overtime is that the old cemetery would have actually become totally filled and an application was made to the relevant authority for an extension of the cemetery. That has been done with the completion of the external wall which juxtaposes the library, and that is also part of this refurbished facility.

There is also the former public car park that would have been used by members of the public for parking. Those who would have been going and engaging in business activities in and around Bridgetown, more particularly the area of the Barbados National Bank and so on, would have found that that former public car park was really a very unpleasant environment. The conditions were not conducive to the kind of practices that you would want in the city. That entire area would have been bought by the Quakers around 1673 and was used as a meeting house for the Quakers and subsequently part of it was used as a burial ground next to the Jewish Cemetery. Mr. Speaker, this particular area is now incorporated into the new landscape

for the emancipation park, the new master plan which would obviously include a car parking facility, a provision of trees for shading and a commemorative plaza. Mr. Speaker, there is an interesting design for pedestrian walkway and designated parking throughout for physically-challenged persons. Mr. Speaker, that completes the development which offers a whole new insight into a part of the history of Barbados which spans centuries and which I believe will place Barbados on the map, particularly in relation to our quest to ensure that the tourism product is enriched by our cultural heritage and I think that the whole importance of this will be seen.

Mr. Speaker, this project offers tremendous examples for others to follow and I hope that the opportunity would be taken by the private sector to take advantage of the incentives that are provided under the legislation to even enhance and to preserve other parts of Bridgetown. Mr. Speaker, it is only through those partnerships that we can really get the work done that has to be done. The Government, of course, will play its part, the Government through the Ministry of Tourism is exploring several options through Inter-American Development Bank funding to enhance a number of areas within the Bridgetown area and its extremities. We recognised that quite a bit of work is required, that there is need to protect certain open spaces, to create bit more greenery in and around Bridgetown and to enhance sidewalks. We would have started a project where we wanted to develop a number of alleys, of which we have started with Flower Alley in the city. We have seen tremendous response from some of the businesses in Bridgetown, particularly, for example, we have seen response from Diamonds International who were a key partner with us in the development of Flower Alley into a complete new area, where the walls are adorned with nice murals. The intention, Mr. Speaker, is to beautify all of the alleys of Bridgetown. We know what happens in the alleys of Bridgetown, we know they become urinals over a period of time where persons use them for their own purposes. Mr. Speaker, in addition, part of the plan would have to be placing in strategic locations public facilities where persons can go and utilise and relieve themselves. Mr. Speaker, that is not to say that there is an excuse for that kind of activity, I think, practically speaking, because it happens we have to make provision for urinals that can be used safely away from the alleys and so on.

Mr. Speaker, all of this does present an opportunity for Barbados to take advantage of what is available, particularly when we are talking about the role that a city scape can play in terms of the economic enhancement of a country. Mr. Speaker, this brings to bear the importance of connecting cultural heritage with economic development. I think to a large extent we are perhaps at a stage where among the discussion points in Barbados, we are not discussing enough how our cultural heritage can be

interwoven in terms of our economic offerings. It is only in recent times that we have been talking about the role of the cultural industries within the economic dynamics of Barbados. I dare say that some of our economic planners are yet to take the leap of faith in looking at the examples in other countries to understand the huge potential of the cultural heritage within the context of how we can transform our economy.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of this can only be connected when we look at what have been the models for economic expansion used in the past. Certainly, we have cultural artifacts and cultural spaces. We do have buildings of cultural significance that impact significantly on what you offer to your visitors. Certainly these prized possessions cannot be dwindled or diminished because if you get rid of them, you are going to immediately have a significantly direct impact on your ability to so place at the disposal of your potential visitors a key attraction in terms of heritage, and there has been a significant connection in relation to the role of cultural heritage and tourism.

Mr. Speaker, my view certainly is that tourism cannot fire on all cylinders unless it is reinforced by a strong cultural heritage component and the international figures are there to be seen. Certainly in looking at this, when you consider the early economic planners, when you revisit the early theories of persons such as Adam Smith's "The Wealth of the Nations", even he from that period of time contemplated an economic model which was not disconnected from personal development. Perhaps the cultural feel of a country or a society had to be connected to the things that made that economy fire and fuel. He recognised it in the early days of economic planning and theory and there has been a continuum since.

Adam Smith would have looked at it. We had other economic planner such as John Stuart-Mills who actually looked at that aspect, but linking the economy to culture, not only to the culture of the people but the cultural norms and heritage of people had to be intertwined in all of that.

Mr. Speaker, I am taking my time to go through that because I believe that in Barbados we really have to get to the point where we see the opportunity in a much bigger way. The Government is seeking to lead that pathway but I believe the country, because cultural heritage exists in every community in Barbados. I heard oftentimes the Honourable Member for St. Lucy talks about community tourism, and community tourism can have dynamic impact on the economy of a country. Mr. Speaker, for example, in St. Thomas there is a huge opportunity with the heritage site that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas often talks about.

Asides.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I recognised that we have to do some work and I did assure the Honourable Member during a tour... I visited that site only yesterday and I can say to you that that I am a bit concerned about the state of that facility because we have to do work to clean it up, but I can give this Honourable House the assurance that that that project will be completed. In fact, the Ministry of Transport and Works that has the responsibility of mobilising the contractor has recently indicated that they will be moving very quickly soon to get it underway. I also had a discussion with the Minister himself, because we have got to get that project underway. I believe that project is extremely important. I hope that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and I can have a discussion in terms of how we can incorporate the community in the periodic cleaning of that site, because there are some self-help measures that we can take where we can get the community involved.

Asides.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am very serious about that gesture in terms of that project which really is a very important aspect of the slave route project, in terms of being the first Freedom Village at Rock Hall that we need to preserve. We have put money into the Estimates to complete the project and I will ensure that that project is brought to completion.

Mr. Speaker, there is a growing number of writers on the subject of the role of the cultural heritage within the economic dynamics of countries who have now come full circle to agreeing that the economic growth that can be obtained by taking cultural heritage more seriously has got to do more than the infusion of financial investment. You can utilise investment capital but, of course, there is much more that can be used. Technology can be used to enhance how interpretive signage can be done, and of course there is a growing market now for heritage seekers within the context of tourism. There are many persons now who are leaving their various domiciles and going after heritage sites. The international statistics do show that heritage tourists, or what you call the cultural tourists, have a tendency to expend more than your regular tourists. They spend more money, because they are usually persons who are going to be looking at historic places and, of course, they are going to spend more, buy souvenirs, and support the taxis and other tour guides to see these locations. That is the kind of market which I am sure we are going after. The Minister of Tourism, I am sure, sees that as a very lucrative part of the reality of where tourism is going. The cruise ship business is certainly going to go after that kind of market. I think this project in the heart of Bridgetown will enhance Barbados' tourism offerings, particularly in relation to its quest to look at that niche in terms of cultural tourism. Mr. Speaker, as I said, cultural tourists, as we call them, spend substantially more than the standard tourists

because they expect new cultural experiences for their vacations, and these expectations are becoming more and more every day.

As persons become more discerning in terms of their spend, destinations such as Barbados are going to have to become more discerning in relation to the protection and preservation of their cultural heritage, and their cities are going to have to be renovated. Mr. Speaker, you can see that certainly the investment of money in the preservation of cultural sites has a direct relationship to the earning of foreign exchange through tourism spend. I believe that is where we are going. Mr. Speaker, the difference has been phenomenal. We have seen the difference where tourists are attracted to festivals, where the cultural activities within a country can be even made more interesting and dynamic by the cultural spaces that have been created. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that this facility, having a museum, in particular, and having other open spaces which can be used for the visual arts and so on, will be heavily used by the National Cultural Foundation and, of course, other persons wishing to stage various shows and so on.

Mr. Speaker, just by means of some information, my research tells me -- and the Honourable Member for St. James Central is interested in statistics -- when I look at my travelresearch.com that, for example, cultural and heritage tourism plays a critical part within the economic expansion of many of our competing destinations. That appears to be now one of the cutting edge elements; whether or not you can get that extra push must be how you see your cultural heritage playing a dynamic role in that. Mr. Speaker, one of the examples has been what has been happening in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) and the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) regions where, for example, the global value of culture and heritage tourism is well in excess of US\$1 billion on an annual basis. This is not an amount of a trivial nature. Barbados, I am sure everybody agrees, can do with any additional amount of foreign exchange but I believe it requires more than talking about it, Mr. Speaker. The discussion now ongoing about how we can grow foreign exchange in Barbados and how we can get to the point of having greater flows of capital into Barbados has to do with the niche markets which we are going to seek to protect. Mr. Speaker, what I am putting on the table in this House is that one of those niche markets which the Government has earmarked is the whole question of cultural tourism; but it is cultural tourism reinforced and supported by key areas of private sector investment, particularly the enhancement of infrastructure which is going to be very impactful in relation to establishing cultural regions. If you look at the area where the development, which is the subject of this Resolution, has taken place, you would recognise that the potential for even more dynamic change is there. You are impacting now not only on one area. That whole location going up toward the Supreme Court, and incorporating the

Carnegie Library, Central Police Station, et cetera, is all rich in cultural history. Therefore, what we have to offer to the rest of the world in terms of generating interest in Barbados will automatically be enhanced by this project. Certainly there is the opportunity for indirect and direct spinoffs, which will necessarily impact on Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, cultural tourism accounts now for about 37 per cent of the world's travel, and is growing rapidly. Once we are able to take advantage of this now, then of course the projection will be that Barbados will benefit by taking direct and specific action to systematically grow our foreign exchange earnings from tourism. Mr. Speaker, cultural tourism is growing at a rapid rate of 50 per cent per year. Understand then that if we are able to reinforce and create restorative projects of this kind, then of course Barbados can make precise projections about the extent to which our tourism dollars can be expanded into real spend. That has been the discussion. We have discussed the rise in tourism numbers; whether or not the rise in tourism numbers relate or correlate to the rise in tourism spend. My submission is that Government, working with the private sector, can make deliberate decisions by providing the environment through private sector projects of this kind through investment where we can make direct decisions about how much tourists can spend. Then, of course, we can make even more precise projections based on the rate at which our foreign investment can be translated into a more supportive environment upon which growth can be harnessed and taken forward. For example, we have said that we are enhancing Bridgetown. We want to see Bridgetown become a live city for cultural expression, and we believe that by doing that we will be able to attract tourists and other activity. Mr. Speaker, if you look at London which is a place where most of us would travel to, we have had the experience....

Aside.

Hon. S.A. LASHLEY: We have to look at models which connect to real statistics, in which of course the cultural diversity and cultural heritage have played a significant role. In London, for example, four out of five tourists tell the story that culture and heritage are really their main reasons for visiting London. They have seen the growth through figures; in fact, they have actually recalibrated their whole marketing programme based on that. London, of course, being a huge city and centrally located within Europe, has been able to plan out a cultural heritage tourism package which relates to where visitors go and what visitors have said in terms of their numbers. We have our own museum here, but the British Museum is the most visited antiquities museum in the world, and that relates to what they have done in terms of trying to portray and showcase aspects of world history in one location. There is no reason that Barbados, because of its historical

position, Barbados is the closest landmass away from Africa to the Americas and the history of Barbados in terms of the role that it played in those early years, Barbados being a very central part of commerce. That story being properly told through bringing alive again those locations within Barbados that those early persons would have actually done their various trades and so on, can be of enormous benefit in portraying this part of the island, Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison as being a key heritage site that visitors should travel to who travel the world over.

Mr. Speaker, the investment that we are talking about which will benefit from the incentive, as I said, under the Cultural Industries Development Act, the cost of the construction of the entire project that I describe is in the vicinity of just over \$14.5 million and that is money that, of course, would have been brought into Barbados for this project. What that tells us is that certainly there is a huge opportunity for using interest in cultural heritage projects to attract direct inflow of capital into Barbados immediately becomes part of your foreign exchange earning capacity and it immediately translates into how we could expand an economy and to grow our foreign exchange. Economic planners have debated the whole thing of how quickly can spend or impact in terms of cultural tourism and developing heritage sites impact on your balance sheet. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that you are talking about a plan that has certainly worked in many jurisdictions but it calls for almost a recalibration of how we think economically, how our economic planners plan out an economy and this is an example. This first major, cultural heritage project \$14.5 million but certain an example of what is possible within the context of creating a more diverse economy based on what we have said. The cultural industries phenomena and, of course, this particular project would have, during the construction phase, employed just about 30 to 40 persons. At the completion of the project the potential for other persons to be employed in this project. The spin off benefits really are the ones that we should take note of because it becomes then a place where they can be so much impact, transport, persons who would wish to go on tours, all of these areas are going to be very impactful in terms of the wider economic impact. Mr. Speaker, this Resolution, as I said, created an opportunity certainly for me to speak to the wider impact of this. I felt it necessary to explain to the House the full and the true importance of this project. This vesting of land basically where the Government would have made a decision to vest the land in the Jewish community to complete the synagogue project but it has done even more than that within the context of what we have planned out for historic Bridgetown. It represents, of course, what is possible within the context of the incentives which can be accessed through the cultural industries at which this Parliament would have passed and therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would recommend that Members would use some opportunity to visit this project and also to support

the whole context of how we could apply our cultural heritage towards further expansion of the Barbados economy. Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I would now move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I beg to second that and I reserve my right to speak later.

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

Miss. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise, Sir, to give my support to the vesting of the parcel of land situated at Pinfold Street in Magazine Lane in Bridgetown to be vested in the Barbados Jewish Community Inc.

Mr. Speaker, I endorsed most of what the last speaker would have said in relation to the importance of cultural heritage to the Barbados tourism product and certainly to the cultural history of Barbados. The Barbados Labour Party (BLP) has a proud record of the development and redevelopment of Bridgetown and a lot of what he has said, I believe, started under the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Administration. It is important, Sir, that when we speak in this Chamber that the history should often reflect the contribution made by Both Sides irrespective of whether the current Administration is responsible for the current handling of a particular opening of a facility.

Sir, I would wish to start there because I think it is important to perhaps give some background to how we have gotten here. The Honourable Minister would have given a lot of history with respect to the Jewish Community but I believe that since the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) would have been involved in the early stages, certainly in acquiring the property and then handing it over to the Barbados National Trust and that work would have started by Mr. Paul Allman, I believe that it speaks volumes to the vision that the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) would have had in relation to the development of Bridgetown.

Many Barbadians may not be aware fully of the history of the Jewish Community in the City of Bridgetown and perhaps, even in the course of this debate it may be lost on some of them why the vesting of this particular parcel of land is even occurring at this point and time. Many Barbadians would have seen the redevelopment near the police station, they would have seen a lot of work ongoing and I would wish at this stage to certainly commend those who have been involved in the project. It has certainly liven up that part of the city and its environs.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) would have started the development and the redevelopment of Swan Street which was previously

known as Jews Street and that was where a number of the members of the Jewish community would have settled all the way back in the 1600s when they first fled from the Portuguese lands to the English territories back in 1651 during the inquisition. It is important, Sir, because those initial settlers from the Jewish community in Brazil would also have been very instrumental in the development of the sugar cane industry in Barbados lending a lot of their experience and certainly their input to the colonial masters, at that time, to assist with the machinery, the equipment, the methodology of dealing with the cultivation of sugar cane. The original building was destroyed by a hurricane back in 1831 and then it was rebuilt two years later. It was then deconsecrated early in the century and it was seized by the Barbados Government back in 1983. A demolition had been scheduled at that time because I think it was felt that with the deterioration of the Supreme Court Complex which sits across the road from the site, that a Court House would have been a more appropriate structure to be erected on that site. The property later became a Barbados National Trust property and the restoration would have begun several years ago.

The Jewish Community which settled in Barbados, at the time it was around, I believe 800 persons. Many of them would have lived in the surrounding areas and therefore I think when persons visit the island there is certainly a lot of history that can be told about that particular area but over the century after those individuals had settled as you could appreciate, the sugar industry started to deteriorate and many of the Jews or they were converted to Anglicanism. The temple was then sold as well as many of the artefacts which would have been in the temple and then over the next 60 years successive owners of the property made several changes.

I know the Minister would have indicated that some graves have been discovered, I believe, over on the site that dates back as far as the 1660s. The fact of the matter, Sir, is that many of the graves had become dump sites and became very unsightly in The City of Bridgetown. They have been covered over with a lot of rubble and thrash over the years. Again, the necessity to restore that particular area, I believe, was sorted out by the persons responsible for this particular project.

Sir, the fact is that the next set of migration of Jews to the island came from Europe. Fortunate for Barbados, the grandson of a gentleman by the name of Moses Altman, known to many of us as Paul Altman the real estate agent, has been the major force behind the restoration of this project. The project has been supported not solely by the Barbados Government as has been alluded to but it certainly has been supported by the American Jewish Congress, the Commonwealth Jewish Thrust and the Canadian Jewish Congress and also from private donations.

Sir, we will support this initiative as one which is a prime example of what can happen when the private sector certainly comes together to be able to renovate and restore buildings. It takes certainly the burden off of the Barbados Government who is certainly cash-strapped at this point in time to be able to renovate a lot of these old structures which I think we all appreciate are very costly to maintain, and Government has not, certainly over the years, been the best maintainer of its structures. The Jewish community today which numbered about 60 would have petitioned Cabinet to turn the building over to the Barbados National Trust back in 1985. The work would have been started in 1986. I believe now we are seeing the fruits of the labour of Mr. Altman and his team being borne out in the project that we are here discussing in relation to this parcel of land today.

Sir, it is important that we applaud these efforts and certainly encourage others to follow suit. Cultural heritage obviously lends itself to encouraging persons when they visit Barbados to be able to take advantage of our cultural heritage. The site where the Synagogue now is situated obviously is part of the world heritage site which again the Barbados Labour Party would have been at the forefront of ensuring that Barbados attained the world heritage inscription, and that would have been carried on by this current Administration.

I think that it is important that the Minister perhaps in his wrap-up addresses some of the strategies which his ministry and certainly the wider Administration is exploring in relation to the marketing strategically of Barbados as a world heritage site. It is not sufficient, Sir, to simply create a website identifying that the world heritage status exists in Barbados. I think that when you look at what would have transpired under the Barbados Labour Party certainly there were a number of progressive steps being taken to ensure that many of these areas in The City of Bridgetown, as we were moving towards world heritage inscription, were actually developed in an effort to certainly draw additional tourists to The City of Bridgetown.

It does mean, Mr. Speaker, that additional resources would obviously be required in order to market and to promote Barbados in this way. I have had the opportunity on several occasions to pass through Bridgetown and I have seen several historians giving guided tours of Bridgetown to several of our tourists during the daytime and perhaps giving the history of the particular location, but it does strike me that when I travel certainly to other destinations that you can also take tours of the city at night and this is something that I believe that we must explore as a country in being able to allow persons who are now coming more and more on the cruise ships and persons who are overnighing in Barbados to be able to take advantage of visiting some of our cultural heritage spots across the

country not only during the daytime hours but also during the night-time hours.

Overseas, museums are something which you can visit at almost at any time during the daytime but also in the evening. It is something that is part of the culture but also part of the heritage of other territories outside of Barbados. It is something, Mr. Speaker, that once you have gotten your world heritage inscription it enables a Government and certainly the private sector to apply resources towards the marketing of these various sites, and vendors are able to ply their trade in the region of the locations. There is obviously an opportunity for souvenir items to be generated and manufactured and certainly produced in the surrounding areas, and I would hope that with this project that we would see special interests by our artists and certainly our audio visual artists in this area developing various aspects of our cultural heritage that could be sold to persons visiting these various facilities.

Madam President, while I appreciate the Honourable Minister's attempt to relate this vesting to the Cultural Industries Development Bill, I will say that this project came before the enactment of the relevant legislation. To this Government's credit, from what the Honourable Member has said, the legislation will be used by this company to be able to satisfy the criteria in the Cultural Industries Development Act to enable them to take advantage of the various provisions in the legislation as it relates to tax incentives and duty-free concessions. No difficulty there, Mr. Speaker. It, however, concerns me that on the Minister's own admission in a previous debate he would have alluded to the fact, in the same Cultural Industries Development Act, that a number of persons in the creative industries had made applications to the Cultural Industries Development Board for assistance to be able to develop and hone their craft and who applied for funding for various cultural projects. I believe the tune of some \$3.2 million in request had been touted by the Honourable Minister. To date, Sir, I am not aware, and certainly the Honourable Minister can update this Chamber, whether the Minister of Finance has been able to so graciously extend the facility for financing to the cultural industry entrepreneurs in this country to be able to access funding to develop and hone their craft because it is all well and good to talk about cultural heritage and to encourage persons who have been involved in this particular project to continue to do projects of this nature but we cannot do so without recognising that the very same piece of legislation of which the Minister reminds us that there are provisions to enable persons to access funding cannot be accessed by several persons in the industry who work tirelessly every day across the length and breadth of Barbados and who work representing Barbados on a daily basis to be able to make an income in the cultural industries, and I would hope that if those funds have not been made available that those funds can at some point be

made available to those persons in the creative industries. It is something I know that the Minister feels very passionately about. He may experience difficulty in convincing his colleague, the Minister of Finance, to apply some funding to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth to enable this particular fund to be properly capitalised but I do feel that you would see a number of other individuals coming forward with very substantial proposals being able to access funding.

Make no mistakes about it, Mr. Speaker, the persons behind this particular project at the Synagogue, I am sure we will all appreciate, have capital. The average artist in Barbados does not have the capital to be able to initiate an investment of this nature whether in the restoration of cultural heritage buildings or whether in the construction of a studio to be able to record music or to even to record a song, and therefore it is important that while we are able for the first time to perhaps see this legislation, the Cultural Industries Development Act, being applied by an entity, I am sure that there are other cultural entrepreneurs that exist in the cultural industries that would also like to be able to take advantage of that particular piece of legislation. The fact is that this group have had to spend the money and now they are entitled to concessions under the piece of legislation, but that is not the lot of several of the people who exist in the cultural industries and therefore I would again urge this Administration to review. A big song and dance was made of the enactment of the Cultural Industries Development legislation, there were artists who were invited into this Honourable Chamber who believed genuinely that that piece of legislation was going to be able to impact on their earning capacity, that it was going to be able to give them a start, that it was going to be able to help them to be able to export their product beyond Barbados. Mr. Speaker, that was enacted just before the last elections, coincidentally, but several years later we find ourselves now in a situation where nothing has come to fruition as it relates to the several requests which have been made by those persons in the cultural industries.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that concerns me is that while the Honourable Minister points out that this has been an important initiative, and we do agree that it has been an important initiative on the part of this particular company coming together to restore the Jewish Synagogue, I would want the Minister to address the issue of the Empire Theatre in the City of Bridgetown. I believe this is as relevant to this debate as the vesting of this parcel of land that we are addressing.

Mr. Speaker, back in 2013 the Honourable Minister made representation and issued a Press Statement that a \$10 million face lift was being touted for the Empire Theatre. It was made known to the country that a consortium led by PreConco Limited was to finance the entire project, that not one cent of the Barbados was to be

used to finance this particular project. We were told that the capacity when it was rebuilt was to house 290 people, that there was to be a craft brewery and that it was to manufacture Barbadian beer. There was also supposed to be a visitors' center. Mr. Speaker, we then came to find out that the Cabinet of Barbados made a decision to grant PreConco permission to be able to lease the building and to construct this facility at the site of the Empire Theatre.

Mr. Speaker, we also discovered that a bid had been made prior to the lease being granted by this Government to PreConco by the BEAT Foundation which was a group of local entertainment fraternity members, persons who had send a number of years in the entertainment industry, persons who no doubt have perhaps an even greater track record than the group which would have obtained the lease on this site, and that Town and Country Planning Department permission had not been given to PreConco for the beginning of construction on this site. Mr. Speaker, I say that the fact that permission had been given in this situation - this side has no difficulty with who gets the permission - what I believe we have a difficulty with and we will always take issue with is:

(1). Due consideration has not been given to persons firstly who have greater experience in the cultural industries and the restoration of these particular projects;

(2). A situation where the Town and Country Planning Department had expressed certain concerns in relation to this particular site, which also led to them denying permission to the PreConco group for this particular application.

Mr. Speaker, this must concern all of us because where the application has been denied, the Cabinet of Barbados has given a directive that PreConco can construct on the Empire Theatre, and this was back in 2013. Now, if it is that this Administration would want us to believe that they are moving expeditiously with the development and redevelopment of Bridgetown, then I would have expected that in 2017 that some labour work would have started on the Empire Theatre. I would have expected by now that the Town and Country Planning Department conditions would have been satisfied. I would have expected that Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown would have be able to stand proudly in here and say that members of his constituency have been able to get work on that particular site for the restoration of the Empire Theatre. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I can stand here today and say to you that no such thing has happened.

Mr. Speaker, I think that just as the Minister of Education, Science and Technology, and Innovation could stand here this morning, after several months of persons arguing and being disappointed by the handling of the Combermere issue, to issue a Ministerial Statement, I

would expect that all Members on the other side, particularly the Honourable Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth would issue a statement on the Empire Theatre.

