
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2013 – 2018

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 28, 2017.

PRESENT

His Honour MICHAEL A. CARRINGTON, B.A., LL.B. (Speaker) Her Honour Mrs. M-J. MARA THOMPSON, M.Sc. (Ph.Ed.) B.A.(Deputy Speaker) Mr. GEORGE W. PAYNE, Q. C.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P.

Mr. R. St.C TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.)

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

Miss CYNTHIA Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P.

Hon. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. Ed.,

J.P., (Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation)

Mr. DALE D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B (Hons.), L.E.C.

Hon. MICHAEL A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.)

(Minister of Transport and Works)

Hon. RICHARD L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.

(Minister of Tourism and International Transport)

Rt. Hon. F. J. STUART, Q.C., B.A., LL.M. (Prime Minister, Minister of National Security, The Public Service and Urban Development)

Hon. JOHN D. E. BOYCE, B.C.H., MRAC, M.Sc., C. Eng.

(Minister of Transport and Works) (Leader of Government Business)

Hon. STEVEN D. BLACKETT

(Minister of the Social Care, Constituency Empowerment, and Community Development)

Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, B.Sc.

(Chairman of Committees)

Dr. the Hon. DENIS S. LOWE, Ed.D., M.Ed., B.A., Dip. Theology

(Minister of Environment and Drainage)

Mr. ADRIEL D. BRATHWAITE, LL.B. (Hons.)

(Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs.)

Hon. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C.

(Minister of Culture, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Hon. DONVILLE O'N. INNISS, Dip., B.Sc., M.B.A.

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

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER, B.A., M.Sc.

(Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Mr. TREVOR PRESCOD, B.A.

Mr. KERRIE D. SYMMONDS, B. A., LL.B.

Lt. Col. JEFFREY D. BOSTIC, M.V.O., B.A. (Hons.)

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

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

Miss SANTIA J. O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons.)

Prayers were taken by Reverend Mark Harewood.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this House is now in Session.

MINUTES

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have with me the Minutes of Tuesday, February 28, 2017.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Minutes were circulated, and subject to any observations or corrections, I beg to move that these Minutes be confirmed.

Hon. D.O'N. INNISS: I beg to second that, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let me draw to your attention Page 2 of the Minutes, at the bottom. The two times are just inverted, 5:45 and 6:30. With your permission, I will have those amended. If there are any

other corrections or observations, then let these Minutes stand confirmed.

PAPERS

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

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following on the behalf of the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs:

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (The Refresh Milk Art Platform Incorporated) Order, 2017;
2. Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Accountant-General for the financial year 2015-2016.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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 rest of this day's Sitting.

Hon. D.O'N. INNISS: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 14

To move that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of money for the service of the Island.

On the motion of Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE, seconded by Hon. D.O'N. INNISS, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply on the Bill. Mr. J. D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

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

Resolution to grant the sum of \$50 MILLION from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 2016-2017 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 2, 2016-2017, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

HEAD 27

\$50 MILLION

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Tourism and International Transport.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to move this Supplementary in the amount of \$50 million. This exercise is somewhat of a housekeeping matter, that towards the end of November, 2015, the House would have considered a loan from the CAF in the sum of US\$25 million for the completion of Berth 5 in the Bridgetown Port and since Government has decided that that \$50 million in the Port would be seen as an equity injection into the Barbados Port Inc., we have to do this exercise where central Government transfers the money over to the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., so that it is a supplementary exercise with the loans having been guaranteed during a previous debate. Therefore this exercise, as the Resolution states, is for the sum of BD\$50 million cost associated with Berth 5 to be transferred over to the Ministry of Tourism under Head 27.

Mr. Chairman, in the Explanatory Note the Resolution also speaks about bridging that was provided by the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.