Mr. Speaker, this is not something that the Members on the other side did not agree to in the last elections, in fact, Members of the Democratic Labour Party Administration told the country Barbados and the world that they believe that their Ministers should speak to the public on a regular basis. Now, I excuse the Honourable Prime Minister because the Honourable Member was not Prime Minister at the time, plus his track record has proven that the Honourable Member does not speak to the public on a regular basis but the others, including himself, would have followed the then Honourable Member for St. John believing that once they came to office, that they had a responsibility to the people of this country to address the issues that affect the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that if we are going to talk about the redevelopment of Bridgetown that we cannot simply speak about the Synagogue Project which is on one end of Bridgetown without also addressing the other end of Bridgetown which touches on the Empire Theatre. Mr. Speaker, the people of Barbados deserve clarity as it relates to the Empire Theatre Project. Mr. Speaker, that site continues to be vandalised, it has become a home for the homeless, and this is three years after the pronouncement by this Administration that something would be done in relation to the development of that part of Bridgetown.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity, with my colleague the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown and others to visit Wellington Street and St. Ambrose Church last Sunday and as we took the opportunity to walk through the surrounding environs, the concerns of the residents generally in the city area are that yes, there is development happening but that development is not affecting them, they are not getting the jobs. Mr. Speaker, while the Minister talks about developing the alleys of Bridgetown, the fact remains that the housing conditions in areas of the city are deplorable. There are people who would like to get work but they cannot get work.

Mr. Speaker, again this is pertinent to this debate as we are talking about heritage tourism but I cannot ignore the fact that you also had a situation where the Barbados National Trust has raised concerns as it relates to the construction of the Hyatt Hotel in the City of Bridgetown. Mr. Speaker, I will say it again, they have raised concerns about the construction of the Hyatt Hotel in the City of Bridgetown which again we have heard nothing further from this Administration. Now, that is the Barbados National Trust, that is not the Barbados Labour Party, that is the Barbados National Trust that has raised concerns about the height of the building. They have raised

concerns, as they rightly should, because they have nothing to gain from the construction of Hyatt Hotel but they must advise the Government appropriately as it relates to anything that may potentially be detrimental to Barbados' World Heritage status. Mr. Speaker, again I say to this Administration, if it is that decisions are going to be taken in relation to anything which will affect our World Heritage Site, Members on the other side owe it to the public of Barbados to engage in a discussion alerting the country as to the status of the Hyatt Hotel.

Asides.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of delaying this Honourable Chamber on the issue because I have already said that we are in support of the vesting of this parcel of land but it would be remiss of me if I take my seat, since we are talking about vesting, if I did not also address, Mr. Speaker, the issue of vesting of National Housing Corporation units into the poor people of this country who were told in 2008 that if they resided in a housing unit for 20 years or more that they would be entitled to their units. Mr. Speaker, we are talking about vesting, we are talking about empowering people to engage in projects to the benefit of this country, I believe that the Democratic Labour Party intended that the people who lived in terraced units to be able to benefit from ownership of their homes. This is since 2008, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I believe that soon you will tell us how this is relevant to the debate. I hope you do. Please continue.

Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: ... Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a Debate on the vesting of lands under the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act. The vesting of terrace units in this country would have been touted by the Democratic Labour Party back in 2008. It was a pledge by this Administration to the people who resided in those units. Mr. Speaker, my question simply is to ask Members on the other side, certainly the Minister of Housing who I know will speak after me, to address the issue as to when the people in St. Michael South East, who live in terrace units, who have been there in their units for 20 years, who have been paid up and who owe nothing -- not a red cent -- to the National Housing Corporation, will get their title deeds. Mr. Speaker, this vesting which we are doing enables the Barbados Jewish Community Incorporated to have this property vested in them. With that piece of conveyance, that Document, they can go to a lending institution and they can borrow money, Mr. Speaker. They can go to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Culture and produce their Document and they can ask for concessions based on the ownership of their land. My people in St. Michael South East who were promised their units back in 2008 and who have been paid up in full have

not to this day been able to have their properties vested in them, and this Administration, Mr. Speaker....

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have made the point and it is really irrelevant to the Debate, so please move on. You have made the point already. Please move on.

Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I know that issue troubles them and I will come back to it at another time, but I hope the point is made that it cannot be one rule for some and another rule for others, Mr. Speaker. If we are talking about vesting, there has to be fairness and there has to be transparency; and if it is that we are going to ensure that particular provisions are put in place for a certain set of people or set of companies, then I ask this Honourable Chamber, in particular this Government, to ensure that the people who were promised by this Administration in 2008 that they would get their title deeds would get them in the fullness of time.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I have no concerns with this vesting. I would also want the Minister to address the issue of the Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill. From the time I was in the Other Chamber, we threw it out. I could only say it was sent back to this Chamber for Amendments to be made. This is relevant once Barbados also has World Heritage inscription. The Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill is as relevant to this Debate and as relevant to proceeding in any meaningful way in relation to cultural tourism as anything else, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Minister owes it to this Chamber to explain to us today why that piece of legislation has not made its way back to this House. The suggestions were made. The Barbados National Trust met with the Minister, I believe. We went on radio and we talked about the Amendments. That is the one which was sent back from the Senate, and to this day.... Again, we cannot operate in isolation. What I have a difficulty with the Administration about is that they lack the foresight to understand what the Barbados Labour Party started. We did not say we were going to introduce a Cultural Industries Bill because we wanted to pat ourselves on the shoulder. We did not proceed to develop Bridgetown and to redevelop areas of Bridgetown because we wanted to pat ourselves on the shoulder. We did not relocate people from the City of Bridgetown to improve their conditions and move them to other parts of Barbados to pat ourselves on the shoulder. We understood that development in the City was critical to the development of tourism; and with tourism being one of the main generators in this country, it was important that all of the machinery was moving at the same time. This Administration, however, would come here today and want us to believe that this vesting of these lands is something for them to pat themselves on the shoulder for, when in truth and in fact it is the private sector which has been motivated to restore this particular area in Bridgetown; and they were motivated

at a time when the Barbados Labour Party was at the forefront of developing Swan Street and the Church Village Green project by the Central Bank. We were at the forefront of doing that, but you have sat idly by on the other side and now want to come here and behave as though this is the best thing since sliced bread.

Aside.

Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: It is a good thing but it is not your thing, because you have done nothing for the past couple years. You have passed legislation which these people can now take advantage of retroactively; but study all of the people who have not been able to take advantage of the legislation over the past two years. I think you have to get serious about the development in the future of Barbados, particularly in the City of Bridgetown where we have cruise ship passengers walking through the length and breadth of the City. That is the reality. They get off the ships and sometimes the stores are not open in Bridgetown. Drive through Bridgetown on a Sunday; three or four ships in the Port and nothing open in Bridgetown. The Minister of Small Business speaks all the time. He even batters you all on the other side, but he speaks frankly and candidly about the fact that we cannot have our shops closed at the normal time of 4:30 or not be open on Sundays. This Administration talked about duty-free zones to encourage more investment across the country; it has not happened. The Minister of Finance spoke about that in the Budget. They spoke about expanding the special development areas; it has not happened. Yet we are here today in what I consider a historical journey by the Honourable Minister, telling us about what the Democratic Labour Party has done and how they are the visionaries of these cultural projects; but this cultural project is not even their own. It is not of their own making, and while they may have facilitated the players in this particular project, let us be real: On its own, this is not all that needs to be done. We have to figure out a way to get our cruise ship passengers from the Port into the City of Bridgetown. We have to figure out a way, or rather you all have to figure out a way, because I know the Barbados Labour Party knows how to do it. We did it already and we will do it again. You have to figure out a way, and we have said before -- do not make little of it -- if you need the suggestions from the Barbados Labour Party, we are prepared to give them, but what we will not be a part of is being brushed aside or the sarcastic comments that we are offering solutions to problems that were created by us. I have news for you all: You all have been the Government of this country for the last nine years, almost nine years. The people of Barbados have become tired of that rhetoric, and if the only thing which you can now tout and which you have come to this Chamber to deal with in relation to cultural heritage is the vesting of a parcel of land in relation to the Synagogue Project, you all ought to be ashamed. If you can name one other project in the City of Bridgetown that this Administration can say it has done

in relation to the World Heritage inscription, I will take my seat.

Asides.

Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Sir, I am reminded of George Washington House up Bay Street. I am reminded of the Boardwalk. Even when you look outside of the Parliament Buildings, you can see the development in the Square. We did not sit on our laurels and blame anybody for not having enough money. The Barbados Labour Party had a vision for Bridgetown, and it did not only involve big business. It also involved ensuring that the people of the City were able to benefit from the redevelopment of Bridgetown, or that the conditions of the people in the City were improved. My heart goes out to the Member of Parliament for the City, and I will tell you why. I tell myself sometimes that I have issues in St. Michael South East in terms of poverty and in relation to housing and unemployment, but when I have walked through the City with the Honourable for the City who sits in this Chamber, I appreciate more and more the difficulties he encounters in the City of Bridgetown and for the people of the City of Bridgetown. I appeal to Members on the Other Side, it is not too late to get it right but there has been enough studies done by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), there has been enough studies done by the Ministry of Culture, there has been enough studies done by the Ministry of Tourism even though we have not seen the Tourism master plan up to this point and time but that is another story for another debate. Again all of those things speak to the fact that this Administration is all over the place. The information has already been collected, the data is already there, we have already done our research, you need to now build on that research do not pretend as though you do not know what you are supposed to do. There are simple things that can be done by this Administration to get things going but it will not happen but casting and pointing finger across on the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Side because if that suits you the people of this country have had enough of that. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, again I have no intention of delaying this Chamber on this issue, this is a very simple matter but I do believe that the issues that I have raised, I would hope that the Honourable Minister, whether the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Culture or the Minister of Housing would address a number of the questions that I have raised. You see, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the benefit of having answers to Parliament Questions in this Chamber. Parliamentary Questions are asked by Members on This Side and they die with each session so if sometimes we may deviate on a particular point we do so, Sir, not with disrespect to you in the Chair, but we do so because sometimes that is the only way that we can evoke an answer from Members on the Other Side.

Mr. Speaker, again, we support this Resolution. I thank you.

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

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution the vesting of this land in the Barbados Jewish Community Inc.

I want to say from the outset that I am very happy to see that the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) is prepared to support this Resolution because from the time I was in this House I have been hearing a lot of hot air about what we are supposed to do with the Jewish Community, et cetera, from a former Member of Parliament for the City and I am a bit shocked that a person who has not been in here now for a full term has now spoken on this issue as if this is a new issue and a new promise. I want the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East to understand that even though they had promised it, we are actually delivering it. All of those who would have been in here would know and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North would tell you that this is not the first time that this issue is being discussed, this has been discussed from the 1990s. The first time that you are getting delivery on it is now, under a Democratic Labour Party (DLP) so I can understand why the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East behaved the way she has behaved in here today because it is like a case of "Mama, mama, call her bigfoot before she calls you." They went all around the country talking about what they are going to do for the City. We heard about how a hotel is to be built in Palmetto Square. We heard about how hotels used to be down by Courts on St. George Street and we heard about how hotels used to be in the City and how you have to bring back hotels to the City. We also heard about the Pier Head Development so much so that we heard so much about a Pier Head Development that I was invited to a restaurant in Christ Church to discuss the Pier Head Development and when we got there, Mr. Speaker, one of the first things we heard that Independence Square will not be there anymore that the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) was planning to move Independence Square to put a marina in the Independence Square.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, you were not around so do not tell me that is not true. I was invited to a restaurant, Mr. Thompson and myself, up in Marine House.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, that is true. He was a DEM that time so I cannot say he was not around. When I say he was not around I meant he was not around the Barbados Labour Party (BLP). Now, that is what I meant.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I would excuse other younger Members for talking and not

addressing the Chair but certainly not you so address the Chair please.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, when they can come in here and give the impression that we have not done anything actually we have something to show that we have done something. Also, what is the most regrettable thing when I can hear now that the same said people who were asking for hotels to be built in the City are now opposing the hotels that coming to the City. Do you imagine that? The same said people and what is even more disgraceful, Sir, they are in here quarrelling with us about the Jewish Synagogue. Would you believe, they invited me, put me on a committee while I was in Opposition to discuss another piece of important heritage to this country and then they allowed one of their own ministers to derail it. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East should know that it was the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) who started the idea about restoring the House of the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow and did nothing about it because a minister felt that the family should not even get a piece of their own land. They allowed Mr. Berry who was in control of the land to give up his job at Portvale Factory, sold his car and left the country. I am not hearing, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. James Central is now saying that this is not important and that this has nothing to do with heritage. Do you know why? Because we are talking about Mr. Barrow and because I said that they wanted to destroy his name by removing Independence Square to put a marina. Do not go there.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: You better not go there because if Dame Billie came back you cannot even be in here. So do not go there.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, what we are hearing now is that heritage is only about Bridgetown but when we had the opportunity to spread heritage right across Barbados they refused to do something for the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. Well they have not done it. We are in the process and we are just awaiting the paper to come back from the Ministry of Finance and we will acquire that land once it is approved by Cabinet to ensure that we will not only talk about Jews and so on but we will also talk about our own local people.

By the way, in that same ??? that they are talking about, there is a name called Barrow who the Right Excellent Errol Barrow has been able to associate his name to. Not only that. I heard the Honourable Member who got up with the brief that was given to her and spoke about everything and said that the Government is not contributing anything to this development and how everything is being

contributed by outsiders. The Honourable Member did not even see in the brief that was given to her that the Government is also giving permission to expand the cemetery. Do you imagine that? The Government is giving permission for the cemetery to be expanded and they are saying that the Government is not giving back something. A very significant aspect of the project and the land belongs to the Government.

Do you know what is happening? There are a lot of people who write papers for people and we heard in here today, Mr. Speaker, that the Hyatt will not fit into the heritage footage, but that is not true. I went to many conferences discussing these issues and in all of the conferences that I went to discussing world heritage there have always been a combination of the past and the present buildings. If you go to Ecuador, the second designated city in the world, you would see that they have modern buildings and heritage buildings. If you go to Mexico, a country that has about 48 million people passing through it on a monthly basis, you would see the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member making the point that you cannot interfere with the footage, but if you go to the same Synagogue project you would see how they were able to restore the buildings by maintaining a piece and building around it. You can add the old with the new, so do not give the impression that these things cannot occur. What we will tell you is that we are going to do what you all promised the people of Barbados that you all would have done in times of good, but in these good economic times we know what we have to do and we will continue to do what we have to do.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, we have to ensure that we continue to deliver the goods and we will continue to deliver the goods to ensure that what the Barbados Labour Party promised, that we do not promise, that we deliver. We are going to deliver in the Synagogue. We are going to deliver in Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow's birthplace and wherever across Barbados. We will even deliver at St. Marks in St. Philip where they have a cave of significance that has heritage value. You just name it and we will deliver on it. We understand that Harrison's Cave has been bastardised by the Barbados Labour Party and that is why instead of making Harrison's Cave just a focal point at the entry, we will expand the offerings to ensure that the offerings for Harrison's Cave does not start at the entrance where they spent a large sum of money just to put in an elevator, we will make sure that whenever we spend money that the people in the area will also benefit from it.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you are getting too loud especially with the cross meetings from one side to next. Let us give the Honourable Member his hearing.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, when we hear about the interest of the Barbados National Trust and giving people the impression that this Government does not have a relationship, we are prepared also to ensure that they have it, but the Barbados National Trust also needs to tell people that their interest cannot only be about St. Michael. The Barbados National Trust also has to come and tell us what is their interest in ensuring that all heritage properties across Barbados will be treated the same way and that they will not pick and choose and when it comes to certain properties say they do not have money because we need to know what their contribution will be when it comes to the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow's house and whether it will be the same as a house located elsewhere in the city or in St. Michael. They should not come and accused us of not having a relationship with the Barbados National Trust when we are quite prepared to have a land relationship when we are prepared to give up land but at the same time their policy must be continuous and it must be in such a way that it relates to all and not to a "two-few". We are ensuring that our policy is wide-ranging and that we have deliverables. Whereas the other side was prepared to have promises, we will have deliverables.

As I spoke about the housing units, I have said already, and I want to repeat on this Floor of the House, that all those housing units belong to the people and they are free to do what they like with them.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, they are free to do what they like with them. We are prepared to ensure that the necessary vestings are done so that they can be transferred. As the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East said, and as I have said already in her constituency, that what we have done as a party is empowered those persons because we are giving them a property that they did not have before and when the transfers are done that they can take it to the bank and use it to buy another property for their family. What the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East must stop doing is giving the people the impression that they should not look after their property. Everybody knows the property is coming to them so if you know something is coming to you, you should keep them in good stead and ensure that you repair them and keep them right.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go that road with them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, there seems to be a point of order or something. Yes, Honourable Member let us hear.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is misleading this Chamber. I did not say that persons who reside in terrace units in St. Michael South East should not look after their property. If the Honourable Minister of Housing...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, are you referring to the debate today?

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Yes, he just said that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: He did not say that you said, he said that somebody should not give the impression or should tell the members to look after them. I did not hear him accused anybody of telling anybody that they should not look after their property. No point of order found. Honourable Member please continue.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I said the impression should not be given by the Honourable Member that they should not because for the simple reason anybody who will own something and they know they have the right to own something, they will continue to keep it in a good state.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I am the only person who has spoken in the debate from this side so I will ask you to review the...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I cannot stop the Honourable Member from getting impressions from what an Honourable Member said. You are free to draw inferences when you get an impression, I cannot rule on that. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I support this Resolution and I want to say that whenever Resolutions like this come we will support them. This is not the only one you know. They have the Holetown Monument down there and they refused to look after it. I want them to know that they should take a visit and go and look at the monument and see what the relationship the Government has been able... It is not only this one you know.

Asides.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Now, I am hearing that Massy fixed the monument not me. No, no, I cannot ignore that for the simple reason that Massy could just go and fixed a monument belonging to Government and gets no

permission, that is the type of what I will hear. On top of that, not only is the monument being fixed but when you pass and see the police station, the library and so on, you would understand. I want to hear that Massy build the police station and the library too.

Mr. Speaker, what have them jealous is that they walk around and tell people that there is no relationship between the private sector and the Government. They are jealous because the private sector and Government have been able to work a relationship not only at the Synagogue but down Holetown and at many other places. They are jealous because they were saying that nobody wanted to invest in building hotels in Barbados and now that you put one in the city that they called for they are now jealous of that too. You cannot please them, Mr. Speaker. Even though they spent ... in here begging for hotels in the city, now they are getting hotels they are vexed.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do the work we are doing and ignore them because it is quite clear that over here you would find the Bible and over there you would find the critics of the Bible.

I thank you.

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

Lt. Col. J. D. BOSTIC: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to make my contribution to this Resolution which deals with the Synagogue Restoration Project but before I get into what I want to, let me start by saying how interesting it was to have listened to the previous speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, who spoke on this occasion with such bravado and with such fire on this particular Resolution. Mr. Speaker, one would only hope that the next time a Resolution of a similar nature that is dealing with housing comes to this Honourable Chamber that the Honourable Member would speak with such bravado and with such confidence and that the Honourable Member would explain to this Honourable House and to this country exactly what is happening within the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development and the uninhabited housing estates across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to give support to this Resolution. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East spoke previously and indicated the support of the Barbados Labour Party to this Resolution. As Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, I endorse that as well. Sir, I support it because of its historical importance, its cultural significance, and the economic benefits to be derived from such a project. Historically, we must also recognise the contribution of the 300-or-so Jewish settlers back in the 1660s who came to this country from Recife, Brazil, who with their pioneering efforts contributed to the sugar

industry and so the restoration of the Synagogue is all part and parcel of that part of our history which we should always highlight and of which we should always be proud. The synagogue, of course, is one of the oldest in the western hemisphere and that alone is something of which Barbados should be proud.

Mr. Speaker, from a cultural perspective back in 2011 the Synagogue was designated as a UNESCO-protected property within the World Heritage Site of Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison. Mr. Speaker, that too is important because in terms of heritage tourism or cultural tourism, the restoration of this Synagogue fits in neatly with that particular initiative and can only but brings benefits to this country from an economic perspective. Mr. Speaker, I am told that the restoration work done so far is really a sight to behold, that is something that we should all be proud of and we on this side will like to congratulate all those who are associated with the project and the initiative. Mr. Speaker, from what I am told it is a very wonderful piece of work.

Mr. Speaker, economically, this is something that really bothers me in terms of what we should be getting out of having world heritage site located within our shores. The Honourable Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth when the Honourable Member spoke made mention of the fact that heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors within the tourism industry because heritage tourists spend more and they stay longer, generally-speaking, so that that should bring a greater yield to the tourism product of any country that has a world heritage site.

Mr. Speaker, I do not get the feeling that we are really doing enough to harmonise efforts in terms of promoting, or marketing our world heritage site. I am hoping that with the restoration of the Synagogue that that should really give us some impetus now in terms of taking this to the level at which we ought to be taking it, particularly at a time when we are encountering severe economic challenges. Mr. Speaker, this Synagogue should assist in the building of the visitor economy and attracting greater yields to our tourism industry, but there is a problem for me. Sir, that problem has to do with what I would expect to see as a nexus between heritage Bridgetown and greater Bridgetown, particularly the residential part of Bridgetown because if the efforts related to heritage Bridgetown do not translate to an improvement and an enhancement of the lives of those in residential Bridgetown, then this for me has to be a problem. Mr. Speaker, I am not seeing it, neither am I feeling it.

Mr. Speaker, the reality also extends to the fact that I am getting tired of projects within the City of Bridgetown, whether promised or actualised, that are executed without any sort of consultation with the residents of the City of Bridgetown, without any engagement, involvement,

empowerment or enhancement of the communities of the City of Bridgetown. Mr. Speaker, this is not development for the people.

Mr. Speaker, the benefits to be derived from heritage tourism should be economic, social and environment. If those people who are residing in the areas close to this heritage site or close to something like the Synagogue Restoration Project are not benefiting from jobs in any form or fashion, then we are not going in the right direction. If we have a community like those that exist within the City of Bridgetown which is at the lower end of the scale and we have a World Heritage Site which is supposed to bring in greater economic yields because of heritage tourism, if that does not do something to uplift this part of the City of Bridgetown to make it more aesthetically appealing to complement the heritage part of Bridgetown, then we are not going in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, I know that we have another project that is coming or at least we are told that it is coming, but the time has come where there must be a conscientious effort in retaining a particular slice of this pie for Barbadians who are at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder of this country. Mr. Speaker, I am speaking about those people who reside in the City of Bridgetown, not because I am the representative for the City of Bridgetown but because I truly feel that this is the real honest thing to do, to utilise projects like these in order to uplift the people around the projects, so that the Government would not have to be providing so much welfare assistance to people, instead Government should empower the people and help them to be able to benefit from something such as this. Mr. Speaker, the benefits must not go to those at the top, but to those who are going to be impacted negatively upon from the project during the construction phase and things of that nature; people must be engaged so that they know what is going on; those residing in the areas must feel as a part of it, there must be buy-in. Mr. Speaker, there cannot be buy-in if the projects are not sold to them, in terms of communicating to them exactly what is happening and to see how they can play a part in developing the project and also in developing themselves and their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling on the Government and those responsible for heritage tourism in this country to ensure that those persons who live in the neighbouring communities around the World Heritage Site can really benefit from having that designation within Barbados and within the City of Bridgetown and its environs, that is something I am calling for. Mr. Speaker, there must be efforts to improve the environmental conditions within the residential part of our city. There must be efforts to harness resources so that the commercial side of Bridgetown can benefit from the World Heritage Site and that some of those benefits will trickle down to the people in terms of employment and other opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no reason that members of city communities could not have been involved in this project and in some of the others. You cannot have a Heritage City and not engage and involve the people in terms of them being able to tell visitors about it. Because they do not know anything about it and because they are marginalised from it, they are excluded from the process. In the same way that we have affirmative action overseas and in other areas because certain things are guaranteed to assist marginalised people, I am saying that in this country we need to start looking in that direction, Mr. Speaker. When we restore places like the Synagogue -- and I am totally in support of this -- we also have to look at restoring some other areas within the City as well that will enhance that which we are seeking to do here with this restoration project.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said on several occasions by the Government that Barbados is an economy and a society, so yes, the economy is the restoration of the Synagogue. It is aesthetically appealing. It looks good, but I want to see the same thing now going on the social side of it in terms of the communities within the City of Bridgetown and within the World Heritage Site. You cannot bring visitors to a World Heritage Site and not do something to improve the environmental conditions of those areas which lead to the World Heritage Site. That is really the point I wanted to get through to this Honourable Chamber today. I support the Resolution, I am happy for the restoration of the Synagogue, I think it is beneficial to the country, and I hope that we will have some more projects of this nature. With that, I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged. Yes, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I should not be too long because I do not think this is a matter which should detain the House for any inordinate amount of time. From what I have gathered, the Opposition Barbados Labour Party supports the Resolution and agrees with the Project. In fact, they went and researched some of their Barbadian Jewish history and they have been reciting the history of Jews in Barbados and what they have done and not done. Thank God for Google.

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute, Honourable Member, before you get really going.

Asides.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. I was saying that I do not see why we should detain ourselves with this for too much longer,

because the Members of the Opposition, as evidenced from the two speeches we heard from the Honourable Members for St. Michael South East and the City, both agreed with the Resolution. In fact, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, after all of the false fire of her speech, very glibly at the end said, "But I support the Resolution". The mock rage, the fury which came out of the Member was a little surprising. It was not one of the Member's better speeches in here, because the Member was all over the place; from the Tourism Master Plan to the World Heritage inscription, to housing, to transfer of properties, and to all types of things. It showed a level of nervousness. I do not know why the Member would have been nervous. I do not know what the Member could have been nervous about, but there were a couple things which I think are necessary for me to respond to, because somehow or the other, at the end of the day, the Members always seem to find the opportunity to attach the poor Ministry of Finance to all of these things, some of which we do not even know very much about.

The Member sought to give the impression that, somehow or the other, between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Finance they were trying to deny cultural practitioners in Barbados the opportunity to access the concessions or whatever benefits may be found in the Cultural Industries Development Act. Nothing could be further from the truth. Apart from the fact that the Cultural Industries Development Bill was something which we came and found the last Administration mulling over for more than ten years -- promising to introduce and never having either the courage or perhaps even the intellectual fortitude or the tenacity to bring it to the House of Assembly and introduce it here -- thanks to the good work of the Member for Christ Church West Central, the Honourable Minister responsible for Culture, he was able to take up what clearly was an unfinished piece of scattered thoughts and pull them into a coherent policy strong enough to be brought to the House of Assembly and have it passed by this Honourable House as an Act. It is a young piece of legislation in the sense that it was passed in recent times; not young in terms of the concept because, as I said, the Barbados Labour Party mulled over it for more than a decade while all the time saying they were doing all these things for the cultural practitioners. Many of those cultural practitioners, I might add, some Members of the Opposition are very familiar with, have managed some of their careers, and have very cozy relationships with, Madam Deputy Speaker. Of course, there is nothing wrong with that; that is okay, that is in their capacity as professionals. Nonetheless, they never really delivered in Government for them, but in Opposition are harassing Members of this Administration for supposedly not delivering in relation to benefits.

As I said, it is a young piece of legislation, new in practice -- not in terms of what is happening because we

give concessions for many things -- in terms of the process which you go through to end up getting the concessions. There is a fairly detailed process through which it goes. I need to make this point because we often hear from people in the community, not in here specifically all the time but outside in the community, that they have applied to the Ministry of Finance for this or that concession or whatever the case may be, and have not received it, or they complain about the time it takes, and so on. I often make the point, as I make to my colleagues in here who sometimes ask the same questions as well in relation to matters which may fall within their own purview as Ministers and in their Ministries: There is no concession factory in the Ministry of Finance. We have in the Revenue section, where they deal with concessions, a meagre staff of about five persons, and that is the standard number because that number fluctuates downwards depending on what may happen in terms of Civil Service appointments. You may have a standard of five or six persons on average, and two may have to go out acting up somewhere and in some other Ministries, and may not be immediately replaced or may be replaced by persons who are not intimately familiar with the process and have to go through a learning curve. You may have persons who may go off ill, or have to go on study leave or whatever the case may be.

I often make the point that those five or six persons have to handle every application that comes in for a waiver or concession by the waiver of taxes and duties and other impositions which the State may have, only about five persons. From the smallest project, from the taxi man or woman, right up to the biggest project like Sam Lord's or Sandals you have the same number of persons and anybody who has been around the Ministry of Finance working as minister or in a senior capacity, administrative capacity, Permanent Secretary, or deputy Permanent Secretary can tell you of the loads of files if you go down in that department. People talk about technology but a computer cannot make a decision on whether a waiver is to be given or not or recommended to be give or not given, that has to be done by basic intelligent research and analysis by those persons who work in that division. I can say publicly that they work hard, long hours, beyond the call of duty to assist in trying to service all of the requests which are made to the Ministry of Finance. I want to publicly give them every possible kudos and support for the outstanding job which they do in the ministry. It is not easy, it is very difficult in terms of that so when new pieces of legislation like the Cultural Industries come on board when you have TDA with the tourism people and you have other attendant types of legislation where we sought to make it functionally a little easier, Madam Deputy Speaker, by making the minister of the particular subject area, in this culture, responsible for approving, it still has to come through the Ministry of Finance. That is something that we have discussed that we really need to examine but the law gives the final approval for the waiver of any tax to the

Minister of Finance so it has by some co-junction into Finance but we recognise now with a lot of these other pieces of legislation coming on board that it is really clogging the system and as Minister of Culture has indicated, he and I have discussed it, we have raised it at Cabinet informally and we need to find ways between the various staff members at a technical level and also at a policy and if necessary a legislative level to have the amendments made to ensure that we can speed that up. Even in the absence of that, if you take this case, for example, persons who were putting together this wonderful restoration of the synagogue and the work out there applied to the Ministry and we realised that given some of the challenges with the Cultural Industries Act, in terms of getting processes through, we indicated to them that they should apply to the Minister of Finance directly under CAP 67(b) of the Income Tax Act so that we could facilitate in a speedier fashion the issues of concessions to facilitate this particular exercise. That is not just for them, we have done it in other instances already. There are cultural industry practitioners who we know can be accommodated under Cultural Industries but because of challenges they may have, we have said to them apply directly to the Minister of Finance and will do it and we have done so. To give the impression or make the point as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East did that we passed this piece of legislation have forgotten all of these people, are not taking them on, not interested in what they wanted to do, not assisting them is really not true. Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, I can tell you that through the Ministry of Finance, under the Arts and Sports Fund of Barbados we have given cultural practitioners in Barbados tens of millions of dollars over the years that this Administration has been in office. In fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, part of what bothered me about the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East speech and there are not a lot of things about her that bothers me, to be honest with you, but what bothered me about the speech is saying that the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Culture was not taking on or helping cultural practitioners. I remember that they had a flood in Dominica. A group calling themselves "Friends of Dominica", up to now I do not know who they are, submitted an application to the Ministry of Finance for concessions on ticket associated with a show that was held at Kensington Oval and the Ministry of Finance, I pulled the thing and I told the people in the Ministry to process it as quickly as possible and let us get them the concessions that they want and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East was an integral organiser of that particular initiative, yet the Honourable Member got in here and gave the impression that the Ministry of Finance does not help cultural practitioners in Barbados. I was mindful to write on the concession file that it would be useful when this exercise was finished that the people associated with it would submit a full and complete account of what has happened in relation to the finances raised for the assistance of Dominica. We are still to get it, I am waiting

on it, I do not mind, you know I am long suffering and I am still waiting on it.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: No, it has not been submitted yet. I am not troubling the Honourable Member. I am just making the point that we operate in a fluid type of situation and we try our best to help people in the cultural industries and the Minister can confirm this. They also get help under the Cultural Fund at the National Cultural Foundation, the Cultural Action Fund so to say that we do not do this and that we do not like cultural artistes is not ...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Not that we will not honour it. That is not what the Minister said. The Minister said they are in the process awaiting approval by the Ministry of Finance and I have explained already the reasons why we have delays in the system because we have thousands of applications and we only have a certain number of persons attached to that division and therefore we have to, in the scheme of things, work with what we have.

I heard the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown, I am not going to address ...

Miss. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I have given the Honourable Member I believe sufficient latitude. The Honourable Member is misleading the Honourable Chamber. It is correct that the Dominica Children Relief Fund would have requested from the Ministry of Finance certain concessions but the Minister should also tell this Honourable Chamber that the Honourable Prime Minister, the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Culture as well as himself would have been privy to conversations with the Dominica Children Relief Fund in relation to the use of the Kensington Oval for the hosting of the facility. It was not a partisan entity, it was an entity which Both Sides would have contributed in some way to ensuring that these funds went to Dominica. I would, however, Madam Deputy Speaker, make a document of the House the transfer from the Scotia Bank to the relevant bank account in Dominica which will show that the sum of ... Hold on, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think I have the wrong one.

Asides.

Miss. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: My apologies, Madam Deputy Speaker. I would never have thought that this would have become such a major issue but the Eastern Caribbean currency of \$94 205.04 was sent to the ...

Asides.

Miss. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: I will make it a document of the House because unlike Members on the Other Side my credibility is not in questions or is the members of the Dominica Children Relief Fund. We raised funds on behalf of the people of Dominica and moneys were sent to Dominica.

I will make it a document of the House because unlike Honourable Members on the other side my credibility or the Members of the Dominica Children Relief Fund is not in question. We raised funds on behalf of the people of Dominica and moneys were sent to the Dominica Government, and I will make that a document of the House.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have made your point.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not fussing up. As I said I made it abundantly clear that I am not imputing improper motives to anybody. I am not impugning anybody's reputation. I made the simple point that the Ministry of Finance, not Chris Sinckler because nobody has to present anything to me, granted concessions and expected to get a report of the event and what happened and as far as I know it has not been furnished to the Ministry of Finance.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: On what do you rise?

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: I rise on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Chamber. If the Honourable Member can produce the letter that he would have sent to the Dominica Children Relief Fund requesting any documentation after the event then he needs to do so to this Honourable Chamber, but to the best of my knowledge that was never requested by the Ministry of Finance.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, it has become the practice of all such charitable events and organisations that when concessions are granted - this is by practice and the Honourable Member knows this - that in order to live up to the challenge of transparency that as a matter of courtesy to the Ministry of Finance - this is known and was communicated - you give a report of what you have done. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East who has a wry smile on his face has been through this already. He knows that process and he knows that I am not saying anything that is not true. We do not get money from Government.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Chamber. I have asked him to produce the correspondence with which he made a request for the Dominica Children Relief Fund to produce any documentation to the Ministry of Finance. The only request which was ever made of the Dominica Children Relief Fund was to provide proof from the Custom Broker that the LED screens which came from Antigua were returned to the island of Antigua after the concert and those documents were provided to the Ministry of Finance. I will not, Ma'am, be a party to any aspersions on my integrity or the persons from both sides of the political divide who sat on a committee to do what was in the best interest of a country that was devastated and ravaged by a tropical disaster. I will not be a party to it, Ma'am. The integrity of myself or that of other Honourable Members certainly cannot be in question. If the integrity of those on the other side need to be called into question, then the Honourable Member needs to do so but do not be casting fingers on this side.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, after all of that the Ministry of Finance awaits the report from those who participated in organising that event. I never said any correspondence went to anybody. I made it abundantly clear that it is the practice for the purpose of transparency and common courtesy to give a report to the Ministry of Finance and that report has not yet come. There are many groups and organisations in Barbados, the Minister of Social Care can tell you, who receive benefit from the Ministry of Finance through concessions or other such things and as a matter of courtesy they supply a report. I am saying that given that it was a public event and given that it had such high profile people associated with it that a report should have been given.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I am not arguing over that. I am making the point as I made before that the Honourable Member said that the Ministry of Finance somehow or the other along with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth have not been owning people who want to have cultural events or cultural practitioners, and that is simply not the case. I have made that point and I will move on from that point because I want to get on to something else.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am begging for my time that was taken by the Honourable Member to be restored. Madam Deputy Speaker, I heard the point being made both by the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East about what was happening in terms of the restoration of the Synagogue and stuff like that. If you hear the tinge of the

argument it is as if these people went and did this thing and that Government is doing nothing for Bridgetown. We have been saying to our philanthropists, to members of the private sector and so forth who are associated or want to do anything in Bridgetown, that this is the kind of thing that we prefer and would advise and promote to be done because Government cannot do everything.

I hear people say Bridgetown needs to be restored and Government needs to do this thing as though Government has some pot of money somewhere that the Government could get up and start rebuilding buildings all over Bridgetown including buildings owned by private people and do it just because we have a Bridgetown inscription in terms of the UNESCO World Heritage Inscription. It is not meant to work that way. We have said look, if you have an interest in restoring something we will work with you. Sometimes we put in an in kind contribution and sometimes we can put in a cash contribution. Depending on what the exercise is, we can give concessions sometimes and other times we can donate the land or the property as we have done in instances where that can happen or we can give permission if that is necessary. Something as simple as that we can do and we have been doing it.

There is a young architect, I do not want to call the name because I did not get the permission to do so, who has restored some office buildings, I believe, out by the Garrison and who went through the entire process of getting the permission from Town Planning, dealing with the Heritage Committee, looking at the structure and so forth and so on, and who came to the Ministry of Finance, the Cultural Industries Development Act either was not passed or it was newly passed, and we said to the person given what you are putting in to restore those historic buildings up there we are going to meet you by giving you expenses concessions to ensure that you can do so at a significantly reduced cost. I cannot call the name of the person because I did not ask for permission nor I did not tell the person I will do so, so I am not going to do it. I know that the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth have encouraged other people, both property owners, developers and so forth and so on, to get these things done, and we are doing these in very difficult circumstances.

I heard the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown speaking about doing things in the city. I like the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown because I think he is one of the few genuine people you could find hanging around Barbados Labour Party politics. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East has not done anything. Madam Deputy Speaker, the Central Bank of Barbados in collaboration with Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. repaired and upgraded the entire Church Village Green which the Honourable Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth opened. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is

such a tremendous green space that they had the People's Republic of China celebrating their New Year recently with a big cheer over there. We also did the work at the Constitution River.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, when you make the point that we have not done anything, imagine by simple history the Barbados Labour Party, as the Honourable Member for St. James Central knows because the Honourable Member had joined me when we were very young boys protesting it, went into Church Village and built a 'big able' Central Bank and left Church Village basically as they found it.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, in those days the Honourable Member for St. James Central was very acid. Madam Deputy Speaker, they came back many years later in Government and built a \$150 million cricket stadium and left all of Pickwick Gap and the surrounding areas in the same condition in which they had basically found it when they built that \$150 million stadium.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five minutes left in which to conclude.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, except where they dragged the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown out of the Barbados Defense Force where the Honourable Member really ought to have been and to have been appointed by then as Chief of Staff, but they did not have any interest in him being chief of anything, but they dragged him out of the Barbados Defense Force, put him to be the consultant of painting palings, gave him some money and he walked up and down the city, because all they were interested in were their political fortunes, that was all they were interested in, but he did not do anything around there to assist.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, we now in Government after 14 years, in fact, not after 14 years... Madam Deputy Speaker, are you aware that for the post-independent period of Barbados' history the Barbados Labour Party has been the longest by far representative party for the City of Bridgetown, so that nobody from the Barbados Labour Party should be lecturing anybody about conditions in the City of Bridgetown, when all of the things that had to be done in the city were not done when they were in Government and had all the money to do everything in the city, now all of a sudden we are being lectured about what was not done and about what should

have been done in the city. Ma'am, it rings as hollow as the argument from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East about handing over housing units to people, the same party that fundamentally opposed this Government giving people the 20-year programme in transferring the units, they did everything including taking people's money and did not give them when they were buying them under the Barbados Labour Party but now comes in here to lecture us because an election is around the corner - they believe - and the Honourable Member wants to go there and say that she made an argument in Parliament for them to get housing units.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, do not come to lecture the Government about doing this, doing that and doing the third when you had all the opportunities. You built a massive Judicial Center at White Park Road and left Greenfield in the same condition in which you had come and found it.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable Chamber. The Honourable Member should be reminded that Greenfield and the other communities in Bridgetown, as well as one in St. Thomas, were integral parts of the Housing Neighbourhood Upgrade Project where no moneys were spent in them, except a few dollars in the Garden Land, and \$47 million of the project was returned to the Inter-American Development Bank because this Government did not meet the conditionalities. Allen View is still suffering, Greenfield is still suffering, Catts Castle is still suffering, the Garden Land is still suffering and they have done absolutely nothing and cannot charge anybody for the nonsense that took place in this country where poor people are getting poorer as a result of that project where \$60 million of that project were drawn down and \$47 million were repatriated back.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I forgive the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because when that Cabinet Paper was discussed in Parliament clearly the Honourable Member was not present. Madam Deputy Speaker, there was no \$60 million that could have been drawn down because the Inter-American Development Bank project work does not work that way, you can only draw down in stages what was spent because it was a reimbursable project.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we came in and found the thing all cooked, curried and prepared. The late Honourable Member for St. John who was then the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs signed the project, only to discover months later that the project was not just cooked and curried but that it was overcooked and over-baked and had a lot of nonsense in it that prevented that project from being successfully implemented. Ma'am, that was the reason it was not done. I say, because I am Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs...

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable Chamber. Ma'am, there were amounts of money for which persons were allowed to apply when the then Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown was able to send this correspondence to houses to say to come and draw down the \$10 000 per house. Ma'am, Catts Castle got none, Greenfield got none, Allen View got none and as I said the Garden Land got a little bit and His Honour the Speaker should have been grateful for that, but it has gone nowhere to ease the plight of poor people in this country and those communities I first called are communities in the City of Bridgetown.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Apologise? Apologise? I have all I have to say on that project and we did the subsidy and grant programme and we gave out, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy can tell you, scores of those grants to persons.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, do not be distracted, please address the Chair, and you have two minutes left in which to conclude.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I cannot say anything if the Honourable Members on the other side keep shouting because they do not want to hear, because the criteria that was left under the programme was so ridiculous that nobody could have accessed the money in the first place. It is like the Catastrophe Fund that they put in place which turned out to be more of a catastrophe than the fund itself. It was a Catastrophe Fund in which the legislation was so badly written, so inadequate that you could not...

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: What does that have to do with the Synagogue? Bad Government, bad planning, bad policy and they just paraded it around to make people feel that they were doing something constructive but when you really looked at it, it was not something that can be done, and that is the problem with the Barbados Labour Party.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we do not stand to be lectured on these things, if you support the Resolution then support the Resolution. If you feel that it is a good piece of work that is being done, then be honest enough to say that it was a good piece of work. Madam President, I should not say be honest enough, I withdraw that because that would impute that they are dishonest, but to be man and women enough to admit that it was a good piece of work, encourage the Government to do more in that regard and let us get on with the business of the development of the country.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: You do not worry about that. Madam Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I rise to lend my voice to this Resolution as it relates to the transformation of the Jewish Synagogue and the associated areas not too far from here. Of course, before one can get into celebrating the establishment of the Synagogue and the associated areas, one has to look at the emergence of Jewish people, really, in Barbados. I cannot be 100 per cent sure, maybe the Prime Minister can correct me, but I believe there was a time in the history of Barbados when a group of harassed people moving from what can be now called the Iberian Peninsula, having migrated from the Middle East way back -- I cannot give the specific date -- settled around parts of the Mediterranean, Holland, Portugal, Spain....

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute, Honourable Member. Members, please permit the Member to make his contribution.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was making the point that these people initially moved from the Middle East to parts of what we refer to as the Iberian Peninsula and settled in such countries as Spain, Portugal, Holland, et cetera, and had an extremely interesting time in the development of these Jewish people. This was at the time when the Moors from North Africa had settled these areas through migration and invasion essentially, and had an excellent time in developing the culture, language, commerce, religion, et cetera, and became disrupted when the Christians then

settled that part of the world. The Jews moved in some significant numbers to what you can call the wider Brazilian area, part of the wider Amazonian stretch of land which would have included Brazil itself and places like Guyana, Suriname and those areas. In fact, during the development of the sugar cane industry in the Americas, specifically South America, and here in the Caribbean just maybe ten years after settlement and so on, they had developed great skills in the making of sugar, as it were. However, settlement by other Europeans in that part of the world again caused mass migration of these Jews who were referred to as Sephardic Jews moving back to find a place to reside, et cetera. It is in that movement that several of them came to Barbados; in that great movement. In fact, they made a significant contribution to the development of the sugar cane industry here in Barbados, and I would want therefore to suggest -- this might be a great leap -- that there are still a few of their descendants sprinkled across the landscape of Barbados. As most religious people tend to do, they set up monuments to honour those who they serve or worship, or they find some place to worship. Therefore, one can compliment those who now claim Jewish ancestry for what has been done thus far in the Jewish Synagogue area with that restoration.

One cannot subtract the Government of Barbados from the exercise. It is in recognition of the restoration and the great work, both historically and in the contemporary period, that one would see the vesting of the land in the particular area to celebrate those who have come before and those who still remain. We, African people, are across the world, particularly in the so-called New World of which Barbados claims to be a part, through the intermarriage or intermixing of the cultures of Europe and Africa and through some small vestiges of the Amerindian people which essentially still exist within the wider Caribbean space in places like Dominica, obviously Belize, Honduras and other places of such ilk. Through the artefacts which have been discovered over time, we understand and appreciate the history of those who were here first; the indigenous people, the Amerindians who settled parts of Barbados, particularly along the southern and western sides of Barbados. For some reason, the extreme northern and eastern sides seemed to have been a little difficult for settlement. However, if you understand and appreciate the movements of tides, et cetera, you would find why they would have settled mostly along the southern and western sides of Barbados to find their place and to find their homes.

That restoration to me seems to be a wider project, and one which will eventually call in not only the celebration of the Protestant religion in Barbados, as manifested through churches such as the Anglican, Methodist, Moravian, et cetera, but also a monument in the honour of those Africans who brought with them their religions or their gods to this part of the world as a means

of, first, survival, Oshe, and many other things. I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Michael East would appreciate this, and I hope to hear him speak a little later on the importance too of arising symbols to the great trek and the great journey, Madam Deputy Speaker. If in fact there were not great people who were being forcefully moved from all of the various countries of West Africa to this part of the world, having to undergo the kind of human depravity that visited our people, then we could say nothing else. It had to be an inner strength and courage which would have deposited them here, not only on this rock called Barbados but on many of the other rocks sprinkled across the entire Caribbean; Barbados, of course, being the entrepôt point for the movement of others across this part of the world.

Aside.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I am calling as well, and this is the celebration of African Awareness Month, that at some time we need to raise a banner, a monument and a symbol in celebration of the lives of those who sacrificed much for this country. Others have done it. Lord Nelson still stands erect not too far from here, and I make no criticism. I understand and appreciate history at different points in time, but I think that there is a marked absence of the celebration through a symbol of the struggle of survival of African peoples here in Barbados and generally across the New World.

I know we cannot do everything at one time and when I listen to the Honourable Members from the Other Side, particularly the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown, I am convinced that they do not appreciate this particular fact. I sometimes reach a point of concern almost to the point of depression when we seek to argue about, I did this and I did that, I put down a boardwalk or I did something on this green. You are in Government and you were in Government and there are things you have to do. I do not think that one has to begrudge because it is a significant beauty to the eye relative to the restoration through, of course, will attract some gestures but facilitated by the work of the agencies of Government including the Ministry of Housing and Lands and these things must be told and citizens must recognised that these things are being done for the enhancement of Barbados.

Let us look at the City. The City is supposed to be the main commercial and financial district of Barbados. It is a City that the main part is essentially absent of housing, there are houses that skirt the inner city, for example, the New Orleans, Nelson Street and Wellington Street. The previous Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown would have been able to tell me all of the names but I do not know all. There is nothing wrong in the construction of

housing, even if it is tourist housing, in the wider city area of Bridgetown, Barbados.

I have seen some opposition arising relative to the construction of a hotel called The Hyatt which is closer to the City area of Barbados. Our city is an old city, comparatively speaking. It needs revitalisation, it needs enhancement and it needs people living in it. The City shuts down at 6:00 o'clock most days, there is hardly any life. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East spoke, I believe, of tourists ships or ship liners coming into Bridgetown especially during the non-working days like Sundays and holidays, to find the City dead. There is something we need to do about that as well. Our City should be thriving and ensuring that commerce, entertainment, recreation and places where people who like to take good drink to their lips can find that place to go. There was a time in the history of Barbados when people like Rachel Pringle and her House of debauchery just outside here, used to be able to satisfy the needs of many with drink and salt, but Bridgetown was alive and it had vibrancy. We need that returned.

I have listened to the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown and I have had conversation with the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown. I used a line of bush as a demarcation point in The City to see if the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown has been working. The only time, Madam Deputy Speaker, I see a reduction in that side of the bush is when trucks pass over it or when cars pass and the wheels run over it. It says that the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown is doing nothing for The City. I recognise his gentlemanly status but I recognise also that he seems at a loss as to what to do with The City. The whole New Orleans, Chapman Lane area.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: There are bushes in The City. Madam Deputy Speaker, I leave the Honourable Member for St. James Central to continue to cut down the bush on the second ridge at Fairy Valley. I know the area well. I have warned the Honourable Member to leave me alone because I like him, I have always liked him. I would never threaten or abuse him in anyway. Do not follow the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. I will show those pictures in due course.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to continue to support this initiate but to look further afield, The City needs major redevelopment and re-enhancement. I know that we are under a UNESCO's designation of Bridgetown and Its Garrison but I am not aware that a UNESCO designation says that you should allow every single part of that City to fall into decay, that every old house without props, without overhangs that used to be overhanging on to

the edge of the street, all falling and all decaying that they should not be a serious rebuilding and refocussing of the built heritage of The City. I am dismayed that we should believe that because of some nostalgic attachment, or some people come out and say this should remain. The decay is taking place, we have to rebuild, we have to further enhance, some of the building materials of the period no longer exist so we have to use what is in our contemporary reality to rebuild, therefore, I 110 per cent support the proper construction of a Hyatt facilities where it is to be located. I would want to even see travelling in a south-westerly direction even more infrastructure put into place and those who currently owned the infrastructure along that strength, possibly the last remaining piece of beautiful see, but is block of now by buildings so that has been done already, to have more construction of usable space for Barbadians and visitors. That is what I would want to see. I hear this loud noise of work for the people of The City. Every contractor chooses those whom he wants to work with him. That is his right. I would encourage any contract that wants to building the Hyatt to also bring from the surrounding areas, because I understand the nature of engaging those persons, as if they are part of their own. Where they cannot satisfy the demands for work at what ever level, engage them as well, but contractors worth their salt have a whole group of workers that form part of their process already and they only extend that when there I s a need to extend that. So just simply calling for let the people some of the work will not solve that reality.

I would have preferred if it were possible that three major housing complexes would have been going up at the same time once it does not disrupt traffic along that part of Barbados. That is when work will happen. That is when persons will be able to work for 2 and 3 days. Rather than the Barbados Labour Party mobilising their hitched men to try to block and to prevent the construction of the Hyatt and other pieces of tourism and Barbadian development.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you can expect to see more of it. They have mobilised effectively to stop everything from happening in Barbados. We know that playbook. They have used it before over and over in the political history of partisan politics in Barbados. The outgoing Honourable Member for St. Michael North do not like any of these projects to happen you know. His motion of representation is driving through Eden Lodge, Lodge Hill and Grazettes rolling down the glass and saying "how wunnah today" and keep moving on. Hoes not stop so that anybody can ask him for a \$5 bill. We are well aware of it. Many of the people of that area report it to us and they say they are going to finish with him now, they have had enough of his wasted representation, but let us continue.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think it is important that we give opportunities and facilitation such as this to those persons who continue to work in the development of the

infrastructure of Barbados. I would like to see somebody come forward to restore the Carnegie Library to bring it back to a useful state. I would also like to see somebody come forward to restore the whole Coleridge Street environs where the Royal Barbados Police Force still operates from. I would like to see many of these things happen. The State itself cannot do everything, it is impossible. To call on the state to do A, B, C, D right down to Z is impossible, so we have to congratulate all of those who come forward with their own resources or with resources raised from others to assist in such efforts and such endeavours, and therefore rather than being caught up with the negativity and the spreading of falsehood by elements of the Barbados Labour Party, let us stay focussed on the mission which should be a continuous mission regardless of who is in Government. It has to be part of the process of national development.