11.34 a.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Seq. 2

Hon. R.L. SEALY: ... The Resolution also in its explanatory notes mentions the bridging, which was provided by Barbados Tourism Investment (BTI) Incorporated, so \$12 million were also put back into BTI. Obviously, again, that is the explanation by way of the \$50 million injection into Barbados Port Incorporated. Mr. Chairman, the issue of the completion of Berth 5 naturally gives us an opportunity to place this project in the appropriate context, and place it in a wider strategic vision of how we see port operations. I speak across-the-board in terms of cargo operations and cruise operations; and in respect of cargo I refer to both cargo which is destined for Barbados as well as the trans-shipment of cargo via the Bridgetown Port to other locations. It is a time for us to reflect on the key strategic initiatives that are being undertaken by the Bridgetown Port. The actual project, Berth 5, which is the end of the Container Quay, was started actually around 2002-2003, I think. Berth 5 was started but it was not completed, so we had another 75 metres which we had to construct, and indeed that is what this particular project was about: the completion of Berth 5.

The work started in March 2015 and was completed in October 2015. The Berth was commissioned in April of

2016. The work was done by a consortium of local contractors: C.O. Williams Construction, Morenco Limited and Preconco Limited. The work involving the manufacturing of the piles and the slabs and beams, et cetera, were done by Preconco. The piling and the stone-armouring revetments and installation of the crane rails were done by Morenco, and of course the concrete paving works were done by C.O. Williams Construction Limited. A local team of contractors did this work, and dare I say they did an excellent job. That is a credit to Barbadian enterprise, and it is not surprising that all three of those entities actually do work similar in nature outside of Barbados, which is good to hear, earning much desired foreign exchange. I want to commend all of the principals of those companies, and indeed their staff, for doing an excellent job and for delivering the project on time. As a matter of fact, the overall project was more than \$50 million. It was about \$64 million. That might seem like a lot of money, but when you are talking about port infrastructure, it is a highly capital-intensive exercise. You are not talking about work which can be done on the cheap, and therefore you have to be prepared to invest.

I spoke about the BTI providing some bridging. ANSAMcAl also provided bridging as well. However, as I mentioned already, the long-term financing came from CAF via the Government of Barbados again. Obviously, there were challenges, as is the case with all construction projects. I mentioned the capital-intensive nature of port infrastructural work. It is also inherently challenging because it is marine construction. What you do from terra firma when you are doing a building you would probably be doing from a barge over water in the case of marine construction. Nevertheless it was able, as I said, to be completed in time. We were under some serious pressure because we had to accommodate during the last cruise season the Britannia and the Mein Schiff 3, I believe it was. We are up to the Mein Schiff 4 now. These are two cruise vessels being home-ported at the same time, carrying 7 000 passengers, and had we not completed Berth 5 we would have had to have kissed one of those vessels goodbye. Unfortunately, the way the cruise industry works, when you say goodbye that is it. You do not get a second bite at the cherry in a hurry. We realised that we had to meet that tight timeline because of the importance of home-porting. It was not only about completing the project in five months for those home-porters, but as we continued to develop ourselves as a home-port destination, it was important that we had the complete Berth 5 in place.

Again, I am happy to say that not only was there the Britannia and the Mein Schiff coming and home-porting here for all of last season, but they have returned this season and are scheduled to continue making calls going into the future. That is precisely the whole exercise in making sure that we can continue to have home-porting going forward into the future. To a large extent, I would

therefore say that the additional berth has contributed to significant growth in, yes, our cruise numbers which last season was at 757 000. It has moved from 723 000 in 2008-2009 to 757 000. I think the more important statistic is contained within those numbers, and that is of course the growth in home-porting. In 2009-2010 we had 120 000 home-porters. We have in excess of 200 000 home-porters this year, and that is important for a couple of reasons, Mr. Chairman.