I am pleased, as I said, with the effort taking place in that part of Lower Bay Street. I would want to see other efforts take place, and I believe that has been identified, around the Needham's Point area under the guidance of the Honourable Minister of Tourism and International Transport that some time soon that effort could get going as well. Barbados needs it. Barbados needs enhanced space for large conference groups coming out of both Canada and the United States of America. We need a major performance theatre. Yes, we have some reasonable good facilities but that only satisfy to some extent thousands but if you had to really put on a very large show or whatever, the stadium is out as we know, you cannot get past 3 000 or 4 000 unless you go to Kensington Oval to put it on and then you have to spend lots of money on bringing in infrastructure if it is a gospel show, a R&B show or even Rihanna to put it on. The infrastructural cost is significant so any promoter has to start looking at all of these things that they have to bring in before they sing one song or collect \$1 from the various patrons.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am sure that with the work that has been going on around this area generally particularly around the Central Bank of Barbados... The Greens there is a beautiful space. It is not used as often as it should be used. There should be young people who are extremely talented in music and the arts who sometimes between 4 o'clock and 6 o'clock on an evening with the appropriate permissions of course - I believe it is under the control of the Central Bank of Barbados. They allow its use by following the correct procedure - and put on some concerts, some performances or doing some spoken word demonstrating to the people of Barbados how good in fact they are, and we know they are. Those persons who do not have to rush to get home as other persons might could come and leisurely take in the beauty of the culture and the beauty of our young people at the Greens there, and generally linking that to this historical facility where I believe more and more persons should be made aware of.

More and more school children should be coming to the Greens there at the appropriate time to do their SBAs, a study. You do not have to be too in depth, it could be a group study. A group SBA of the operation of this Parliament would make an excellent SBA for those involved in history and social studies as part of the work they are doing in our school.

There are things happening. We want more to happen at a quicker space but we have to be aware that to restore, to refurbish, to rebuild and to enhance really cost a lot of money. This is a beautiful step following on after other things that have been done before, and therefore the work of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth must continue unabated as we bring parts of Bridgetown alive and parts of Barbados truly alive.

I commend the Resolution, Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I feel that a lot has been said in respect of this Resolution already, but I think it is important enough that as many Honourable Members as so desire should speak to yet another monument to the overall effort of development in Barbados, which is significantly being demonstrated to be not only the responsibility of a Government but also the responsibility of a motivated private sector to join with the incentives that are made available under the various legislations that have been enacted to help to carry out this overall development.

Madam Deputy Speaker, ever since the inscription of Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison as a world heritage site in 2011, as the Minister so accurately pointed out... What I want to commend in the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth's presentation is where he spoke to the complete overall development of the heritage site that we call Bridgetown. Restoration of this particular area is commendable, and I really want to start by thanking those associated with this development because it is a work of art, a work of dedication and significant voluntary work done by many engineers, cultural historians and other artists who have helped to bring this project to its present stage.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I took time out with a couple of colleagues only yesterday to spend some time at the facility with one of the volunteers Mr. Jeff Ramsay who we know is a very prominent landscape architect who also has developed a tremendous interest in this historical and restoration work. It was a demonstration of how emotionally we can get as we look at the kind of opportunities that are more or less beneath us because one

of the features of that development has been the careful restoration of hundreds of graves of Jewish settlers who have lived in Barbados and who, as the Honourable Member who just spoke said, would have assisted and would have led to the very significant development of what has become or what used to be an important part of Barbados, our sugar industry.

House D3 Sequence 31

5.05 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Madam Deputy Speaker, that has its own history and probably would be a discussion for another time but certainly what it immediately brings to mind and again Honourable Member spoke to the fact, that as we have developed this area it has exposed for all to see the need to quickly move to other areas of Bridgetown where this development is so needed and where this development must take place and to encourage the private sector through incentives and Government to make sure this investment does take place.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the point was made during that visit and maybe if Honourable Members who have the opportunity, if you really want to get a picture of what is so urgently needed in Bridgetown you need to get sometimes an aerial view of what is going on in that area or what has evolved in that area. Ma'am, certainly a visit to the top floor of the Central Bank of Barbados and looking down on Roebuck Street and on the same Synagogue area would lend a clear idea to any Barbadian of how badly we need to carry out this development.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Member who just sat also spoke to the question of the continued controversies that will accompany these developments. I have said here before and I will state it again that I have been to no old city, whether in the United States of America, Canada or the United Kingdom where one does not see juxtaposed with all the heritage properties, et cetera, modern, effective, efficient buildings being used by Government and the private sector and I find it very interesting the kind of delays that are coming about with respect to the implementation of the now, to my mind, long overdue Hyatt Project at Bay Street. I look forward, Madam Deputy Speaker, like most of us, to this project being started.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have referred to the Empire Theatre and there are still members who speak to the possibility of redeveloping the Empire Theatre. I was reluctant to join that group because whenever I pass the area I make it my business to make a careful inspection of what is going on and very soon from now, if not already Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to charge that that property

is not really in a condition that can be restored without significant demolition of the existing structure, so again it brings into question what will be the outcome of any developer's attempts to restore that property. Madam Deputy Speaker, the facts are that we do not have to restore every aspect of the property because indeed, the Resolution to which we speak and the restoration which is taking place at the Synagogue Street, in the carpenter's, the shoemaker's shop, the old fire station and in the old art gallery, a significant amount of the material, especially the wood, has been taken from the building object which would have been the Old Telephone Company. A lot of the very old lumber from that roof has been transported over and laid on the floors and laid into the rafters of this very new and imposing structure.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are things that we have to do and if we do not act quickly, if we do not free up our initiatives so that they can invest and can carry out this important work, then we will find ourselves in the same position in which we are with the Martindale's Road where we have a small operation still in that vicinity. Madam Deputy Speaker, I called them small operations, maybe I should not, the Barbados Family Planning Association still operates in what really is not an ideal physical conditions either. Again, we are on the verge of moving that Ambulance Service to a retrofitted area at the Old Donnelly Building, Wildey, where one-quarter of that building will be temporarily used for that Emergency Ambulance Service.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the point I am making is that the rest of that facility is essentially lost to development at this time, a lot of it has been taken away by one institution or the other, in one corner there is a lot of rubble associated with the technical department of the Ministry of Health. As you know, as Minister of Health, this is not something that is pleasing but in the north-western corner, so to speak, is a model of what could take place if we have the funds, the incentives and the will, in that the University of the West Indies was able to redevelop the Old Nursing Quarters and it is now part of the Medical Faculty of the University of the West Indies.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the point I want to make is that this kind of restoration must go hand in hand with modern developments. Ma'am, I contend that a hotel complex... We have the Hilton Hotel as an example of tremendous success at the southern tip of Bay Street, at Needhams' Point. We then come along the very, very beautiful beaches of which Barbados is so proud, but again which are crying out for further development.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as we move around Barbados we are going to find ourselves faced with many areas where this development can occur but there is one important aspect to these projects, that is that for them to be

viable there must be 'customership'. I do not know if that is a correct word but I know that I will be sorted out in that regard if not before but certainly when I sit. We need to develop a clientele to make sure that these projects are viable. Ma'am, that was one of the points that was made, the guide who took us around yesterday made the point that we really have now to get our customers, our visitors and the local Barbadians to participate in coming and visiting these facilities, sharing in the experience and rich history which they offer and getting involved. Indeed, the best way to start something like this would be for our students and schools to encourage class visits to this museum, as I am sure they do to the Barbados National Museum at the Garrison which is never short of customers. I am sure there are a lot of lessons to be learnt too from the way the Museum has marketed itself.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the point was made again that again we need to create spaces in our development for the remounting of our national art collection. I understand very clearly the need to be sure about the infrastructure into which this collection is being taken or that it would remain but at the same time I think there is clearly a need for greater flexibility as to the kind of solutions that could help us to find homes for the national art collection.

5.19 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Seq. 33

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: ... At the same time I think there is clearly a need for greater flexibility regarding the kind of solutions which could help us to find homes for the National Art Collection. I know there is progress to be made to create the building at the Garrison, where I believe the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) used to be housed, and there is an intention to put the Art Collection in that facility, but I can sense that this is still somewhere down the road. The point I want to make is that we need to be flexible enough to look at buildings which are already established and place our collection, even if temporarily, in these safe facilities for keeping. These can be either private sector buildings like banks and office spaces that are going up every day in Barbados, or they can be Government offices like our Ministries which are dotted all over the place. I am sure that Warrens alone could probably consume, if not all, most of a National Art Collection. I know the Minister is actively working in this regard, but I sense that if something is not done of this sort pretty soon, when we get back to that collection we may be disappointed at the condition it may be in. I am only saying this as an idea and as a way to deal with it, but I am sure the Minister, if he so desires, will elaborate on that.

I cannot leave the subject of our heritage and visitors without touching on the town of Oistins, where the 1652 Charter would have been signed and which has its own very rich history. I know that there are preliminary discussions to create a walk in Oistins which can help locals and visitors to understand the significant history associated with the development of this fishing village. I am already in discussion with the Minister of Culture and some local experts in the area of Oistins as to how best we can portray this very important streetscape, not necessarily in its final form. I am an advocate for taking things by step, so if we can make that first step and then proceed to the final destination, we can reach the goal which we all have in mind. We must therefore use these opportunities to build our visitors, to build Barbados as not only sea and sun but to show that there are other aspects to visiting buildings of interest, reading, learning and sharing in the rich history of our country. It is extremely important even as we see the character of our visitors changing in some regards.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have spoken in here many times about the fact that many more of our visitors are being termed backpack visitors, in that they do a lot of walking, they do riding, and we see it all the time in Christ Church on the South Coast because this is where it happens. There are a lot of our visitors now who spend probably 90 per cent of their daylight time surfing and in the sea boogey-boarding. I myself have taken up a little bit of the same boogey-boarding, Madam Deputy Speaker. I have a boogey board in my car downstairs now. This is a starter boogey board. These are the kinds of things which the locals and visitors are getting involved in, and which we need to encourage because it demonstrates how much we can build this country into a significant economy around what we do best. I think that we more or less have got to understand that sugar will never take us back where we were in terms of earning foreign exchange, although it may have the opportunity to provide local and specialist goods along with delivering some of the energy requirements of the country, but we have got to keep moving and keep developing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, our people are a significant part of that exercise, and I continue to be flabbergasted with the reluctance of some of our principal servants in this regard; I am speaking specifically about our taxi men. They are my good friends. I know a lot of them, and a lot of them of course know me, but I must say that we need to understand that we have to be much more circumspect about how we sell our business in terms of delivering our taxi service, Madam Deputy Speaker. We must give the visitor the opportunity to choose. I am concerned about what is obvious harassment that takes place and the kind of impact it can have on our visitors' view of the country, Madam Deputy Speaker. The situation at the Port is not necessarily encouraging, Madam Deputy Speaker. Again we see these demonstrations and these kinds of shouting

games that occur. We need to get to the bottom of this and we need to sort it out. It does not occur in most countries, so if the professionals who provide taxi service in Barbados believe so, they need to be told differently. It does not happen like that in most countries, and we have to be careful what image we send to our visitors and what stories they will go home and relay to their friends and families so as to continue to build that important aspect of our tourism.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that the Resolution gives us an opportunity to speak to these very many important aspects of development. We recognise that this goes hand-in-hand with what has become the main industry of Barbados -- tourism, of course -- and that we have a responsibility to make sure that this heritage development in Barbados continues. It does not have to be restricted in any way to Bridgetown alone. There is Speightstown which has a wonderful history to it and beautiful beaches also. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy speaks to that area. There is St. Andrew and St. Joseph and these picturesque areas which probably can even offer stronger attractions in this regard in terms of heritage tourism. There is the Old Train Line and the Atlantis Hotel -- not to advertise any particular property -- but these kinds of features. There is also Sam Lord's Castle and we know that is being rebuilt. These are the things which are happening in an environment where our colleagues on the other side say that nothing is happening. Sometimes I wonder which Barbados they live in. Nothing is happening over there. That is a fact because there is fighting, definitely there is a lot of fighting over there; so when they have sorted themselves out, maybe they will be in a position to contribute meaningfully to this discussion.

I am disappointed - to some extent on either side but certainly on the other side - in their contributions this evening where we heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East sort of trying to establish a litany of what the Barbados Labour Party would have started; whether they started the Boardwalk or finished it, or whether we started. This is puerile politics. This is not Government. This is not management. This is not management of an economy and development of a country. We want to share effective ideas with each other and encourage good projects. We want to learn from mistakes. Pardon me, Honourable Member for St. Thomas. We want to learn from mistakes so that we can really build that confidence among Barbadians so that they will feel naturally part of this development process. Madam Deputy Speaker, this Resolution has my total support.

5.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

House D 3 Seq 34 5.19 p.m.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: ... among Barbadians so that they would feel naturally a part of this development process. Madam Deputy Speaker, this Resolution has my total support. It helps to move Barbados in the direction in which we want, we understand and the Minister was at pains to point out that nothing is free. We understand the kind of moneys that had to be made available, the incentives and the legislative changes that had to be put in place by the Administration or the Administrations to make this possible, by the sacrifice and the generosity of those who would have donated to the project essentially, whether it would be in kind in terms of money or materials or whether it was just gifted to public by way of their talents. There is a lot of this going on, it must be encouraged and certainly this signals to the public and to our investor friends that Barbados is opened for business and Barbados wants to share these opportunities with you so that our development can be guaranteed.

I am obliged to you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would wish to share a few perspectives on this matter which is before the House and to that I assure you that I really will not detain the House very long.

As I listened, Madam Deputy Speaker, I thought that it was important to underscore, and I will use the language of the Honourable Member who just took his seat, the significant extent of the generosity and sacrifice, the philanthropy involved in bringing about the restoration that has taken place at the synagogue. It is not only aesthetically very attractive but I think it is very necessary in terms of uplifting the general area. Beyond that, Madam Deputy Speaker, this debate was allowed to go fairly far and wide and coming out of that, one of the things that I find inescapable and which has given me cause for pause and the need to reflect upon, and I really rustled with myself as to whether I should just reflect quietly but I think that I have a duty to speak this concern out publicly. If for no other reason, Madam Deputy Speaker, I sense that it is a place where Government is failing and does not, itself, recognise the extent to which it is failing or the way in which it is failing.

As you listen, Madam Deputy Speaker, as I did to this debate you hear from the lips of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who is a member of the Cabinet a sense of triumphalism over small things, things that really are mundane, mediocre at best, and quite frankly are to be taken for granted like granting the permission to have a monument worked upon by a private entity. It is a small thing. In other Parliaments, Madam Deputy Speaker, and in fact, in this Parliament in other times when we enjoyed a

more halcyon level of ministerial endeavour, the fact that a minister signed a piece of paper to give a permission for a private sector entity to do work is nothing to beat one's chest about. As you go to the Minister of Culture, I want to say that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central spoke in a developmental way. He tried to share with us some semblance of what his vision is and I praised him for recognising the economic linkages in the Ministry of Culture but again he spoke in a very anticipatory way which bothers me simple because of the fact that he has held the portfolio now since 2013 and perhaps before. I question the extent to which you can still be speaking in such an anticipatory way and, as I said, I, at that point, reflected to myself that maybe you just do not worry too much about it. Then, well I will not go to the Minister of Finance just yet, I will reserve him for last because his problem is of an entirely different dimension all together and that deserves a little bit of special attention.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you listen to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Education addressed this House as though he is a man divorced from the Cabinet, as though he is not a policymaker. In fact, in a sotto voce remark across the realm of the House to the Minister of Finance, it bothers me now to the extent that I hear Members of the Government, Cabinet Ministers talking about we should do this and it would be good if we could do that, and it would be a nice thing to do so and so. That is the executive of the State. You cannot be a part of the executive of the State and wishing on a star. We hear over, and over, and over again the Honourable Member who is not now here but my neighbour in St. James South, he does it. Whenever he has the opportunity he would divorce himself from the Cabinet and he speaks as though he were a man distant from the process of governance and we just heard it again from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Your threats to me does not matter because I understand the nature of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. The Minister of Education is not at his heart a bad person, he speaks without benefit of thought first so I do not get vex with him. I am disappointed in him but you do not get vex. When he talks about cracking skulls, I know he did not pause for thought. When he talked about little people's children having demons he did not pause for thought. The other day when he talked about all the people who opposed the Government came out of the trash heap with rats and so on, that again he did not pause for thought. He goes on, and on and nauseatingly on that way. That is his style.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this debate is not about that and the faults of the Honourable Member, and there are many, is something that the country would be invited to

reflect upon at another time. The issue though, Madam Deputy Speaker, is this. What does it mean for us, in the context of governance because that, to my mind, Madam Deputy Speaker, is where the real issue in this debate is beginning to manifest itself? The crisis of governance that is gripping Barbados where the Members of Cabinet themselves seem to be unable to agree or incapable of coming to an agreement on the way forward. In this matter of culture we are seeing it very clearly.

Some things were said by Members of the Cabinet and one of the issues that was touched upon was the need for there to be the restoration of derelict and abandon buildings. All the Members of the Cabinet who spoke on that issue spoke as though the Cabinet has never once addressed the matter of the City of Bridgetown, the derelict and abandoned buildings in Bridgetown many of which fall under the control of the Town, and they speak as though their Cabinet does not have a subcommittee on infrastructure. I asked myself when I listened to the ministers talking: what happens on Thursday? What do they do in there? What do they talk about apart from cussing one another? What happens? Is there anything constructive that comes out of it? Madam Deputy Speaker, because when we look at the Carnegie Library and for the benefit of Minister of Education again, who did not know and it worries me when a Ministry of Education does not know that the Library is called the Carnegie Library. That worried me, but the question that has to be asked, Madam Deputy Speaker, if he would allow me because he had a chance to speak and I did not interrupt him. The question that has to be asked, Madam Deputy Speaker, is: who has been engaged in dialogue? You cannot just pass it every day and watch it crumbling. As a little boy at 11 years old, I was going in there on Saturday mornings for the purposes of doing research and reading. I know well now that lots of youngsters have the iPads and so on but it is still a desirable thing to encourage youngsters to spend time in the library. When I was preparing for my O'levels, Madam Deputy Speaker, I was in there at the whole Easter time. You were in there the summer before and, Madam Deputy Speaker, I find it difficult to believe that we could be seriously talking about development young people in this country and that you have not yet engaged anybody. A minister should not be saying we should do something about the Carnegie Library or trying to remember the name of the Carnegie Library. The Minister should be saying, we have engaged as a Government a dialogue process in which we are hoping that Mr. X or entity Y, whoever the entity is ...

House D 3 Seq 34 5.29 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: ...if you cannot remember the name of the Carnegie Library, the Minister should be

saying we have engaged as a Government a dialogue process in which we are hoping that Mr. X or entity Y whoever the entity is would be in a position to work with us in whatever way so as to bring about the restoration. That is what I would have hoped that I would hear fall from the lips of somebody in the Cabinet, Ma'am.

The question of restoration is not something you just wish on a star. The first thing Government would have to do is to have a vision as to what plan exists if any at all. Again, Ma'am, this debate has gone from the beginning now practically to the end and not a word was said about a restorative plan or vision for that fundamental institution which is falling to pieces before our very eyes in Bridgetown and which is of such fundamental value to the development of not only our young people but our broader population as well.

Ma'am, we then have the situation of whether or not any targets have been established in terms of timelines because it is something that this Government would like to see done while it is still enjoying the last breath of its life in office, or is it something they say oh well, it does not matter so much we 'gine' through the door now anyhow so let somebody else worry about that. That is why I say, Ma'am, that there is a crisis of governance. It is as though the weight of responsibility to this wider society is now weighing so heavily on the shoulders of these enfeeble men who sit before me that they themselves are signalling to us that they have given up.

Ma'am, it is not only there. The Empire Theatre which was quite rightly referenced by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East in her speech is another issue of concern. We heard in the Estimates of last year, and it has never been rebutted on the Floor of this House, that there were two plans for the Empire Theatre neither of which seemed to have come to pass because the Empire Theatre then is as it was now for the naked eye to see. One plan we heard was a so-called Maloney Plant. I am incapable of understanding it but I would have thought that a Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth who spoke so long and so extensively about the need for economic linkages with culture would have recognised that that theatre sitting there for all of this time falling to pieces before our eyes would be a matter that should have attracted his attention.

I am not going to get side-tracked with the Hyatt Hotel and so no and so forth. I know that is another Maloney endeavour but I am not getting side-tracked with that because that is of lesser immediate developmental cultural importance to the people of Barbados than is the Empire Theatre. What is the plan? What is the future that this Government has in mind for the Empire Theatre? It cannot suffice to say that this Parliament was told without contradiction last year that on one hand there was an effort for it to become a cultural home perhaps for a national

orchestra and that that was a matter that technical people felt strongly and in favour of but then it was overridden at high levels provoking the Town Planner yet again, in order for it to fall into the lap of a private investor, to do whatever he wants with it but not necessarily related to culture. It cannot escape us in a debate of this nature that that is something that needed to be addressed at the outset.

I feel, Ma'am, that it is imperative that the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, when he rises to wrap up this debate, clears the air on what is the vision or the impended usage of the old Empire Theatre because of the fact that so much has been said about it in recent times, and more importantly because of the fact that he has now been forced to speak about a matter about which he opted to remain silent but about which this country has been waiting with bated breath to hear some response upon.

Again, Ma'am, I say to this Chamber that it is part of the crisis of governance, the transparency that we thought we were going to get that we were told we could rely upon. When the Democratic Labour Party published a 2008 Manifesto and missed and win a Government, among the things they talked about at page 46 is the good governance that would be brought ushering in a new ethos of governance and about how it was going to be participatory and consensus-oriented and transparent and all of the decision-making and all those nice sounding platitudes, but about which we have seen no manifestation of substance.

Ma'am, beyond that, there is also the question of the Cultural Industries Development Act. That has been raised in this debate by the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth himself and unfortunately by the Honourable Minister of Finance. Ma'am, I see a glaring divide and I do not know that this House can accept a divide between two men who are sitting shoulder to shoulder not only in the Cabinet but physically sitting shoulder to shoulder in the House as well. The Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth in Barbados is on public record as having stated that \$3.2 million in request had come in from cultural exponents in Barbados and that the request could not be met by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth because the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth was hamstrung by virtue of the fact that there was a Cultural Industries Development Act which had passed the Parliament in its collective sense, meaning the bicameral legislature of Barbados, that embodied in the bowels of its provisions in writing, if nothing else, for there to be a Cultural Industries Development Fund. The Bill was passed in 2014, and last year 2016 is when the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth made the statement about \$3.2 million in request having come before him. Two years later a Member of the Cabinet and the Minister responsible for culture in Barbados was saying that there was no money in the Cultural Industries Fund to meet the \$3.2 million in request, in other words, that the Fund had not been capitalised. The Minister of Finance has come

here today and flown a kite to tell us the complete opposite, not that he failed to capitalise the fund, not that the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth publicly implicated him as failing to move the necessary resources to capitalise the fund but that to hell with the Fund, Ma'am, push the Fund one-side because the Minister of Finance and only the Minister of Finance is able to tell us that tens of millions of dollars had been given to cultural industry exponents in Barbados when at the same time as he was saying it the man sitting right next to him was in a state of shock almost going out of spasm, eyebrows up in the air, glasses come off to wipe the fog as though he has never heard that before. I know what I heard from the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth own lips, that the Honourable Minister of Finance had not capitalised the Fund and that there was \$3.2 million waiting in request.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Madam Deputy Speaker, I am really enjoying the theatrics of the speech of the Honourable Member for St. James Central but the Honourable Member is really misleading the House. When I addressed this matter, well not the matter that he is speaking about, I spoke in relation to applications for concessions. I specifically said that there are applications for concessions under the Cultural Industries Fund and some of them have been held up in the Ministry of Finance because of a lack of personnel and the amount of work that we had to do. I did go on to say that in instances like those and others, the Ministry has been trying to facilitate the granting of resources to cultural practitioners through the Arts and Sports Fund of the ministry. I did not speak and have not spoken either in response to what the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth said in relation to the Cultural Industries Fund. I did not...

House D3 Sequence 35

5.40 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I did not speak and had not spoken either in response to what the Honourable Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth said in relation to the Cultural Industries Fund and the Honourable Member knows this. Ma'am, the Honourable Member is misleading the House to say that I am at a divide with the Honourable Member for something that I really did not say.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. C. P. SINKLER: Madam Deputy Speaker, that was another speech and it was a speech that was relevant to the issue that I put before the Floor of this Honourable

House. The Minister is into smoke and mirrors and the Honourable Member has to stop doing it because the Honourable Member would have to be aware, and the Honourable Member would have heard with his own ears, I presume, when the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East raised the matter, the Honourable Member did not speak anything about any applications for concessions, the Honourable Member was talking about ordinary individual members of the cultural industries community, for instance, a calypsonians that falls under ban who wanted to get a grant funding so that they could do a music video or that they can do some sort of a production. Ma'am, that is what the Fund was supposed to be about. What concessions are we talking about?

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that the Minister lives in the land of concessions. I know that for the Minister, Government in Barbados is about big businessmen sitting down in front of him and asking for concessions and if the circumstances fit into specified box then those concessions are granted. I know that and the Honourable Member knows that I know that and that will soon change.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I keep telling the Minister I want him to relax. Last Sunday I passed the Honourable Member by a coconut vendor and the Honourable Member was flying off his hands along the highway. I thought the Honourable Member was going to beat the vendor. I turned my vehicle around, came back and said to him: "What is wrong with you? Why don't you relax? Take it easy." Ma'am, I thought the Honourable Member was taking leave of his senses. I assured him and I say it now, "The people of Barbados are going to relieve you of the burden, just relax. The Prime Minister is taking pleasure watching you twist and turn because you led the "Eager 11". The Prime Minister is enjoying your demise but the people of Barbados will rescue you, Star, take it easy."

Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not know why the Honourable Member is now jumping up in here, the Honourable Member had a chance to speak. The Honourable Member knows very well that what we were speaking about was grant funding that was not available. The Honourable Member also knows that the Honourable Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth who is his colleague in Cabinet were speaking specifically to the \$3.2 million in applications for that type of assistance. What concessions are we talking about? That is not the issue for the average small cultural exporter in Barbados, they did not come looking for concessions for anything, keep that for Cost-U-Less, Carib Cable, Sandals and the rest of your big friends but the small men in Barbados are not looking for that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the other issue that the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs went way, way, way down the wicket, swiping like "blind Elder" on was

the question of the Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme. Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not know why, again I cannot understand why. Ma'am, the Minister has to realise that there is a thing called a paper trail. It is all well and good for the Honourable Member to get up and give assurances as to how the Honourable Member saw the Housing and Neighbourhood Programme unfolding. The Honourable Member said to us a few minutes ago that the programme was unimplementable as conceived by the Barbados Labour Party and taken on board by the Democratic Labour Party and so then 'he', because you know, 'he' is the front for everything, 'he' decided that it was done with, that it cannot be done.

Ma'am, what was happening in writing? This is why we say there is a crisis of governance in this country because while the Honourable Member was Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs on 6th January, 2012, the Honourable Patrick M.T. Todd, M.P., was Minister of State in the Ministry of Housing and Lands with specific responsibility for the Housing Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme and the Honourable Member wrote under his letterhead and above his signature to say that the Honourable Member was taking the opportunity to draw to the attention of residents the incremental home construction component part of the project and that in view of the fact that the facility maybe of interest to the residents and indeed their entire households, the Honourable Member was enclosing a pamphlet that outlined the criteria which applicants must satisfy in order to access grants of up to \$10 000 per household.

Madam Deputy Speaker, do you understand what that means? It means that the people in the Garden Land who the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs stood up in this Honourable House this evening and condemned the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for speaking about, saying that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas did not know what she was talking, that it was unimplementable as a project, these people were written to by a representative of the Government who was sitting in Cabinet with this Minister about this same policy and the Minister of State in the Ministry of Housing and Lands invited the people in St. Michael to signal their interest in getting \$10 000 per household so as to effect house repairs and to complete the construction of new homes.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of State went further. The Honourable Member said: "I take this opportunity to invite homeowners who are eligible to access these grants to apply to the Ministry of Housing and Lands at its Country Road Headquarters as soon as possible." Ma'am, this is an unimplementable project, so a Minister of Government, because this is now an admission of complete chaos, crying havoc on let us slit the dogs, everything has gone wrong and broken down, because the Minister of Finance is saying on one hand that the project

is unimplementable or so the Honourable Member would have us believe today but in black and white you have a Member of the same Cabinet at the same time writing to the people in kind across the City of Bridgetown...

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Well, they did not go up to Allen View, St. Thomas because this is another thing, there was a political discrimination that took place because this project was supposed to encompass not only the City of Bridgetown but also the folks in Allen View, but they did not get a letter and I will tell you why they did not. Ma'am, they did not get a letter because they missed and voted for the Barbados Labour Party and that did not satisfy the politics of feeding the fatted calf. At that time the City of Bridgetown was represented by a Democratic Labour Party Member of Parliament.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Yes, missed and vote, as far as you are concerned because that is how you see it, not that there is a democracy and that they have rights, they missed and voted for the Barbados Labour Party. Ma'am, that Minister decides today to come and say that the project was unimplementable. Ma'am, please explain this to me because this has to make sense at some point, this lawlessness in Government has to stop at some point. How can it be unimplementable when the Minister with responsibility was writing to the people and was extending to them a legitimate expectation, it is a legal construct?

Ma'am, a member of the Government who has the authority to implement it says to you that he has the opportunity here for you to participate, that you must signal your interest in so doing. Well, that is the criteria that the law requires, the person who is capable of implementing it must signal that they can. Ma'am, the point that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was making to this Honourable House was that the people in the City, with a small exception, by and large, nobody saw the money and that of the \$60 million that was available \$47 million was forfeited because of a failure to implement. Ma'am, this brings us to another problem that this Government has, the problem is that that money was forfeited because this Government has an incapacity to implement and to execute policies, even after they had extended in writing the expectations to people that they can materially transform the quality and circumstances of their lives. Ma'am, this is what Minister Todd said:

"Moreover, approximately 600 of these grants totally \$6 million must be disbursed within the next few months in order to access Inter-American Development Bank funding. I therefore look forward to your urgent

consideration of this golden opportunity to enhance the quality of your living conditions.” Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: What is the relevance? What is relevant is the fact that the process of transforming the lives of the people of the city to whom the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown spoke today could have begun, could have been undertaken, could have been continued but due to the lack of diligence, competence and/or interest on the part of this Government, that was met with failure.

6.02 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Seq. 37

Aside.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, address the Chair please.

Mr. K.D. SYMMONDS: Ma’am, the issue which is before this House is that the Members over there had a mirror held up before them so that they could see the full nature of their own ineffectiveness and incompetence. Ma’am, it cannot be right that we come to this place and spend half of a day discussing the development of the City of Bridgetown. We have the benefit of hearing from the sitting Member who spoke seriously and sensibly to the fact that there is a level of alienation taking place in the City. That should be of concern to everybody in here; that people in the City whom he is representing feel alienated from the process, and that they see projects promised, they see projects come and are executed, and nobody involves them in the process. It is not only the City, Ma’am. Part of the development paradigm that Barbados is on, that we must urgently transform and in fact will urgently transform when given a chance, is that we must come to a point where every time there is a project that impacts in a material way on a community, as a matter of first priority that community needs to be involved in the planning process. It needs to be involved in the discussion process. There needs to be a buy-in, and that community needs to be treated as a group of stakeholders. I felt it in my constituency when they tried to bring a furnace down there into the metal dump in Bagatelle, unlawfully so. Yes, it is true; the Minister of International Business made it his business to go down there and try to make nice with the people who were bringing it down in there. Happily, the people saw through him and that, and they had to take it elsewhere. The reality is that we see it too often across Barbados, Ma’am.

Aside.

Mr. K.D. SYMMONDS: We see it too often across Barbados, where people come into a community and feel there is a project going on which may quite frankly be of benefit to the community, but you cannot just invade the people’s place and do not involve them in that which is transpiring, and do not involve them so that they can become stakeholders too. Whenever it is done, whether it is good, bad or indifferent, they have to live with it. That is the reality which is felt by all the people who we represent in here, with no exceptions, and it is something that I want to say to this House which the Labour Party undertakes to transform when given a chance. That is what the Member for the City of Bridgetown was speaking to when he addressed us; that there is that sense of alienation and pain in the City where, as he put it, projects will come, projects are promised, but at all stages they take place without reference to the people, as though they are just idle bystanders along the way.

Ma’am, that bring me to the final point which I wanted to make in this contribution. In the context of what we have seen today, the glaring crisis, as I put it, which has manifested itself is one of the approach to governance. The Government can take two approaches to that. The Government can get vexed with me for saying it, but I believe that if you look at it sincerely and seriously, you would realise that all that has been put before this House by way of examples in this short address are truisms and realities. It is for the Government to try to turn this thing around, because we are losing confidence in Barbados in our ability to govern ourselves sensibly and seriously. You cannot have two Ministers in the Cabinet saying two completely and diametrically opposed things on the Cultural Industries Development Fund. You cannot have Ministers taking a position, as we have seen repeatedly, and saying, “I am not in that. It does not have anything to do with me,” as though the doctrine of collective responsibility no longer exists in the governance system of Barbados. Collective responsibility in regard to the failure to maintain the roads has been rubbished by the Member for St. James South, because his personal car tyres blew out and he had \$3 000 in either real or imagined expense. He broke ranks unmindful of the need to have collective responsibility. The issue of collective responsibility is when you have a situation with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Finance are at such disparity that one tells his staff do not attend meetings called by the other; so that the Minister of Agriculture’s staff cannot go to a meeting called by the Minister of Finance. There is no longer any collective responsibility. One hand is turned against the other, but all are in the same Cabinet.

Aside.

Mr. K.D. SYMMONDS: The Minister of Housing and the Minister of Energy; it is the same thing all over again. Ma'am, it repeats and replicates itself over and over again, and the reality is that the consequences for the governance of the country -- it is all right to make sport about it in here -- and the signal we are sending out there is a complete loss of confidence in the direction Barbados is going in, and a loss of confidence in Barbadians' ability to see themselves as being governed effectively.

Ma'am, it is quite possible that this caution will not be heeded. In fact, as I listen to the Member for St. James South, I am very sure it will not be heeded because he feels that it is a sport-making time. Ma'am, I have said what I had to say and I am obliged for the opportunity to do so.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Miss C.Y. FORDE: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I take this opportunity to make a brief intervention because I am about Barbados. I am about development of my country and the development of people; empowering people so that they too can be a part of any and everything that is happening in this country for their own advancement and their development. Therefore, I would want to reiterate what was said by the Honourable Members on this side as well in relation to the support which is extended to the vesting of the land for the Jewish Synagogue. Ma'am, it was made pellucidly clear by everyone from this side of this Honourable Chamber who have spoken to it, but I do not think that we live in a world where anything or everything that anybody or everybody does is always perfect and not eligible for criticism. I believe that criticism should be constructive, and most constructive as often as possible, but there will be times when criticism will be negative. I have grown to understand that negative criticism would help to make a difference in whatever plans or activities are being undertaken, so that those who are executing those plans would step back and look at the picture, evaluate and make whatever adjustments or changes that might be necessary in the interest of the people of Barbados.

Ma'am, I support any effort that is booked towards the enhancement of the City of Bridgetown; indeed, to enhance any part of this country. We speak about our tourism-oriented product, and I support the whole notion that a lot of it must be supported. There are some grey areas, like attractions that were bringing all these hundreds of tourists here. The Right Honourable Prime Minister said late last year, I think, that he would like to see an additional 40 000 visitors coming here, and I support that. It is about Barbados, but unless we have attractions which have a heritage component to be able to hold these visitors with us, for them to be able to spend, to take back experiences

and share with others to encourage them, we would only be spinning top in mud.

5.59 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

House D 3 Seq 38 5.58 p.m.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: ... a heritage component to be able to hold these visitors with us for them to be able spend and take back experiences and sharing with others to encourage them we would only be spinning top in mud therefore, any effort to enhance any part of Barbados buy more particularly now, The City of Bridgetown will be supported by us on This Side because we are only one people, Barbadians and nothing more.

We know of the acceptance or the position for the UNESCO World Heritage Site for The City of Bridgetown. We know that the works was started by I am not going to harp on that. I just want to say that for a small island Barbados to be recognised for the heritage components that have helped to be developed in this country over the many centuries I think that we have done an excellent job however, The City of Bridgetown is looking tacky in some areas. Some buildings have been refurbished and I like that but there are times when you walk through certain side streets and so or even sometimes on the main street, Broad Street, where we see a lot of uneven sidewalks, we see potholes in it, not as many as that in St. Thomas but we see potholes and then signage is always a problem. Signs are knocked over and no urgent effort seems to be put in place to make sure that they are properly reinstalled or repaired for that matter.

Lighting in Bridgetown, Madam Deputy Speaker, in many areas is extremely poor. If we want our visitors to come out at night and be a part of the entertainment and the enjoyment of what is taking place and our locals as well because we have thousands of people who commute The City, many of them walking from one bus stand to the other, walking from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) to another location, leaving Pelican Village and Fontabelle and going in different directions but there are so many patches where there is no lighting and we know how dangerous it can. That is what I would want to put forward today as part of what we are discussing here about heritage Bridgetown, for proper lighting to be put in place to facilitate those persons who use the streets, particularly the pedestrians but, of course, those who are driving as well because we recognise what is happening across the world when it comes to some lawless people who seem to think that they can choke and rob and do all the strange things that we see happening in some countries. We do not want Barbados to be going down that road at all. Madam Deputy Speaker, the lighting is poor in many areas, the roads are

not as conducive to walking, in particular, and driving as we would like them because I would like to see more being done.

The housing in The City of Bridgetown needs to be upgraded, Madam Deputy Speaker, and it would bring me to the housing neighbourhood aspect of it as well. I will not be seeking to repeat what was said earlier but I am pleading to this Government to put another system in place so that poor people do not remain poor. I know that the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) having developed the Urban Development Commission (UDC) as well as the Rural Development Commission (RDC) started to look at urban renewal in The City area and its environs and its suburban areas. I am still not happy with the slow pace at which it has been going on under this present Administration because the persons there want to buy their spots and that would have been a part of the legislation that was made available, through the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) at that time, for persons to be able to purchase their spots in the tenancies in the St. Michael area meaning the private tenancies at \$2.50 per square foot while Government would subsidise because we understood the conditions of some of the persons who were there may not have been working for any large amount of money but that ownership that they can get their documents, title deeds, whatever, and go to the various lending institutions and so to be able to upgrade their properties. I am disappointed, Madam Deputy Speaker, at the slow pace at which it is happening and people are crying out that they have filled in these forms and they have gone to these different agencies and they have been stirring up the funds to be able to do the purchase but little or nothing is happening from the Ministry of Housing and Lands that should be overseeing such a project. People do not want to grow old and have money in an account when they know they have something put aside that they want to be able to purchase a house spot that can be passed down through the family and lift the out of poverty. The Rural Development Commission also worked extremely hard to be able to upgrade houses and I see that one or two new houses have been provided for and the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) never went up in any television set dangling keys at a 90 year old lady and so on. It was done discreetly to let people hold their dignity and their pride and I see that this Government is doing it all the time. I saw the Right Honourable Prime Minister doing it. People like their dignity because they do not want when anybody passes by they say, oh that is the house that Cynthia got and two grandchildren are now living in it. That was built for the old lady. It is wrong and I believe people's dignity should be upheld in every respect. The Barbados Labour Party (BLP) built hundreds of houses and added hundreds of waterborne toilet facilities to houses in urban and rural Barbados. I am not going to go into rural Barbados now in that way because I do not know if this kind of discussion would allow it and I would wish to make the other points I want to make.

There are roads in urban Barbados that were to be expanded or they were to be made habitable so that persons could ride a bicycle through to get to their houses because we know how these houses are laid out in The City of Bridgetown and in other environs of St. Michael. Nothing seems to have been done to be able to bring a measure of comfort to those people who are going through little tracks and so on to get into their homes. I am not going to call the communities. I know some of them but they need to have a good concrete pathway leading to their houses so they do not have to trek through mud and so to get to their homes. If we are talking about tourists coming in walking and embracing people and people bracing them as locals we need to have proper facilities for them to walk on in order for them to get to and fro as they go to people's houses for breakfast and to dinner and to lime and to be involved in social activity which most tourist like. When I travel overseas I like to get engaged in the local activities. It is not often I can do it under this Government because of the constraints in this economy but when I go, I like to get engaged with the locals to be able to learn a little more about their heritage and their history and their ways of living if you want to call it that. The people in urban, some of them are still waiting to get whatever permission there is for them to purchase their lots and for them to be able to carry on with their lives in in this democratic society as we know it is to be.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know as a woman who have moved around before, I do not do much of it now, whether it be in the Town or wherever, but I know that when I pass by the Fairchild Street Bus Stand at night, previous to 2009 we saw scores of people sitting, having a beverage and playing a game of dominoes. Usually up there now is like a ghost town. Of course, the Guyanese were told, "ever so welcome wait for a call", and they ship up in the day and in the night and sent back to Guyana. They were some of the ones who were there socialising with Barbadians spending money in those little shops for the concessioners to be able to make an extra dollar bill to feed their families. A lot of those shops now are shut down all like now and no money is turnover in those shops or even in the economy as a result of losing those scores of people who were a part of the entertain in the area of Fairchild Street that is now a ghost town except perhaps for the Chefette and I understand that might be moving from there and the Jordan's Supermarket that might be closing off by a particular time, therefore the place is like ghost town in sections of the Bridgetown area.

The other point I wish to make, Madam Deputy Speaker, is to do with some projects that were conceived and developed when the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) was the Government. I believe that more should be done, I understand the constraints now but I believe more could have been done between 2008 and 2015 to be able to improve the quality and to add more to the built heritage of

our country or to restore the built heritage. I can talk about the lift bridge just across the street, Madam Deputy Speaker, ...

House D 3 Seq 38 6.08 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

Miss C. Y. FORDE: ...to be able to improve the quality and to add more to or to restore the built heritage of our country, and so I can talk about the lift bridge just across the street. Ma'am, I can talk about this distinguished Chamber where we have the left wing and the right wing and so on. The place was tacky and through a project under the former Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown we were able to restore sections of this Honourable Chamber and to have that museum that is downstairs that is a gem. If other Honourable Members have not been there, I encourage them to go and have a look and internalise some of the history of Barbados and the good that our former leaders and our current leaders would have done to help to build the history of our country.

Ma'am, I do not have to make too much mention of the Boardwalk. Once upon a time when I walked down there I used to be afraid because I cannot swim in the way other people can. Being a country girl when I walked down on the Careenage I used to be afraid because I felt that I would fall in. Ma'am, that Boardwalk has helped people to come out on evenings to sit on it and enjoy the sunset and things of that nature and to be able to walk up and down to be able to be a part of embracing and enjoying what is being offered.

I can talk, Ma'am, about the George Washington House that would have been mentioned before by another Honourable Member, but I will not do so. We heard about Kensington Oval. Kensington Oval was an old tacky building. Yes, it would have been a costly exercise but the Honourable Members on that side need to be remember that were there no Kensington Oval they would have never had their Swearing In Ceremony down there in 2008 to become Ministers, Senators and others.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Exactly, and I have no problem with that because I was part of the attendance of the funeral service of the late Honourable Member for St. John. I have no problem with that because these are the resources that have been built by the taxpayers' money that we are all enjoying.

There were challenges at the Sherborne Centre and when we took up the Government we tried to put some systems in place. We use Sherbourne Centre over and over again. It belongs to the people of Barbados not to the

Barbados Labour Party or the Democratic Labour Party or any other party that wants to make a claim, it belongs to the taxpayers of Barbados and that is the critical point I would wish to make.

Ma'am, Baxter Road and the night life that is there where ordinary men and women are plying their trade frying the dolphin and whatever things they prepare used to be a lively area. There used to be something called a Baxters Road Festival or something so and scores of people were using that street like they do for the Hometown Festival and the Oistins Festival. I would like that kind of activity, Ma'am, to come right back into Bridgetown for Baxters Road again to become a viable entity where tourists, local and others can come and have a great time which is critical to the interfacing and the learning of our culture and that of other people as well.

Ma'am, I want to talk about the road improvements because roads in that general area were narrow and the Barbados Labour Party in recognising the significance of making sure that the roads were adequate for travelling, for pedestrians as well as for motorists, repaired and upgraded Passage Road, the same Baxter Road and the road leading down to St. Leonard's Church and so on.

Ma'am, I turn to housing because our city should not be a dead city after 6 o'clock in the evening, and a Barbados Labour Party in more than one different tenure of office developed Kensington Lodge, Pondside over in the general area where we know the plan is now for the hotel to be placed, London Bourne Towers, and of course that section for the Country Road Project that this Government added and completed. We started it because we believed that it should be a living city in the day and in the night, and that is exactly what it is, Ma'am.

We did the Supreme Court Building up the street so that judges, attorneys-at-law and other workers to do with the death and birth certificates in the Registry can be in environments that are safer or more conducive to them being able to produce in new environs.

Ma'am, I eagerly await as well the refurbishment that has been promised for the Empire Theatre as well as the Carnegie Library.

Ma'am, I also want to get closer to home. The Honourable Member for St. James Central would have spoken...

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: I do not want to talk about the St. John Polyclinic that still has an outstanding \$5 million due to the contractor or the rooms up there where only a

secretary is in that section and it looks like Noah's Ark. I can talk about the Arch Hall Fire Station and so on though.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, would you address the Chair please.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: I expect you, Ma'am, to tell me that and I will respect you highly. The Honourable Member for St. James South is causing this, Ma'am.

Ma'am, I want to get to Rock Hall that the Honourable Minister for Culture, Sports and Youth spoke about earlier. Ma'am, I wait with bated breath because the Honourable Minister visited that location with me in June 2015 and the place is more dangerous now than it was when he visited it. The bush is overgrown. Visitors go there every day and that is the part that hurts my heart because visitors should not believe that in Barbados we do not know how to appreciate projects and things that we do in spending the taxpayers money. Tour coaches go up through Rock Hall every day. There is no turning area properly for coaches. People are tying their cows there. The water that is collecting in the plinth of the monument is now carrying mosquitoes and other vermin, and I think it is wrong and so I would like the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth to please look at it as he has pledged. Ma'am, to his credit when I asked for a visit he acceded quite unlike the Minister of Transport and Works to whom since May 2013 I made a simple request for him to look at the roads and the bridges in Bloomsbury and so on and the Honourable Minister has not even given me a letter of acknowledgement.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are yet to touch the Resolution.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: I have touched the Resolution Ma'am. I was on to Rock Hall that the Honourable Minister would have spoken about at length this evening. I am not so sure, Ma'am, you were in your seat, and I am not saying that in any disrespectful way, but that was a part of the Honourable Minister's contribution and he can get up and correct me if I am wrong. I will never ever take advantage of a situation or do anything that would be disrespectful, I really am sorry.

Ma'am, I turn to look at the Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme. The City has two communities that this Government, having won that seat handsomely in 2008, would have overlooked the poor people in Cats Castle and Greenfield who worked, most of them honestly I believe, who have pride and joy in having a good standard of living and whose children require space for them to be able to lie down at night because they are growing children, we do not like to separate our girls from our boys and so on. Those persons in Cats Castle, Greenfield, the Garden Land and Allen View are still

waiting patiently to be able to get an opportunity for the houses to be upgraded, for the roads to be expanded and for the sewerage projects to go on. I grieve for the people in Allen View in particular because there are houses in Allen View with families where there is no running water. There are houses in Allen View that need small realignments so that roads can be widen to facilitate them on a daily basis. There are persons in Allen View who should have benefitted because a sewerage system was to be put in place so that any sewerage that would have been in the area would have been properly pumped away that it would not impact on what is going on under the earth with the stalagmites, the stalactites and that crystal clear water. Ma'am, I therefore have a difficulty in understanding why the people of Allen View were overlooked with the Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme when we were told at two town hall meetings by the Honourable Minister that approximately \$5.8 million, I think it was, was to have been spent in that community to help to empower those people.

House D3 Sequence 39

6.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Madam Deputy Speaker, St. Thomas people are people too.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that Haynesville people are people too and that they will deal with the Honourable Member for St. James South. Madam Deputy Speaker, St. Thomas people are people too, and the folks at Allen View will not beg because rural people do not sit down and wait for hands-out but they were entitled to the funding from that project to be as effective in there because they were designated. Ma'am, in March, 2008, the late the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Philip North went up to Washington and signed off on that loan from the Inter-American Development Bank for that project, US\$40 million.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is sad that the conditionalities were to be met over a six-year period but that six-year period elapsed without one red cent being spent on the people of Allen View, Catts Castle and Greenfield and those people are still waiting. Why must a certain section of this society have to go down on their knees and beg and beseech and feel as though they have to be given a hands-out or a hand-down from a Minister or any leader in this society when they are taxpayers too who pay VAT and all kinds of funds into the Treasury? Why must they must be suffering in the way that they are doing

under this Democratic Labour Party Government that says they like people? Ma'am, their slogan at one point was DLP means "Dear Loving People" but they are not loving the poor people of Barbados as a result of what has gone on with this Housing Neighbourhood Project.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I wrote officially to find out exactly what was happening. I also sent in forms for people when I heard the then Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown talking about people coming in and getting the money because the time was running short and my forms were sent back to me. This is my letter and I can make this a document of this Honourable Chamber. Ma'am, it says, "Housing Neighbourhood Upgrade Programme, September 4th, 2015." They told me that the programme was now finished and therefore they apologised for any inconvenience that might have been caused, and there are people in Allen View with small houses, with no running water, no proper toilet facilities, many of whom still have 'pit' toilets and this Government repatriated \$47 million as a result and these people are still suffering.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I just want to conclude by saying that the built heritage of this country is critical to our own lives and history, as well as that of tourism and education. Ma'am, I know that a former Honourable Member for St. Thomas who passed away in 1985 was a decent man and that the Honourable Member stayed in his office every day serving the people of Barbados and did not go playing golf in Christ Church when that Honourable Member should have been in the Ministry of Finance doing his work.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Ma'am, he would have been in his office every day because the people in the Barbados Labour Party do their work and do it well and you all cannot match that. Ma'am, I just want to conclude by saying that this Government seems to think that they can get hot and sweaty under the collar and can start project in constituencies...

Asides.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered to be expunged from the Record by Madam Deputy Speaker.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Ma'am, I am concluding. This Government seems to think that they are the most outstanding leaders of the century so that when they come up with a project, whether it is a viable one or not, that they will pursue it. Ma'am, I want to encourage that there be dialogue with people in Barbados. Ma'am, the Cahill Project already was one that would have been forced down

our throats. I am saying now that the NPC doing madness in St. Thomas without any word to anybody but we are enduring the inconveniences. I have roads up there that are hardly...

Ma'am, I am still speaking about heritage tourism because I have the vault in Welchman Hall that is a heritage site. There is a vault over in Stoney Gully area that is another heritage site. Of course, we have other sites in the parish that would be locations where people would want to go, but they cannot get a road fixed so that when the big coaches drive by people have to maneuver and travel as though they are driving over the back of an alligator. Ma'am, it is so sad and because seemed to have voted for a particular individual in a particular party called the Barbados Labour Party absolutely nothing is being done despite the numerous requests for the people of St. Thomas to be able to get a piece of the cake, though they pay taxes like anybody else.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes left in which to conclude.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Ma'am, they work hard like anybody else and for a Government not to be boasting about tourism - and I have no problem with that as I said - but for a Government to overlook fixing a single road in a constituency that has over 10 000 people who are now eligible to vote. Ma'am, these are people who pay taxes but those roads are destroying their vehicles. Ma'am, when those coaches come up, if they come up from the west coast they cannot pass Vauxcluse Road by the race track because no less than three feet of water is still on that road thus making it impassable. Ma'am, I have written, I have called, I have spoken on the radio, yet nobody has responded to me. Ma'am, the locals have already had some of their vehicles flooded out, but do know when this Government is going to answer? Ma'am, when tourists get marooned there that is when this Government is going to get up and say hoy! Nobody can come through Vauxcluse Road, nobody can come through Stoney Gully, nobody can come through from Mount Misery, hardly anybody can do down inside Airie Cot because all of the roads have fallen apart.

Ma'am, the point I am making is that all of these roads lead to places such as Highland Outdoor Tours, Welchman Hall Gully, Harrisons Cave and to the Flower Forest. Ma'am, Bloomsbury Road is on the verge of collapsing, while every day buses go up there with children from the Grantley Adams Secondary School and coaches are going up there with both locals and visitors every day and there is absolutely nothing that is being done to help to rehabilitate those roads.

Ma'am, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is very guilty because even photographs were sent to

him. Ma'am, the road in Carrington's Village, nearest to Vault Road where I live, has a bridge that is collapsing. That is the road that takes you from Canefield on to Welchman Hall Gully. Before you get to Welchman Hall Gully there is a bridge on the left. Ma'am, pictures are already in the Ministry of Public Works. Madam Deputy Speaker, the only thing that is holding up that bridge from collapsing and going down the Scotland District is a massive ackee tree on a piece of property that is owned by my mother, that is all that is holding it up and I ask God not to let that tree gets hurts or not to let any heavy-duty vehicle run off the road to injure anybody. Ma'am, I support this particular Resolution.

Asides.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a brief intervention in this debate this afternoon because I have some affinity, some love for the subject of heritage and I therefore want to make my contribution against that background. I have heard the contributions of the Barbados Labour Party in this debate, some of our Honourable Members on this side have sited the kind of approach that they have brought to this debate, the staged exhortations, the false fury, the mocked rage and the anger pretense and I am really hearing it because I am not deaf.

6.35 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Seq. 41

Hon. S.D. BLACKETT: ... I am really hearing it because I am not deaf, and the Members on this side are hearing it because we are not deaf. They set out in the last two or three weeks on some staged debate boycott, where they were setting the stage that they are not participating in any Debate in this House unless it was one designed around what they intended to speak about. I am surprised today that they are joining this Debate. Madam Deputy Speaker, they should have maintained their boycott. They would have done better. All of the talk which we are hearing from this political jalopy that is the Barbados Labour Party, they are pretending to be preparing themselves for some Government. They are getting ready for Government. One speaker even mentioned that we are on our way out. They are a political jalopy preparing themselves for Government. The people in Barbados are not interested in any political jalopy or old Model T Fords; I mean the car.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party is now pretending to be the fairest, the most even-handed,

and non-partisan, and that they like poor people more than any other political party in the history of Barbados. All this even-handedness, non-partisanship and equitable approach was not maintained when it came to the people in St. John with the construction of the polyclinic, as you know, Madam Deputy Speaker. The people in St. John had to suffer, for 14 long years when the Barbados Labour Party was in office, in an outpatients' clinic that flooded every time the rain set up. We had to come back to office and complete that polyclinic in St. John. All of this equity and even-handedness did not exist between 1994 and 2008. All of that talk is nonsense talk. As a matter of fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, I heard on several occasions from Members who sat on this side during their term of office, especially the St. Michael representatives who spoke of being left out like outside children when the Barbados Labour Party handed out their political largesse. I heard from my colleague here next to me. Several times he was left out when it came to sharing out things and cutting up the pie in the 11 constituencies in St. Michael. Now all of a sudden we are hearing about all this equity and even-handedness by the Barbados Labour Party.

I was Minister of Culture between 2008 and 2010 after we first came back to office in 2008. I was part of the talk when it was first mooted and when there were discussions surrounding the inscription of Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison. I played an instrumental part, along with the Ministry's staff, in first putting it on the table, and I want to congratulate my successor who, along with the Ministry's staff and the principals involved, got Barbados to the stage where it was accepted as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I want to congratulate them, but we sort of laid the groundwork previous to those discussions. We were even preparing Bridgetown and its Garrison in terms of building out some of the structures in Queen's Park. We re-established, refurbished and almost rebuilt the Steel Shed. We were getting ready to move to the Queen's Park House where the Daphne Joseph-Hackett Theatre is located. That was on the cards, and I am glad now that we are moving towards refurbishing that theatre and getting it ready as one of the possible venues for our CARIFESTA later this year. Transforming Queen's Park was high on the cards. A Paper was presented to Cabinet. I do not believe that we quite frankly had the stomach for it at that time; of renaming Queen's Park as the National Heroes Park, and establishing our National Heroes in that Park with some iconic signage and that kind of thing. Even in relation to this very square in which we now stand, there was a proposal also to rename National Heroes Square and call it Parliament Square. All of that was done leading into the inscription of Bridgetown and its Garrison.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I just want to congratulate the principals involved in the private sector with the refurbishment of that area which we are now debating on today. I had an opportunity just yesterday, along with some

other Members of the Cabinet, to visit that area, and I saw the splendid transformation that has taken place there involving the Synagogue, the shoemakers' shops where they are planning to bring back in some of the shoemakers who are carrying out their business in that general location. They are bringing them into the main areas which have been refurbished and rebuilt, and I am glad to see that kind of craftsmanship coming back. There is the museum and its artefacts, the commemorative monument that is built there on that spot in commemoration of Cods House that was demolished, and the unearthing of a wonderful female bath which had been literally buried, according to my information received yesterday. They excavated it, of course, and have now revealed a female bath that was there centuries ago.

Asides.

Hon. S.D. BLACKETT: The recreation hall has been recently built, and of course there is the general greening and landscaping of the area. It provides a wonderful area of greenery in Bridgetown, and I really want to congratulate the principals who were involved in that particular venture.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is just a continuation of the UNESCO World Heritage Site and of the 2011 inscription, and we are getting there. We are getting there slowly to be listed among some of the greatest Wonders of the World in terms of a World Heritage listing. There is also this false belief which is propagated by the Barbados Labour Party that for everything we do in Barbados nowadays, when it comes to development and building out Barbados and Bridgetown, there must be these town hall meetings. I am all for informing Barbadians and the residents of any area immediately surrounding any major development, and I feel you should bring them into the fold, but I am wondering if there were town hall meetings held by the Barbados Labour Party when they were constructing the Boardwalk. Were there town hall meetings when the Lift Bridge was refurbished? Were there town hall meetings when they redesigned Independence Square? Were there town hall meetings? I want to know if there were town hall meetings when London Bourne Towers was built.

Aside.

Hon. S.D. BLACKETT: I want to know if there were town hall meetings when they restored this Parliament Building. I even want to know if there were town hall meetings when they licked down and imploded the Hilton Hotel and rebuilt it. Were there town hall meetings? You are holding us to a higher standard that you are holding yourself? I cannot understand that. There were no town hall meetings. This talk now and this new phraseology in the lexicon of the Barbados Labour Party must be paused.

Asides.

Hon. S.D. BLACKETT: You will not pause because you all are looking to stall time so that this current Administration cannot get on with developing Barbados as we have been mandated to do, so you all will not pause. You cannot get any pause from us. We are an action Government looking to do things for the Barbadian people.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know a little bit about the Empire Theatre. It was built first in 1922 and came into being as a live theatre. The word is that it conjured up live plays. Of course, as years went by it was developed into a cinema. When I was Minister of Culture back in 2009, we approached the Chinese Government and it had all but signed off on coming to Barbados and having that theatre completely reconstructed. What the Chinese and our Government did not see eye-to-eye on was the question of them not being interested in maintaining the current design, the current structure nor the current façade. The Chinese Government said, "Yes, we are willing to construct a 'new brand' Empire Theatre for you but we want to do it our way."

6.38 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

House D 3 Seq 42 6.37 p.m.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: ... The Chinese Government said yes, we are willing to construct a new brand Empire Theatre for you but we want to do it our way. We did not see eye-to-eye on anything and persons involved said we better put this on hold because we knew at the time that we were fighting against not only pleasing the average Barbadian, but the several interests surrounding what was constructed within that area called Bridgetown and its Garrisons so we did not believe this was the way to go.

I want to make this point, Madam Deputy Speaker, in my brief intervention. I hear the Honourable Member for St. James Central especially lampooning this Government putting us in the corner to stand up on one foot and even giving us some lines to write because we did not rebuild the Empire Theatre in the time that we were in office. Madam Deputy Speaker, we came to office in the year 2008. We have been in office now for a little bit over nine years. The Empire Theatre was closed in the 1970s, remember this. This Barbados Labour Party (BLP), and I like to call out my friend, the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown because I said in a previous debate and I am going to repeat it, I believe he is the sounding rod, the moral compass the conscience of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP).

Asides.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Not you. You are not in this.

Asides.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: In fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, I contend that if he does not separate himself from the Honourable Member who is sitting next to him he is going to devalue himself somewhat. I say that. He ought to remove himself. He once sat on the Front Bench in here.

Asides.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Well, he was devalued, demoted and placed on the Back Bench with the Honourable Member for St. James North. I beg you Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown separate yourself from him, but I want to go back to the point I was making.

The Empire Theatre was closed in the 1970s ...

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central is misleading the House. I have never been sued in the law Courts of Barbados for failure to pay debts so I do not know what he is talking about. If he has been so sued, let him say so if we are talking about morality in here.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not going to comment on what he just said but he has said on previous occasions that I came in here with a majority of 39 votes. This gentleman here, the Honourable Member for St. James North. Madam Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. James North could never, ever make me feel devalued in any way. When I ascend the stairs coming into this Honourable House and I aspie the bust of Sir Conrad Reeves and enter the forecourt of this Honourable Chamber and see my name emblazoned on the walls of this Honourable House nobody like him could ever make me feel devalued. I do not walk into this Honourable House asking for validation from his kind. Never! I want him, through you, Madam Deputy Speaker, to go and know his place. Who does he think he is talking to? Go and know his place, man.

Asides.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Tell him go and know his place? I told him to go and know his place. Who does he think he is talking to?

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central were ordered expunged from the record by Madam Deputy Speaker.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: I want to get back to my point.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: The Empire Theatre was closed in the 1970s. In that period, the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) came to talk in 1976 and demitted office in 1986. That is 10 years that they were in office. They came back to office in 1994 for 14 years and was kicked out of office in 2008. Add that to the time, they were in office for 24 long years while the Empire Theatre stood in its present location but we were in office just for nine years and they want to beat us over the head. They want to put us in the corner, they want to give us lines because we did not refurbish or rebuild the Empire Theatre for the nine years that we were in office but they were in office for 24 long years and did nothing to the Empire Theatre. We are not going to be reprimanded by you. Never! The Empire Theatre will be dealt with in time. Madam Deputy Speaker, I have made my point in that regard. The ??? of the poor state of The City, the inadequate lighting and even the sidewalks. When we are trying to do something in The City we are trying to facilitate the investors of the Hyatt. We are trying our best to do that and they are giving all kinds of push back from the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and their acolytes. When you are trying to do something they are complaining and when you are not doing something they are still complaining. Madam Deputy Speaker, I have said enough on this issue and I support the vesting of this portion of land in the Barbados Jewish Committee in The City and I wish them luck as they continue to develop that area in Bridgetown.

I am obliged to you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Madam Deputy Speaker, it is clear that the debate is going to continue for a while and I have been informed that other Members on That Side need to make some contributions so I beg to move that the Sitting be suspended for dinner until 8:00 o'clock this evening.

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The question that the House do now suspend until 8:00 o'clock was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

House D 3 Seq 42 6.47 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Members, this Sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 18 and with that we shall continue.

ORDER No. 18 (Resumed)

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

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to intervene in this debate on a Resolution to approve the vesting in the Barbados Jewish community of 534 square metres of land which is roughly, by my quick maths, about 5 600 square feet, if you use the old way of measuring land, situate not far from here in the heart of Bridgetown.

Mr. Speaker, like my honourable colleagues on this side I support this Resolution. Of course, we cannot help but support it. After all the Jewish community themselves have put in all of the infrastructure and it is starting to look very good. The Government's contribution or rather the people of Barbados' contribution through the Government who holds the land on trust for the people was to give the land, and notice, of course, that it is a complete vesting, so in other words, the Jewish community would own the land as opposed to a lease which could have been done as well and has been done in this House in the short time I was a Member in terms of the Rotarians somewhere in Wildey.

This Resolution lends itself to a debate on the significance of Bridgetown and the attractiveness of Bridgetown as a city. Bridgetown, of course, is being magnificently represented by my colleague, the Honourable Member, an officer and a gentleman. Bridgetown, of course, has been fundamental to the social equilibrium and the cultural and economic development of Barbados and we really need to ensure that its attractiveness both for citizens of Barbados and for visitors remains at the highest possible level.

As my colleagues on this side in the debate have said, as recently as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, Bridgetown has been declining as a city in terms of its attractiveness in relation to the question of signage which comes into play here, the question of the decay in the buildings over the last few years certainly under the governance of the Democratic Labour Party, the issue of the increasing number of potholes and the issue of the lightning - it has been said, I believe on both sides, that Bridgetown goes dead to a large extent after 6 o'clock - and certainly the difficulty of persons with disability to easily traverse Bridgetown.

People with disabilities, at least I believe on two occasions within the last nine years, have gone into Bridgetown and showed how difficult it is to move along the streets especially Broad Street in terms of the impediments and the obstacles which are in the pathway of people with disabilities. If we are talking too not only about citizens of Barbados but visitors to Barbados, I have already said in this Parliament, Mr. Speaker, that persons with disabilities in a lot of cases are people with large incomes, a lot of them have received large personal injury settlements in North America within the context of North America and Europe and they have dollars and they travel and we have to make not only the City of Bridgetown but Barbados as a whole an attractive place for persons with disabilities to come to. This is an area that is asking for revenue growth if you have a Government with the political will to achieve this.

The tourist product in Barbados and this property, which is the subject of this Resolution, should enhance the tourist product, but the tourist product on the whole in Barbados needs revitalisation. Really and truly we speak about tourism being our number foreign exchange earner and the Government as often as it does beats its chest and says that we have growing numbers of tourist here, that tourist arrivals have increased by 15 per cent over the last year, not that they were high previously because they had declined at one time, but the issue is tourist spend and not tourist numbers. The issue is: What do we have here, what sites do we have in Barbados, what attractions and what places do we have for tourists to spend their dollars and part company with their foreign currency? Unfortunately, we do not have that many.

We have seen Graeme Hall going into decay and we have seen the Golf Park that they had at Balls go in decay. We certainly as a beautiful country can enhance our attractiveness when it comes to heritage and the environment for both those who live here and those who visit us. It means spending some money, it also means accommodating foreign investment in this country, it means therefore easing up the bureaucracy and the red tape that is the Government of Barbados right now as the Honourable Member of Cabinet, the Honourable Member for St. James South clearly recognises, just as much as those of us on this side, and speaks about quite often. What is the Government of Barbados doing to ease the red tape, the bureaucracy and the mounting regulations that we have in terms of doing business in this country and of being an attractive place for foreign investment?

Even here, Mr. Speaker, within the last few days coming on the Order Paper is some other piece of bureaucracy, an amendment to the Barbados Revenue Authority Act to make it more difficult to do business in this country. This Government does not seem to understand

that the way to bring revenue and growth into this country is to ease the pressure of doing business. Barbados is no...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please speak and be relevant to the Resolution on the Floor.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: I will tie it in, Sir, but I accept your ruling.

We need an improvement in the economic activity in this country. We have sites in Barbados. We have been hearing about the Empire Theatre, which was being discussed. We on this side are not into the blame game, as the Government of Barbados presently is, as to whether the Empire Theatre was closed up from the 1970s or not. The fact is that this Government of Barbados has been in office now for over nine years, its second term is soon coming up, and it needs to take the responsibility to do what it should do to get our product enhanced and make Barbados more attractive for us all. Certainly, the Empire Theatre is a key area in Bridgetown that ought to have been dealt with by now by this Government.

We have the Dale Carnegie Library, the public library. Most of us I am sure, certainly those of us who went to school within the environs of St. Michael, would have frequented the Dale Carnegie Library, the public library.

House D3 Sequence 44

8.12 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your speech is sounding very similar to speeches I have heard today and so I have to caution you too with respect to tedious repetition of previous speeches. Please continue, Sir.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Mr. Speaker, this is all part of the whole process of the enhancing of Bridgetown, certainly with the vesting of this property in the Jewish community, a place such as the Public Library which is within a stone's throw ought to be looked at in terms of bringing it back into the game play as a part of the places where both the young and old in this country can go. Mr. Speaker, I do not think that anyone has touched on green spaces within major cities and capital cities. Sir, we all have travelled to many parts of the world and have seen how the major cities of a country have been decorated in terms of greenery, in terms of the environment, in terms of the promotion of heritage and we need to look at that within the context of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard talk about Queen's Park being refurbished and that the Daphne Joseph Hackett

Theatre will soon be refurbished. I do not know, we have heard so many promises from the Government in terms of projects and infrastructure that were to be started, that have not been started after four years that I have been in this Parliament. Certainly I believe that the Daphne Joseph Hackett Theatre is one but we really need to take our green spaces seriously. Mr. Speaker, I know that that is difficult and that it has compounded the problem when the Government has laid off quite a few hundreds of workers from the National Conservation Commission, Beautify Barbados and the Drainage Division, but we all know the importance and significance of green spaces in major cities all around the world as part of the attractions, both for citizens and for tourists, even in terms of their spiritual development.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of Hyatt Hotel has come up and I would just want to say this, that the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, my friend who has connections in St. James North constituency... Mr. Speaker, never mind what goes on in here nothing cannot get between us in that way. Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we cannot stand for him to be corrected on this issue because the Laws of Barbados clearly state that a development likes that of the Hyatt Hotel should have Environmental Impact Assessment Studies and town hall meetings before it could be approved. Mr. Speaker, we are a country that operates under the rule of law, we have a written Constitution unlike some countries. We have a whole set of laws that go behind you and we cannot breach these laws just like that because we feel that we are a Government or a Parliament in here.

Sir, I excuse the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, the lawyers on that side, including the Right Honourable Prime Minister who is in his seat and the Honourable Member for St. Philip South who sits beside of him now they could all tell him that you would not have needed a town hall meeting for a redesigned board walk, the redesign of Independence Square or for exploding Hilton Hotel, we are dealing with a hotel, Hyatt Hotel, that is being proposed in an area that would have impact on the community which surrounds it. Mr. Speaker, for example, we understand that traffic would be diverted from where it now goes and that would have a people's impact. Mr. Speaker, others on that side must not get in here and play 'big' and pompous and say that they do not need to have town hall meetings and that the Barbados Labour Party did not have any for certain requirements that did not require by Laws of Barbados such. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West spoke about the Barbados Labour Party employing its "henchmen", that is the word the Honourable Member used, to prevent projects and developments that the Government wishes.

Mr. Speaker, that is not so, we will be the last people on earth to oppose or to hinder any development that would

bring economic activity to this country, that would bring employment to the people of this country when after all we had unemployment down to 6.7 per cent when we demitted office nine years ago, that would prevent the advancement both economically and socially of people in this country of all constituents and for the constituents of the Members of the other side. Mr. Speaker, we are the party for development, most of the infrastructural developments in Barbados have been championed by the Barbados Labour Party, so do not let us get into this divide, that we are looking to prevent projects that the Democratic Labour Party wants to bring, that we are using “henchmen” to prevent them, that is not so. Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we here are the highest lawmakers in this country and we have to abide by the rule of law, including the rules, Acts and regulations that have been passed in this Parliament, whether in this session or in previous sessions. Mr. Speaker, that is what we will stand and fight for on the behalf of the people of Barbados and our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the designation of Bridgetown and Its Garrison as a World Heritage Site, yes, Mr. Speaker, we feel as proud as anyone else about that designation but again let us correct the record because the impetus for having Bridgetown and Its Garrison defined as such was started under this Barbados Labour Party under Dame Billie Miller, former Deputy Prime Minister and previous representative the City of Bridgetown. Mr. Speaker, we have to give Jack his jacket, let us not seek to distort historical facts on which you can be challenged at any time.

Mr. Speaker, the issue as well has to be addressed in terms of businesses and Government departments relocating out of Bridgetown. Of course, a lot of those businesses have relocated to other parts of Barbados, for instance, Warrens which has developed very well. Warrens is now as much a city as any other part of Barbados, but clearly with Government departments and other businesses relocating out of Bridgetown there has been a decline in economic activities over the last few years. We have a situation where tourists come to Barbados on cruise ships and on some days, for instance, Sundays and bank holidays, only to find businesses in Bridgetown closed. Mr. Speaker, believe you me, a lot of these tourists have expressed their disappointment as to why is it that the major city in a country in which some of them have visited for the first time in their lives is closed. We have to, yes, as a political directorate, give direction to that. I am not saying that Government should directly intervene and have businesses like that in Bridgetown but certainly Government is there to facilitate the private sector and to facilitate the commercial sector of a country and therefore more needs to be done in this regard.

8.32 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Seq. 46

Mr. E.G. HINKSON: ... Mr. Speaker, the issue of the whole heritage and archaeological development of Barbados comes into this Debate aptly, I believe. We are a country which has a history dating back over 375 years, and we are talking about historical vesting of property in the Jewish community which goes far back. I think others in this Debate have spoken about the history of the Jews in Barbados. I think at one time, as might have been referred to by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Right Excellent Errol Barrow found a connection with the Jewish community. I believe he said he was five per cent Jew at one time. If we are talking about that, let us talk in terms of our whole history. There is an opportunity for us to develop our archaeological aspect and our history over the 375 years. All of these are avenues which a Government that is competent and knows what it is about can look at in terms of making life better for its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the property enhancement, I note that the Honourable Member who in fact presented this Resolution -- the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central -- has been speaking about refurbishing community parks across the island. Mr. Speaker, I hope he remembers St. James North is part of the island. We had written him almost a year ago on Folkestone, which is a national heritage park, so it does not belong to St. James North but it belongs to the whole of Barbados. Folkestone is in disarray. The tennis courts are down and the place is looking bad. In a lot of cases, the play park is rundown. We really need an enhancement of that as a place which attracts citizens of Barbados and visitors, especially on bank holidays; so I would want to urge him not to look at Folkestone as a St. James North district. I know how it is in terms of this Government and its unwillingness to carry out development within constituencies which they believe they cannot win next Election. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has spoken about that very often, so in doing these community parks let us not forget Folkestone.

Mr. Speaker, also in terms of St. James North and the enhancement of it as an archaeological and environmental place of attraction, the issue of Zone 1 has to be dealt with. There are certain constituencies I know, such as the constituency of my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, which is also a similar constituency and where a significant part of it, like St. James North, comes under a Zone 1 belt. As soon as I became a Member of Parliament, I went to the relevant authorities to see what was the position on this, and I was told that the Cabinet -- that was way back, about four years ago -- had some Paper or proposal before it to reduce and redefine these water-protected Zone 1 areas, but it has not come up here in this Parliament yet. We have a situation where large parcels of land in certain parts of Barbados,

including my constituency, cannot be developed for anything. Some of the most beautiful sights in this island, certainly in St. James North, can be used for economic activity and enhancement, just like this site we are dealing with in this Resolution. Mr. Speaker, if this is the case, I do not know because we have a Government which does not account to the people of Barbados, does not operate with transparency in spite of their 2008 Manifesto which sought to say that they would so govern. I do not even know what the position is, but certainly this is an issue that needs to be dealt with in terms of the large tracts of land in this island, including in St. James North for which no development can take place, unlike what we are dealing with today.

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

Mr. E.G. HINKSON: Mr. Speaker, I thank you. I will not take my five minutes, and I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Asides.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, I will not make mention of Reparations. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin this discussion by making reference first to Marcus Garvey. Garvey was very clear when he said a people without a knowledge of its past history and origin and culture is like a tree without roots. Garvey was saying that in the early half of the 20th Century. Bishop Tutu also had a different view in relation to when minorities are ignored in a society. In this case, I am not talking about minorities quantitatively. I am talking about minorities based on how we assess people's value in a system itself, where our people seem not to be of any great importance in relation to the importance of history in a society. As a matter of fact, some of our people believe that social or political history is not important; that it is a subject which is considered to be useless. I do not hold that view. I believe that we also have a responsibility to redress the cultural and historic imbalances in this system.

While I am fully supportive of the State vesting land in the Jewish community -- because they, too, are a people with equal standing in terms of people who respect all types of human beings -- I am also concerned with whether we are really paying the same respect to our own people's interest. I am very much concerned about this because I had the privilege a few years ago of hearing a speech delivered in Kingstown, St. Vincent by Barbados' Honourable Minister of Culture, and the manner in which he delivered that speech gave me a sense of pride to hear a black Minister expressing himself with everything that would reflect sincerity.

Asides.

8.31 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

House D 3 Seq 47 8.31 p.m.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: ... extensively and the Caribbean people were very impressed at that event. He also spoke in the company of Ralph Gonzales and a whole number of distinguished persons from the Caribbean. He read the script well. I do not know if the Permanent Secretary shared some of her wisdom with him but he was a very good student he read the script without a blunder, but I would like to believe that with a strong sense of a ??? spirit that the Minister said what he said then as a true commitment of the Government's concern for addressing the imbalances in the system. He was also asking for compensation and healing of the society in relation to the whole call for recreations in the system.

If you are going to talk about reparations then you have to let the people know who they are calling upon to give us reparations and that we are a serious people because we have some imbalances within the sovereignty of itself that we also have to address. I do not want to indict anybody on this one because all I am saying to you is that we are now at this juncture in history where we are now celebrating black history month and we should be, to some extent, fully preoccupied with what we can do as well because I am assuming that this arrangement for the vesting of land in the Jewish community would have preceded the celebration of black history month but if this is to mean anything more than just children walking about in African garments then the State Administration must be concerned with what it is that we can do to reclaim those historical roots, those ancestral foundations, that would give our people a sense of pride and bring about some level of inspiration. I said it before and I really believe that when people believe that they are meaningful to society they would contribute to society itself. If they believe that they are not, they are not going to contribute to society. That is where I stand on this one.

We are the mouse in this exercise and Desmond Tutu also made the point that if you are neutral in situations of injustice you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral the mouse would not appreciate your neutrality. That is a reality. This debate means nothing to any black person out there which is 90 per cent of the population if you say you are doing something developmental and you pass land on to the Jewish community. No negativity in relation to the Jewish community itself but we also have to do something at this point that is helpful to the black community in Barbados

because we are doing it for the Jews, we doing it for the Asians, we do it at George Washington House because George Washington came down here with the flu and spend some time and we felt that was such rich history ...

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: I am not talking about no BLP/DLP thing. A man came down here with tuberculosis and they believe that Barbados would put this thing on the world map, took up the taxpayers money and spend the money in this historic fight. I am talking about us as a people. I am asking you to reconnect and get conscious that we are making a mockery of this important journey of development for our people. You cannot step on the mouse's tail and expect the mouse to be quite and not to express a strong resentment to these efforts. While we did that there, you know at this stage when we are in Black History Month and all across the island everybody is looking around to see if they could find African fabric from Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Angola, Algeria or Ethiopia. Could you imagine that a stake at this point in history with all of us in here, the only thing you could be thinking about is fabric? I want to know you have Newton Park, the burial ground of the slaves. The Minister of Culture must focus his attention on also preserving our heritage because if we do not preserve our heritage and perpetuate the importance of our heritage we are like a tree without roots and people that are ignorant of our history will always find themselves at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder of the society itself. We ought to be talking about Barbadians but when you talk Barbadians we play a secondary role in this exercise. I just want to urge the Minister because as I said I will pay a short intervention in this exercise and to be truthful I was a little concern when he started to wobble, everything went warped and loosed focus completely. This thing is about venting land in a people which the people are extremely proud. The people are proud and they will manifest it in the months ahead because you will see a physical transformation of that location itself which all of us will drive pass with great admiration at the new urban developments but they can do it because they enriched themselves on this soil and they can now do it for the preservation of even the unborn Jewish community itself. What are we doing for our community? Are we going to leave Newton Park as it is?

There are also important sites, look at Golden Square. In this case, I want to thank the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) even before I offered myself as a candidate to the part or I was invited to be for joining collectively with the Clement Payne Centre, the Israel Lovell Foundation and The PanAfricanist Movement because at the time we were not in Central Government. We were a peripheral group even considered as a fringe movement ineffective in the system but we agreed to a number of issues because we thought this was a way that we would be able to make a

meaningful contribution to Central Government. Whatever Government existed the intention was to do something good for the people of Barbados and the Clement Payne Centre contributed the bust that now exist in Golden Square.

Now I will tell you this and I know this one may be a little sensitive but the unfortunately thing is that we corrupted the whole concept of preserving that important historical site because we went and put a market on the same site. We did not see the importance of it although we felt that it had an important connection to not the revolt of 1860 but it also had a connection ...

House D 3 Seq 47 8.41 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: ...We did not see the importance of it although we felt that it had an important connection to not only the Revolt of 1860, which I am going to talk about, but also to the Revolt of 1937. When we worked in collaboration with the Government to preserve that site we did not expect that some train would run off the track at a later date and put a wooden structure, some kind of macro cage, out there and call it a market and indicated...

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: The whole idea of agreeing to preserve these important sites was to have respect for Emancipation Day as well as to invite all types of distinguished persons from the international community on August 01 every year symbolising this effort to redress not only the cultural imbalances but also the psychological imbalances in the system. Sir, we saw Fidel Castro on these things on one occasion when it was supposed to be Winnie Mandela, all of that. We had Hugh Masekela. We should be going forward, but to me it looks like we are not retreating but we are in reverse.

I just want to call on this Government now that we have such a debate of this kind... For me this debate is about culture, it is about history, it is about symbolism and it is about monuments and the importance of these things to the development of Barbados and what they mean, not just as an inscription on the concrete itself. It is very important work. Somebody spoke about the one in Paynes Bay today. We have also Errol Barrow Statue in Independence Square and Grantley Adams.

I do not agree that we only do these things when we have any strong religious foundation because that do not happen in religious groups. Religious groups preserve symbols for different reasons. They create that mystique around the symbols within the church that very seldom

they will honour any outstanding persons with any inventions or anything like that.

We are in a society where we are struggling every day. We talked about taking Lord Nelson from facing the main commercial street in Bridgetown and turned its backside to the street itself and considered that to be a revolutionary change in the system. The statue of Lord Nelson used to look westward and we took Lord Nelson and put him to look eastward and we say we made a fundamental change. I know you cannot dare speak about moving Lord Nelson to Nelson Street or to the Careenage. You cannot carry Lord Nelson no other place than in that central area. Any Government risking it, will be able to test their power against the children of the old plantocracy in this country. Our roundabout at efforts to move Nelson, not to dump him in the Wharf where he ought to be because he is the biggest threat to the civilisation of black people for all that he has said about the emancipation of our people... He is mirrored in the "Capitalism of Slavery" written by Eric Williams for the way how he behaved. The only sensible answer this society keeps throwing up with all of these educated people is that he deserved to be there, that if he was not there we would be speaking French in this land today. All these African born people are thinking about is that they would not be speaking English, which is so important to them, that they would be speaking French.

I think that this debate is worthy of some rich contributions and I look forward to hearing the Honourable Prime Minister on this subject matter. There are many other things that we can talk about but I am going to touch these sites because I believe that the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth could probably take note - I do not want to ask about any credit - that at least if he is here next year this time - that is in the hands of the Honourable Prime Minister if he wants to take the risk tomorrow or next month or as far as March 2018 - or whoever is here that they have a responsibility that the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth has a lot of work to do so that we could be proud of who we are as a people.

There is a plantation in St. Philip and the representatives of St. Philip should be in this fight. A black Caribbean man came to this country and recognised the importance of a black man in a black country owning a plantation, not with the intention to use the plantation for the same means and purposes of the traditional class who had that plantation, but because he felt it is important for him to preserve the history of that plantation. They you cannot talk about Bussa' Statue in front of Matthew and they want to connect that statue to the struggle of 1860 at Bailey's Plantation. The driveway - and this is where the Minister of Transport and Works is important, from the main road into that plantation... Whatever money Mr. Eddie Grant would take for that estate, I believe that estate ought to be in the hands of the Government. We ought to

be negotiating with Mr. Grant to see if the Government can preserve that. Bailey's Plantation is probably one of the richest part of our history where the owner because of his wealth has been able to do some development there. We have to take the responsibility, because our people cannot take the responsibility for themselves, whether we go into that pool in the Consolidated Fund or to get the money from somewhere and own that plantation and then we need to look to see how we can make it an important site where the tourists that we depend on and in some cases influenced our thinking in terms of what kind of development we ought to have and the way that development must occur in the geography across the topography of this land where everybody will be how the roads look on the Coast Road... Nobody cares about how the roads look in The Ivy or in Licorish Village. Nobody cares about who can enjoy the pleasure of going into a small room and defecating in water but they make sure that the hotels got 'nuff' toilets and the system is working well because the tourists are important to the society.

I do not want us to drift, because I listened to the debate today, from that whole national spirit, that sense of cultural and political and economic interest and development that would help to make our people feel a sense of pride...

House D3 Sequence 48

8.52 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, the people in this country feel more about what is happening in the United States of America than what happens at home. Mr. Speaker, every house across Barbados is switched on to CNN or Fox News, everybody understands the struggle happening between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, a foolish 'dumpsy' man who has a lot of money, who talked a lot of foolishness over the years, who is on television every night telling people they are "farred" and Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation showing this man all the time but the man became the President of the United States of America and does not care anything about any judge or about any race, only his own. This man wants to make America great again by disrupting an entire system and trying to create more enemies than friends in less than a month. We have that to deal with.

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, we need to give our people something of some great worth, we have to give them some kind of hope, we have to make them feel a sense of importance as human beings. Mr. Speaker, you

cannot expect people to feel that way if they do not have any sense of the worth of their own history because you would not have done anything. Mr. Speaker, as I said, this is not a Barbados Labour Party or Democratic Labour Party talk, what these people believe is that black people have contributed nothing to the world's development, that you have no presence because your history has been suppressed, that you have no presence. Mr. Speaker, some people believe that we do not even have a history, if you look in the history books for your history you might have to read the entire book and in a continent with about 55 different countries in it there is nothing in that history that mentions that the African continent does exist.

Mr. Speaker, all that our people know about ourselves is that we were enslaved. We even call ourselves slaves and the Caribbean intellectuals had to come and tell us that we were never a slave but that we were enslaved. Let us address that, the Minister of Education, Science and Technology, and Innovation must work in collaboration with the Honourable Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth and with almost every ministry because the interest of this transformation touches on almost every ministry in the governance of the society itself. Mr. Speaker, the Right Honourable Prime Minister is quite capable of leading the way on these important things because I know that the Honourable Member has the information that is so important.

Mr. Speaker, history is a subject, it is not an oratory subject, it is not a discipline of any importance, if you do law you must study history; if you are a carpentry you have to study the history of carpentry; if you are a mason you have to study the history of masonry; even a fool has a history. Mr. Speaker, it is so important that we contribute, if we start here by ideas, they can fashion us to do many things that are meaningful. Mr. Speaker, many people feel proud to see the statue of Bussa, but there was such ignorance in the society in the early years... people were not concerned if he had on a short pants, if he had on Balley shoes, if his hair was combed, if he has big ears or if he has a big nose, there were all types of foolishness because it was the backwardness of the society itself, the content which they had for themselves and their own people. This debate is about reclaiming, restoring, reconnecting and unearthing the foolishness that caused us to think this way about the major contributions that we have made.

Mr. Speaker, I said I was only going to speak for about five to ten minutes on this issue.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have just one minutes left in which to conclude.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, let me finish it by saying that these are important sources, not just Garvey

and Desmond Tutu but if we are interested in the level of consciousness you have to know Carter Woodson. Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude by this quote:

"If a race has [no](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/no/>) [history](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/history/>),

if it has no [worthwhile](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/worthwhile/>) [tradition](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/tradition/>), it [becomes](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/becomes/>) a [negligible](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/negligible/>) [factor](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/factor/>) in the [thought](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/thought-of-the-day.php>) of the [world](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/world/>), and it [stands](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/stands/>) in [danger](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/danger/>) of [being](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/being/>) [exterminated](<http://www.quotes-inspirational.com/quotes/exterminated/>).” Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to follow on from where the Honourable Member for St. Michael East has left off. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that at this late hour the Government seems as if they have run out of steam and nobody else wants to speak. Sir, I want to continue this debate because it is so important, it is so important for us to understand that this vesting of this land in the City of Bridgetown to the Jewish community is important, as it has cultural and historical dimensions. As the Honourable Member said, we have also to look at how we are going to help other businesses and communities across Barbados and not only in Bridgetown. Mr. Speaker, it is important for us to look at the conditions under which this vesting is taking place. Surely the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development is responsible for the vesting of lands into Government or the private sector and I have not seen the terms and conditions as laid out here if these people are expected to pay taxes or what will be done for that community.

Mr. Speaker, as a former Minister of Housing and Lands I know that Government can either sell the land or can vest it into another entity, but of course the conditions should be spelt out so that if it is to be vested for 25 years, what conditions in terms of taxes that would be paid by this community.

Mr. Speaker, certainly this vesting allows the community to own this land for that period of time where they can do whatever they would want to do with it and so it is important for Government sometimes to get into an arrangement with the private sector. Mr. Speaker, I say to this Government that this type of thing is encouraged and that we support the vesting of this land into the Jewish community. Mr. Speaker, I do hope that Government can do so to other entities because over time as a former Government we have vested lands in the church, in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., and to the development of Bridgetown and so this is important.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of activities have taken place over time and one Honourable Member asked what has been done by this side in Bridgetown. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East has recognised that historical perspective is also important. When you look at the capital city Bridgetown you see that it has a lot of history to it, it has a history as one of the major shipping ports for slaves...

9.11 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Seq. 50

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: ... The Member for St. Michael East recognised that historical perspective as important. When you look at the capital City of Bridgetown, it has a lot of history. It has a history as one of the major shipping ports. It has a history as one of the outposts from Africa, and it has a history as well as one of the posts within the English-speaking Caribbean. It is an important city. Bridgetown for years has been an important city, and has been twinned with many cities in the United States of America. We recognise that we would want to improve this as we go on. It is true that over the past three or four years this Government has carried on a work which we had started, and it is now designated as a Heritage City, and that is important.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to say that over the last 60 years a lot of work has been done by both Governments. Starting in 1950 the Bridgetown Port was opened by us, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and the Government headquarters which was done here to enhance this area. Mr. Speaker, we also talk about what has happened over the course of the last 50 years in building out Bridgetown; building out the green spaces which Members have spoken about. Mr. Speaker, a lot of work has been done to enhance Bridgetown over time. Look at the transformation of Swan Street, Mr. Speaker. I want to say that all of these things have been done to improve and to bring commerce into Bridgetown, but more has to be done over the next 50 or so

years, Mr. Speaker. We have to look at what will happen to Bridgetown in the year 2050 and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, there is a need to improve, and the Member for St. Michael East is right: What do we do for the ordinary man in the street? What are the things we do to enhance the livelihood of ordinary people? Mr. Speaker, I believe it is through vending. Surely, both Governments over time have done work in improving vending facilities within Bridgetown, but more has to be done because this capital city is the central area of commerce and we must be in a position to enhance Bridgetown to a major point, Mr. Speaker. I heard Members mention that when the cruise ships come in sometimes there are no shopping centres open, and we have to be able to build it out. Of course, today we have seen a situation where commerce can now go on almost for 24 hours, but what has happened within that space of time? How many shops are open to take advantage of the new legislation that came into being a couple years ago? We have had none. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we need to do some work to the Bridgetown Fisheries Complex and to the fish market, and we need to look at how we can improve the lot of small vendors within Bridgetown. We need to be able to put facilities in place to help those people; better facilities.

Over the past 15 years, work was done by the Barbados Labour Party when you look at a new Fairchild Street vending facility. Of course, that has not been completed. Over the past eight years, the Government has done very little in moving forward a programme to bring vending to Fairchild Street. We have seen work being done at Trafalgar Square but we have not seen the Bridgetown Fisheries Complex being opened up as we had thought in order to help those fishing vessels which come in and are really looking for a space. Mr. Speaker, at the Bridgetown Fisheries Complex today there is a need for Government to spend some money in that facility, and I believe that the private sector can also help. Mr. Speaker, the private sector can help in providing activity for Bridgetown.

When you look at other activities like housing, you would need to improve the inner City of Bridgetown. Surely, work has begun to look at relocating a number of persons out of the inner city. We have seen what has happened at Church Village. It was at Greenfields where work was to be done. It was at the Garden Land where work was to be done. An Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) programme was put in place, and Members spoke about that, so I do not want to go into detail, but I believe that we need another IDB programme in order to improve facilities in the Garden Land, at Greenfields and of course in the Nelson Street area and western Bridgetown including the New Orleans, Mr. Speaker. We definitely need to put a programme in place to help persons now. There are still too many outhouses, Mr. Speaker, and work

has to be done in order to make people's lives better. Yes, I mean pit toilets; outhouses.

Mr. Speaker, I believe since the Government does not have the money, we have to put our heads together to see what it is that we can do. The same way we could have a vesting of this land in the Jewish community -- and this is a good thing -- we need to work with the private sector to see how we can improve the lots of those persons within Bridgetown who still have pit toilets. It has to be improved. This Government and future Governments must be looking at activity to improve the lives of the poor in Bridgetown, the suburban areas of Bridgetown, and also in the rural area. However, it is very noticeable in Bridgetown. When you go beyond the commercial activities in Bridgetown and you go into Nelson Street and the Orleans, you see some desolate and derelict places. We need to look at this. If you go into Nelson Street, the Orleans or Greenfields, you still see activities which remind us of the 1950s, 1930s and whatever, so work has to be done, Mr. Speaker. I believe a private sector partnership must be made.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands over the past two decades, I would think, between 1991 and 1994, activities were created within that Ministry to look at a new dimension for Bridgetown. The studies were done, and when I came to the Ministry of Housing, their programmes were put in place to look at how we could uplift these societies. You cannot do it alone, and that is why the IDB was brought in and we were happy to bring it in because we knew at the time that Barbados had been graduated from getting loans. We had to fight to get that loan in order to provide activity for Bridgetown and certain selected communities across Barbados. It is unfortunate that problems occurred, and I do not want to say who is to be blamed, but of course once you are a Government, you have to carry the blame for that programme which was scrapped in 2014 or thereabouts. Therefore, there is a need now to provide financing. You do not have the finance so you have to involve the private sector in order to uplift those communities, Mr. Speaker. How do we do it? The Government has to be able to meet with the people in those communities. I would like to see a situation where the Ministry of Housing and Lands, along with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Finance, puts a programme in place in order to meet with those persons within those communities in Bridgetown and the urban areas so as to come up with not only a cultural programme. I understand that as a result of the Cultural Industries Development Bill, which has been passed in here, persons are now able to take advantage of any activity, whether it be sports or culture, in order to make a livelihood for themselves.

9.10 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

House D 3 Seq 51 9.10 p.m.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: ... and persons are not able to take advance any activity whether it is sports or culture in order to make a livelihood for themselves but where in Bridgetown can entrepreneurs take advantage of it. Certainly at the Jewish Centre here, I believe persons should find some form of employment. Vending could be done but we want to see and upliftment within the Fairchild Street for culture, we want to see an upliftment within the Trafalgar Street area and, of course, the Lower Green. The Lower Green has been traditionally a place for activity where Barbadians came out to not only spend their time but to pass good times in the Lower Green area and we see what happens up here. There are many things happening within Bridgetown only if we would take time to move around Bridgetown. I believe that more and more Parliamentarians and people of influence must walk through Bridgetown and see what is happening in the outer areas of Bridgetown, it is important. You would see how many activities take place on Friday evenings right here in Bridgetown.

I saw a couple of weeks ago, I am not sure if it was organised by the Minister of Culture or the private sector but it was organised in a dominoes competition right above Parliament. There was an activity which I understand was done by the private sector and Government and it was a good activity but surely the ordinary people were expressing their culture in a way that ordinary people can. We want to encourage those activities right within the Parliament Courtyard. It is a good thing. I want to see if we are serious about culture, if we are serious about opening up Bridgetown. There must be one or two days. There was a time when on Saturday mornings there used to be an activity, we need to see that coming more and more across Bridgetown. I do not know how many of you know that on Sunday mornings, for example, over at Eagle Hall there is an activity going on there for marketing. A lot of people still come out on Sunday mornings to buy their fresh fruits and vegetables, Mr. Speaker, right on Sunday mornings. It is a good thing and we want to see that type of activity opening up now within Bridgetown to help ordinary Barbadians make a living. Certain the Ministry of Culture must be looking at an area within Bridgetown where persons can do art and craft, where people can do all of those things.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Well, I am not sure if that is a possibility at this time. We have to encourage not only vending but we have to encourage agriculture as a whole because people make a living. The contribution that is being made to agriculture today and has always done, we take for granted but a lot of people make a living out of selling. I understand people are now encouraged to plant

coconut trees although the Government has now encouraged the bringing in of coconut water. I understand that people are now bringing in coconut water which to my mind is not a good thing. We have many coconut vendors across Barbados that are now making a living and years ago we did not think that coconut was a big industry but it is. People are now being encouraged and we should encourage more persons to get involved in the planting of coconut trees, in the planting of more vegetables because it can be sustainable but we have to look down the road at what happens and what is the activity for marketing, Mr. Speaker. What is the activity that this Government is putting in place and a future Government would put in place for marketing.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that there is a need for the Ministry of Transport and Works to look at a new traffic management for Bridgetown. I believe that there was a time when we were thinking about Bridgetown, Lower Bay Street and we were looking at a link between Bay Street and The Wharf. Certainly if you think that Barbados is only for the next five years, so be it but we must look at Barbados down the road a 100 or 200 years.

I think the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) was very short-sighted when they abolished the concept of flyovers. They have not gotten back to traffic management and Bridgetown is still chaos when there is a problem. If there was a problem in Bridgetown, a tsunami or whatever, what traffic management style do we have to get out of Bridgetown. There is not any. I am not sure the Ministry of Transport and Works have adopted the programme that we put in place for traffic management several years ago.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: But what is it? We were moving at a pace that when you look at the Bridgetown Road Improvement Project. I have heard Members talk about it, Mr. Speaker. The Bridgetown Road Improvement Project improves not only Baxter's Road, Passage Road, Country Road and then it went up through Roebuck Street, up to Tweedside Road and up to the Garrison. That was traffic management so when people ask what was done by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) in our term we were busy providing activities and doing things to improve not only pedestrians ...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member is misleading the House and confusing himself. He is mixing up the Traffic Management study somehow with fly-overs. Fly-overs was an idea which the former Administration, the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) never completed, never really designed and that is it. Traffic management in The City of Bridgetown is something that is practiced and could be practiced more often but I recall even last there was a

simulation of emergency existing of Bridgetown by the traffic in Bridgetown so the Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Okay, Honourable Member, thank you. No point of order found. Thank you. Honourable Member please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the point I was making is this, for the Honourable Member. He was also a Minister of Transport and Works. He went to work there but he did not continue the programme of traffic management. What I was saying is that there was a concept of improving traffic within Bridgetown. For example, Mr. Speaker, we were able to provide for the very first time, sidewalks that were international in terms of persons having wheelchairs. We had to come and cut down all of those blocks of concrete in order to ensure that when the tourists come here ... I am not sure that the Ministry of Transport and Works -- you cannot do all of these things in a year now -- but the sidewalk programme that was improved by us, I am not sure that the Ministry of Transport and Works have continued with any degree of alacrity so that we definitely need to see Bridgetown with better sidewalks. I hear people talk about lighting, Mr. Speaker, but we need to have better sidewalks.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is an engineer by training, I hope, and he would know that there is a separation between the traffic from the pedestrians. We definitely need to look at improved traffic management and we are going to come back to this within Bridgetown and within the urban corridor especially if you want to improve the tourist industry. So many people still complain that Bridgetown, Barbados is a good society but we still need to come into the modern world where we do these small things that sometimes become irritants.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we must set the train for the next 50 years. We need to look at vesting lands not only in the Jewish Synagogue but also in the Anglican Church. For example, do you realise that when you come down here at the Cathedral, the Cathedral needs ...

House D 3 Seq 51 9.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: ...not only in the Jewish Synagogue but also in the Anglican Church. For example, you realise when you come down here that the walls at the St. Michael's and All Angels Cathedral must be taken down. The road is too narrow. I saw it, and I am sure that the Government must see it. There is a need to improve St. Michael Row. As Minister of Transport and Works we were able to develop and vest the land in the Central Bank. The land at Church Village is vested in the Central Bank of

Barbados but we need to also vest other lands in the Anglican Church so that we could open up that wall and provide for a one-way traffic there. There is a need to open up the area at Church Village. We were able to improve the St. Mary's Church in our time. There is a need now to look at the St. Michael and All Angels Cathedral. Our Cathedral is important and we have to look to improve that area for the next 50 years. The vesting of land in the churches, in individuals and in businesses is important.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development should tell you this, but do you know that a lot of the land on the roadside down Broad Street is still owned by the private sector. If you go down Broad Street at any one time and you stump your toe in front Cave Shepherd, do you sue the Government or do you sue Cave Shepherd. We have to look at that. We need to look at who owns the land in those areas. The Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development really needs to do the job of looking at what happens to a number of private ventures and who owns what because a lot of the businesses in Bridgetown still own the carriageway so who is responsible if... I heard that one Minister had a flat tyre but he did not say where he had a flat tyre, so who does he sue?

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Was it on a private venture, was it on a private property or was it on a Government highway? Who did the Honourable Member sued? Did he sued the Ministry of Transport and Works or did he sued the venture? He fixed the ... because it was on a private venture and a private property, so you have to look at what happens in this case. These are questions that need to be asked. You need to understand the dimension as to who owns what. Surely the Government looked at the vesting of these properties in certain areas.

Mr. Speaker, it was a former Speaker who asked that Parliament be extended to take in two or three other buildings outside of Parliament. I come in here today, Mr. Speaker, and could not get a park so you understand that there is a need to improve the facilities at Parliament not only for the civil service but down the road. We have to understand that the Government must continue to vest land in the private sector and in itself in order to borrow money because this vesting here will allow the Jewish community to improve that section out there, and we want to encourage that.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you, Sir. Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to wind up this debate and, of course, to

begin by thanking Honourable Members on both sides of the House for their contribution. I did not at first believed that we would have had such an extensive debate on this matter, but, of course, the extent of the debate underscored the importance to which Honourable Members accord to the wider issue in relation to this particular vesting and the reasons for the vesting.

Mr. Speaker, there were certainly several contributions made. I believe that by and large the contributions certainly from the other side spoke to a number of wish lists in terms of what they wanted to see occur within Bridgetown over many years. They related a number of issues, opinions and so on, I do not plan to deal with all of them tonight, but I accept that Honourable Members were seeking to put before the House their own version of where they believe Historic Bridgetown and Its Garrison should go and, of course, by and large they have all accepted and supported the Resolution, which means that they have given the green light and the approval to the policy of the Government in relation to the wider issue in terms of how we should proceed towards the development of Bridgetown.

Mr. Speaker, some matters were raised to which I think I should specifically respond. Of course, there was the assertion that the Cultural Industries Development Act, which was passed into law in 2011, did not go far enough in terms of empowering the beneficiaries who were named as persons to whom we would want to benefit. I believe a particular aspect raised was the issue of the Cultural Industries Development Fund. Yes, the legislation does provide for the establishment of such a fund. I have certainly made public comments in terms of the request that had been made already that we would have to look for the kind of capitalisation of that fund. We have had discussions with the Ministry of Finance. Of course, that speaks to certainly the kind of awareness that has actually been already created by the Cultural Industries Development Act. It is now left to the Government to find the resources to capitalise the Fund. Certainly, discussions have already taken place with the Ministry of Finance towards that. That does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that assistance have not been provided in other ways to artists certainly through the Cultural Action Fund (CAF), which is managed through the ministry and the National Cultural Foundation. Quite a bit of assistance have been provided as well through the Arts and Sport Fund. Of course, we recognise that there would be need certainly to propel this sector to capitalise the Cultural Industries Development Fund and to allow for the kind of critical activity to take place which is desirable within the building out of the Cultural Industries Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I want to certainly give the country and the Parliament the assurance that every effort will be made to ensuring that Fund is capitalised. Certainly, in recent

times we he had some very intense discussions in that regard.

The issue was raised also in relation to the Empire Theatre, and I will deal with it on two levels. Certainly, the Government has taken a giant step forward towards ensuring that the Empire Theatre could be redeveloped. I have said in this House that the Government would have received a number of submissions and those submissions would have gone through the process that would allow the Government to make a decision at the level of Cabinet to award a contract to the consortium companies of Preconco Limited and that was done. A lease was granted through the National Cultural Foundation to that group of companies for the development of the Empire Theatre. All of that was subject to the compliance with all regulatory rules including of course the Town Planning Act. I have said in another place by means of update that the development in that has been that the Town Planner acting in his own discretion under the legislation has denied the approval in relation to the Preconco consortium. I believe it had to do with the requirement of the Town Planning Department for the submission of a scoping study. Having gotten to that point, because while the Government of course can provide...

House D3 Sequence 52

9.32 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, while the Government, of course, can provide those contractual arrangements, it also is bound to adhere to the relevant rules and regulations governing approvals. What is required to be done, and I have certainly had discussions within the Ministry on this, is that we now have to, in view of this development, return to the Cabinet for further direction as to where do we go with the project, because of course the not granting of approval means that it now has to go back to Cabinet. Mr. Speaker, I can say to Parliament that there is at least one other interest in terms of the redevelopment of the Empire Theatre but the decision on those matters would have to go back to Cabinet for further discussion.

Mr. Speaker, the history of the Empire Theatre and the need to have it developed is well-known. I do not think that the Barbados Labour Party can speak with any real authority on the Empire Theatre and whether it should have been developed before or even now. What we have seen over the years is a lot of expressions of intent by the Barbados Labour Party in Government in relation to where it wanted to take the cultural industries and certainly replete in all of its publications have been a desire to move the country forward but not much has happened under them. Mr. Speaker, we have seen the need for this

Administration to take forward quite a lot of the mouthings and intent that have come from the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, it has come up in this debate as well, for example, when I review this issue of the need to restore the Empire Theatre that had to be taken up by us because nothing really happened at all under the Barbados Labour Party. Mr. Speaker, the 1994 Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party repeats an intention given earlier to transform the Empire Theatre into an artistic centre and so on and because they never achieved it in 1994, it was repeated in the 1999 Manifesto. It is really shameful for the Barbados Labour Party to then repeat the same thing in this Honourable House now, having not delivered it. Sir, they also talked about creating national art gallery as well, all of which is now really left to this Government to do.

Mr. Speaker, of course, when we have to reflect on the record of the Barbados Labour Party, the mantra always to forth that we should not go back to the past but it did for one point troubled me that persons listening to the debate and to the contributions from the Barbados Labour Party would be very concerned, given the actual substance of what was being said. Sir, on reflection I thought that perhaps the most enlightening contribution came from the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, who very cunningly reflected on some of the significant judgment of errors of the Barbados Labour Party, even when it had to do with how it grappled with the very essence of what should happen in relation to the development of cultural heritage and therefore some of the fundamental errors of judgement was reflected in his speech. Mr. Speaker, I felt that having heard the Honourable Member there was not much more for me to say in relation to his very concise condemnation of the practices of the Barbados Labour Party in Government. Mr. Speaker, I thought that was enlightening and I felt that that meant that my task was made a bit easier in relation to responding to some of the concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I think the most that can be said in relation to what has happened is that there is a recognition that the Government has certainly proceeded along a path of taking this sector very seriously. We never had, for example, a Cultural Industries Development Act. That was left in draft as a mere signal of intent by the Barbados Labour Party. While it remains at this stage still in its infancy stage, certainly significant strides have been made. We knew that in an environment where the fiscal challenges facing the country would not allow us immediately to capitalise the cultural industries fund but we sought to start the ball going and to build on that. Now, for example, we have not only the establishment of a Cultural Industries Development Act and the country, through a number of very incisive decisions made by the Authority, now have a better appreciation for the economic value of culture.

Mr. Speaker, already we have retained the services of a very knowledgeable consultant to start the important exercise of mapping the cultural industries. Sir, we have never had a mapping exercise, we have never had an exercise done to really pinpoint the true economic value of the cultural industries, and to find a way to link that into the statistical data of the country. Mr. Speaker, that mapping exercise Mr. Speaker, has started and an action plan resulting from that mapping exercise would be ready for the country in six months.

Mr. Speaker, we have also established in short order a very comprehensive database with a record number of over 300 persons who have signed up to that database. That database is already online and it provides an avenue where individual artists who have registered can themselves promote their businesses and services online. Mr. Speaker, that has never before happened in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, while philosophically there has always been a difference in terms of where the Democratic Labour Party Government in office sees its role in terms of empowering people -- because most of the things I have heard from the Barbados Labour Party is what is Government going to do -- I have never heard anything coming from them in this debate as to how can they create the environment to empower Barbadians. Mr. Speaker, that has always been their problem because the Barbados Labour Party in office has always felt that it had to somehow make people mendicant and dependent on them. Mr. Speaker, we have sought to create an environment in which Barbadians feel that they are empowered and that they have a role in their own development.

Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult for the Barbados Labour Party to understand that, but that is really where Barbados has to go and certainly the Cultural Industries Development Authority, the focus of the Board has been to enlighten artists and to make them aware of the embodiment of their own empowerment and to create avenues by which they themselves can assist in their own marketing. Mr. Speaker, we know that we will have to put in place a Cultural Industries Development Fund but in the meantime we are working with the resources that we do have and we have been having significant discussions with the sector.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the Barbados Labour Party would have repeated in their 1994 Manifesto and would have also placed in their 1999 Manifesto was their plan at a policy level to develop a film industry in Barbados, that has been the mantra of the Barbados Labour Party to develop a film industry in Barbados but that has never happened. Mr. Speaker, already within the context of the Cultural Industries Authority we have moved very quickly in terms of the audiovisual sector. In fact, we have sought to empower the Film and Video Association of Barbados which has already started to create

the kind of activities so that we can see the development of a film sector in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we have also sought and received assistance through the European Union to enhance the export capacity of cultural practitioners in the creative sectors and we have earmarked, in the first instance, the fashion industry and the visual arts industry. We have had about five experts in Barbados working with those sectors to determine proactively how we could enhance their goods and services with a view to breaking into the European market by utilising the Economic Partnership Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, these are concise interventions that are designed to grow these subsectors and to create the kind of foreign inflows of capital into Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I am very precise because many of the contributions from the other side have sought to belittle or to suggest that the Government is somehow lost and that we have not had a very focussed approach to the development of the cultural industries sector of Barbados.

9.51 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Seq. 54

Hon. S.A. LASHLEY: ... Many of the contributions from the other side have sought to belittle or to suggest that the Government is somehow lost and that we have not had a very focused approach to the development of the cultural industries sector in Barbados. My sole purpose in my wrap-up is to really tell Barbadians what has happened so that they will be in a position to make a judgement. I am very impressed usually with what they say. They are usually very descriptive in their intent, and I have heard a lot of descriptive language tonight coming from the Barbados Labour Party, but that is fine. We go a bit further than that and we seek to ensure that we can have purposeful projects and programmes. That is why, for example, Barbados very recently won the bid to host the CARIFESTA festival of 2017, the 13th edition, and Barbados will look forward to another effort of seeing how the cultural industries can be used as a vehicle for economic empowerment, not only within the context of Barbados but within the wider context of the Caribbean.

We are talking about empowering persons. The Cultural Industries Development Authority has had many exercises designed to pitch to businesses in relation to the potential of the creative sector, and one of those programmes has been able to mobilise about 47 persons who are already involved in the creative sector. Another pitch programme is scheduled for March of this year.

Seven of those 47 persons have already attracted financiers, six of them have won cash prizes during the programme, and several others were targeted in terms of how their businesses can be improved. Many of the contributions which I have heard spoke to how we are going to develop Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison. Some persons were at a loss as to what is being done. The project that is the subject of this Resolution is only but one of those. I heard the Member for the City lamenting, of course, the fact that people themselves are not being consulted or not being engaged in relation to projects of this kind. I want to give a bit of background to that, because I can say to the Honourable Member for the City and to the House in particular that one of the key documents in relation to planning out the design of the benefits of the World Heritage designation is a document called the Management Plan. Before that Management Plan was even put out there, and maybe before the Member became a Member of Parliament, we did several consultations in relation to getting persons who live in the City to be sensitised as to the economic opportunities of the World Heritage designation. In fact, the Ministry of Tourism as well as the Ministry of Culture have trained a number of tour guides who are currently active in terms of the World Heritage site. In fact, they are very active in terms of ensuring that persons are able to tour the various aspects of the site, and some of those persons are in fact from the St. Michael area and some are from the City. We have also had significant engagement with the business community of the City. In fact, we had a consultation in which the Right Honourable Prime Minister would have addressed the owners of property in the City, and we spent quite a lot of time sensitising them as to the provisions under the Cultural Industries Development Act and also how they can go about accessing those incentives with a view to improving their properties.

Our Members may not be aware but many of the properties in the City, a number of which have gone into a state of disrepair, are privately owned but they are of historic importance. That is why we speak to the whole question of not only saying that the Government should go and do projects here and there, but the Government by legislation has created the environment by which owners of properties can access the incentives and can thereby improve their properties, knowing full well that the kind of expenditures which they would have to outlay would be significantly reduced by the incentives they would get under the legislation. We have to give credit. We have businesses such as Diamonds International, which I mentioned. Diamonds International has extended significantly in terms of the improvement of its stores. They have partnered with the Government in relation to the improvement of the alleys, the first of which was Flower Alley. There is a renaissance project which has been launched in the City and which will see the transformation of all the alleys in the City, and we have started with

Flower Alley. We have had the painters transform the walls and we now have to get the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW) to do the drainage. All of these things, of course, will take time but we have started it.

Aside.

Hon. S.A. LASHLEY: We have started that as well. We have also had the inference that the only thing which has happened in the City are projects done by the Barbados Labour Party Government. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas refer to the Boardwalk as one of the projects which they have done, but the Boardwalk was recently repaired. In fact, it is still being repaired and during the whole Christmas period you could see the entire area walk cordoned off, and the work is ongoing in relation to the improvement of the Boardwalk. Do not give the public the impression that you would have developed the Boardwalk and nothing happened or, in other words, that this Government has done nothing to improve anything. That is totally inaccurate.

The other project which has been mentioned was this Parliament. This particular Parliament is a significant Heritage Site. I agree and I would give way to the persons who spoke and recognised that the Barbados Labour Party in Government would have been instrumental in terms of the redevelopment of this Parliament, but you cannot end there. You cannot stop there; you have to say that the work has been continued under this Government. You have to say that and acknowledge it, because there has been significant work done in terms of the preservation of this historic property here, and it has also happened under the Democratic Labour Party Administration. We have had the Senate ante-room refurbished. We have had the widening of the corridors of Parliament. We have had the Members' Room refurbished, and of course the Clock Tower which was damaged by bad weather was reinstated and repaired. We have also had work done in the Committee Room as well. The work of ensuring that this World Heritage Site, this Parliament, can continue to be refurbished, has also been done.

I did think that this Debate ought to have been as apolitical as possible, because the nature of the subject matter did not lend itself to a partisan Debate. It lent itself to a focus on how we could put our ideas together to see in what other ways we could transform the landscape of our World Heritage property, taking into account what is before the House in terms of this project which I said was valued at over \$14 million and has been truly transformative of Bridgetown. The issue is this: You will never be able to approach the redevelopment of the City in one fell swoop. It has to be a continuous effort.

9.49 p.m.

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

House D 3 Seq 55 9.49 p.m.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: ... of The City in one fell swoop. It has to be a continuous effort. This project, when we combine it with other future projects, will create the kind of economic activity that will give the kind of attention to some of the key projects that were mentioned, for example, by the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown. It has to be done that way because of the nature of how these things go. The significant amount of resources that is require to deal with many years of neglect of your properties in The City, that is why, for example, the Minister of Transport and Works have had to go to the River Terminal and start a project to rescue what was really left to decay.

When Members of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) stand up in the House and talk about their interest in the poor man ... I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East talking about, it is not enough to only talk about a project of this kind but how can it drill down to the poor man? At the River Bus Terminal you have a place that is usually frequented by the poor persons of Barbados, you could say that. You have had it left to really decay, there was total neglect of this important part of The City. They were saying that reporting average growth in the economy of about 3.5 per cent over the 10 years in office but do you know what has happened? I have done the analysis myself, not being an economist. You have had, on average, reported by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) over the last 10 years of their Administration 3.5 per cent of economic growth but then we came to office and we have had to rattle our brains with some significant areas of infrastructure neglect in Barbados.

I felt that most of the contributions were of a platform nature. They were not really suitable to the House. Most of the contributions coming from the Other Side were of a platform nature and it disappointed me. I thought we missed the essence of how this Honourable Chamber should be used but I could not resist it. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North is having to spend about \$5 million in bringing the River Bus Terminal to a state that is acceptable for use by the public through the Urban Renewal Programme, yet still, of course, the Government is doing nothing. He is spending \$5 million to show that there is a caring Government in office. We have also had, I believe, a statement made about the Antiquities and Relicts Bill. That Bill, we know the history of it, it is designed to protect the cultural heritage of Barbados. The Antiquities and Relicts Bill is designed to protect the cultural heritage of Barbados but, of course, once we brought it to the house it was criticised and the criticism went viral into the public domain, into the Senate and we took the decision to review the legislation. It is still being looked at by the Office of the

Chief Parliamentary Counsel and we expect to bring it back to the House. We have made some changes to it, we have had some input from the various interest groups including the Barbados National Trust and various persons and we will be bringing it back to the House as soon as we can have the amendments made to the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to detain the House much longer. I believe that we have had a full debate on the matters. Certainly the spin off benefits for this project will mean increase employment. We have seen, of course, the deployment of architects, we have had several Barbadians employed in the project, artisans have found work, vendors will find spaces in the cubicles that are made available and, of course, I believe that this will be another impetus towards spurring further development in The City.

We have seen, as a result of the policies of this Government, a response from the private sector. We have seen Cave Sherperd, for example, spending in excess of \$6 million to refurbish its stores and the sidewalks and they have to be commended for that. All is not lost in The City. We are going to rebuild The City bit-by-bit and through the policies that we have enunciated and through, of course, the allocation of resources, and I did refer to a very important project through the IDB that we would ensuring that The City can be revitalised and we will work closely with our partners in that respect.

Mr. Speaker, it was not the intention of my wrap up to deal with every single aspect presented. I want to thank Honourable Members for their various contributions. I want to, again, signal that we are focussed on ensuring that all of the relevant areas pertaining to the development of the built heritage of Barbados are given focus, therefore with those remarks I move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the House.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, with that we have come to the end of Government Business for the day and I beg to move that the Sitting be adjourned until Tuesday, 14th February, 2017 at 10 o'clock in the morning.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is reminding us that it will be Valentine's Day so she will be accepting red roses from any of those and I will make sure,

Mr. Speaker, and bring my red rose for my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, 14th February, 2017 at 10 o'clock a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

House D 3 Seq 55 9.59 p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE.....	1
Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, 2.	

PAPERS

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS.....	2
--------------------------	---

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Hon. R.D. JONES.....	2
----------------------	---

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

COMMITTEE

Mr. J. D. PAUL.....	15
Hon. D. O'N. Inniss.	

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH

SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING
AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, THE
VESTING IN THE BARBADOS JEWISH
COMMUNITY INC. OF THE PARCEL OF
LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN,
SITUATE AT PINFOLD STREET AND
MAGAZINE LANE IN THE PARISH OF
ST. MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND TO
FACILITATE THE COMPLETION OF
THE SYNAGOGUE RESTORATION
PROJECT

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY.....	16
-------------------------	----

RESUMPTION

Hon. S. A. Lashley, 19, 21, 22; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman,
23, 29, 30, 31; Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, 23, 27, 28, 31, 35,
36; Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic, 31; Hon. C. P. Sinckler, 33, 35,
36, 47; Hon. C. P. Sinkler, 37, 38, 47; Miss C. Y. Forde,
37, 38, 50, 52, 53, 54; Hon. R.D. Jones, 38, 39, 40; Hon.
J. D. E. Boyce, 41, 42, 43, 44; Mr. K. D. Symmonds, 44,
45, 48, 49, 50; Hon. S. D. Blackett, 55, 56, 57; Mr. E. G.
Hinkson, 57.

RESUMPTION

Mr. E. G. Hinkson, 58, 59, 60, 61; Mr. T. A. Prescod, 61,
62, 63, 64; Mr. G. A. Clarke, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68; Hon. J.
D. E. Boyce, 67; Hon. S. A. Lashley, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72;
Hon. M. A. Lashley, 72.

SUSPENSIONS.....	19, 57.
------------------	---------

ADJOURNMENT.....	72
------------------	----

Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, 72; Hon. M. A. Lashley, 73.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BLACKETT, Hon. S. D. (St. Michael Central)

BOSTIC, Lt. Col. J. D.

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

BRADSHAW, Miss S. J. O. (St. Michael South East)

BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. D. (St. Philip South)

CLARKE, Mr. G. A. (St. George North)

FORDE, Miss C. Y. (St. Thomas)

HINKSON, Mr. E. G. (St. James North)

INNISS, Hon. D. O'N. (St. James 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)

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

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

PRESCOD, Mr. T. A. (St. Michael East)

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

SINKLER, Hon. C. P.

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. 18, Mr. K. D. Symmonds, take-slip H: D3 (36), 6.02 p.m.. Mr. Symmonds's sentence beginning 'What is relevant is the fact that the process of transforming the lives of the people of the City' appears before the take-slip and again after it. The second copy (about 60 words) has been left out. Please confirm.

Q3. Order No. 18, Mr. E. G. Hinkson, take-slip House D3 Sequence 44, 8.12 p.m.. Mr. Speaker's caution about 'tedious repetition of previous speeches' appears twice, either side of the take-slip. The first, shorter copy (about 35 words) has been left out. Please confirm.

Q4. Order No. 18, Mr. T. A. Prescod, take-slip H:No.D3 (46), 8.31 p.m.. The sentence 'The Minister spoke extensively and the Caribbean people were very impressed at that event' appears before the take-slip and again at the start of the next take. The first copy (about 15 words) has been left out. Please confirm.

Q5. Order No. 18, take-slip boundaries. At many other take-slips the last sentence of one take is typed again, in slightly different words, at the start of the next (for example in the speeches of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, Mr. K. D. Symmonds, Miss C. Y. Forde, Hon. S. D. Blackett, Mr. G. A. Clarke and Hon. S. A. Lashley). Where the repeated words share a paragraph with new text they are printed as in the source.

Q6. Order No. 15, Committee. Hon. D. O'N. Inniss moves that 'Clause 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Stand Part', and the procedural sentence records 'Clauses 1 -- 8 inclusive were called and passed'. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Orders Nos. 15 and 18, headings. 'ORDER No. 15 -- NOTARIES PUBLIC BILL 2017' and 'ORDER No. 18' are typed as ordinary paragraphs, and some take-slip details ('House D 3 Seq 42 6.47 p.m.', 'Seq. 37', a stray '') appear as paragraphs. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Speech labels. The Member for St. Michael North West is labelled both 'Hon. C. P. SINCKLER' and 'Hon. C. P. SINKLER'. Printed as in the source.

Q9. Minutes. Mr. Speaker's confirmation of the Minutes is run into Hon. A. D. Brathwaite's seconding ('I beg to second that, Sir. Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections...'). Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 7th February, 2017, with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Mark Harewood. The Minutes of 17th and 24th January, 2017 were confirmed, and Hon. D. O'N. Inniss laid the National Policy Framework for the Development of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector in Barbados.

In a Ministerial Statement, Hon. R. D. Jones, the Member for Christ Church East Central, reported that the Combermere School at Waterford, on its site since 1958, had reopened after some weeks of closure. He traced the environmental problems from natural gas odours reported in May 2014, pipeline leaks resolved by the National Petroleum Corporation, and ventilation problems in the Administration Section, through to December 2016; listed further works including a larger septic tank, toilets, drainage and an improved cafeteria; noted the work of consultant environmental engineer Mr. Grenville Phillips Junior from March 2016; and said that on 26th January, 2017 hand towels and pages of children's books had been found blocking drainage pipes, in what appeared to be a deliberate attempt at sabotage.

After Standing Orders were suspended, Mr. Inniss, the Member for St. James South, moved the second reading of the Notaries Public Bill, 2017, which increases the number of public officers who may act as notaries public ex officio, in the interest of business efficiency; Madam Deputy Speaker took the Chair during his speech. Mr. D. D. Marshall, the Member for St. Joseph, agreed that the Bill was timely but argued that it did not go far enough; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman asked why he had not acted as Attorney-General; and Hon. A. D. Brathwaite said that the change arose from complaints from the international business sector, and spoke of apostilles under the Hague Convention. After Mr. Inniss replied, drawing a point of order from Mr. Marshall, the Bill passed all stages, Mr. J. D. Paul in the Chair in Committee, and was cited as the Notaries Public Act, 2017.

Hon. S. A. Lashley moved the Resolution under section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, to vest land at Pinfold Street and Magazine Lane,

St. Michael in the Barbados Jewish Community Inc. to complete the Synagogue Restoration Project, describing its cultural importance and the restoration of the old Fire Brigade Station, built around 1858. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, the Member for St. Michael South East, supported it for the Barbados Labour Party but was twice warned by Mr. Speaker on relevance. Mr. Kellman supported it, with exchanges and points of order with Miss Bradshaw. Lt. Col. J. D. Bostic, the Member for the City of Bridgetown, noted that the Synagogue had been designated in 2011 within the World Heritage Site of Historic Bridgetown and its Garrison.

Hon. C. P. Sinckler disputed the Opposition's claims on concessions for cultural practitioners, and Miss Bradshaw and Miss C. Y. Forde rose on several points of order. Mr. Jones spoke of the history of the Jewish community, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce of homes for the national art collection, and Mr. K. D. Symmonds of a housing grant programme in the City under which, he said, \$47 million of

\$60 million had been forfeited. Miss Forde spoke of heritage and tourism and was reminded by Madam Deputy Speaker to address the Resolution. Hon. S. D. Blackett spoke of the Empire Theatre, closed in the 1970s, and certain of his remarks were ordered expunged. The Sitting was suspended for dinner until 8.00 p.m.

On resumption, Mr. E. G. Hinkson was cautioned by Mr. Speaker on relevance and repetition while speaking of the Public Library and Queen's Park; Mr. T. A. Prescod spoke of Marcus Garvey, reparations and the preservation of historic sites; and Mr. G. A. Clarke spoke of the history of Bridgetown and the Bridgetown Road Improvement Project, Mr. Boyce's point of order being ruled no point of order. Mr. Lashley replied, defending the Cultural Industries Development Act of 2011 and the Government's approach to the redevelopment of the City, and the Resolution passed. On the motion of Mr. Boyce, seconded by Hon. M. A. Lashley, the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 14th February, 2017 at 10.00 a.m.