There is an ongoing debate about the question of cruise versus long-stay and whether or not it is worth our efforts sometimes in cruise, because of the economic footprint which they leave compared to long-stay tourists. The truth is that it is a segment of the tourism sector that is highly desirable and rapidly growing, so we cannot ignore it. The other reality is that with cruise also, while it may not have the macro-economic impact of long-stay, there are certain constituencies within cruise which the long-stay tourism product would not address. The obvious one would be providers of transportation. The taxis which you see lined up on a cruise day in front of Trevor's Way, for example, there is no way the hotel sector could find work for all of them. That is a sector which relies heavily on cruise. In terms of attractions, many of them rely on cruise for more than half of their business; and of course there is the duty-free shopping subsector. Those are just but three examples of why, even though the macro-economic impact is not great, cruise is still an essential part of our tourism offerings and the economic impact towards certain groupings is so significant that we have to continue to develop our numbers. As I said, I think the completion of Berth 5 would have contributed to our growth in cruise numbers, but more particularly -- and this gets right back to the fundamental point I was just making -- our growth in home-porters. The fact that we are now seeing more home-porting than we have ever seen in Barbados is an extremely good thing. The economic impact of a home-porter is much greater because the vessel has to be provisioned in Barbados, so naturally our suppliers benefit. There are opportunities for producers as well, and those who may be providing goods and services; a whole slew of people who would benefit because the cruise starts here and the cruise finishes here, Mr. Chairman.

10.40 a.m.

In fact, people who you may be very familiar with, our farmers, manufacturers and importers all have a chance to benefit from a home-porter. You would not benefit from a vessel that is just staying here during the day. It comes in at 8:00 o'clock the morning and sails out at 4:00 o'clock, not that we do not want that business, but we want more homeporting. I want to submit, Mr. Chairman, that the real value of this investment -- we are going to get to the taxis as well do not worry -- in Berth 5 when we are speaking about the cruise element is because it allows us to

homeport more vessels because we get a greater level of impact during the course of a season and that is exactly what we would like to see develop more. The other thing about homeporting is the opportunity for cruise and stays as well. You would find, for example, if there is a programme with TWI that is specifically aimed at that. You can cruise and you can still stay here at a hotel so a single cruise passenger also getting five, six or seven bed nights out of them as well, more impact on the economy, leaving more money again in Barbados. Greater earnings of foreign exchange.

I think I do not need to belabour the point that while we are open for business and any cruise ship that wants to sail into Barbados is welcome to sail in, we are placing greater levels of emphasis on getting home-porters. Again, we will continue to operate on that basis. The other thing at Berth 5 that has to be looked at is the growing needs for cargo. We, of course are a consuming country. The reality is, when the Port was built in the 1950s it was built thinking about exporting. That entire facility, by and large, the warehouse and the conveyor was about exporting sugar. Things have changed and by and large, as a consuming country, the Port has been adjusted over the years to suit those needs. Introduction, of course, to containerised cargo and we would have seen the construction of the container key in the container part right adjacent to the same area which we are talking about and that reflects the changing needs of Barbados but on the subject of cargo, I think that we have to accept that there is a need to increase capacity as well. The levels of economic activity has increased and will continue to increase. If you look at your needs, not only of your local population, but considering that we also have a tourism product that is expanding, the numbers are growing, rooms are under construction and more rooms are supposed to start construction so we are on a growth path where tourism is concern and tourism itself require a level of importation. We try to minimise it and use as much local produce as we can but the reality is, if you are going to have rooms under construction and rooms to be constructed and numbers growing, we also need to be able to import more as well. We need to have capacity as well at that end so the physical capacity so that we can continue to accommodate larger cargo vessels. In that regard, we also have invested in an addition crane, a gantry crane and new equipment, new forklifts and new straddle carriers. We have to invest, as I said, this business of running a port is capital intensive and this equipment, of course, is specialised equipment so we are moving in that direction. The new gantry crane, I might add, is Panamax compliant crane which can handle more that is why it is so much larger than the older one, which is of the 1980s vintage. We have that crane in place and, of course, the appropriate straddle carriers and forklifts that can handle that. I also believe -- and this is a reality -- just to illustrate the point that I was making earlier, 20 feet equivalent units (TEUs) in 2012/2013 we had 71 000 TEUs coming into Barbados

and that has climbed to 90 000 in 2015/2016 and it will continue to climb on the basis of what I was saying earlier in terms of increased economic activity on the island. Transshipment is something that we have been focussing on extensively as well. I think that building out our potential as a transshipment hub fits in totally with the concept of building a services based economy. The work that we are doing in developing financial service but moving that out to professional services, transportation services, logistics in general and going in that direction but you need to have the facility again to move in that direction. By having Berth 5 and by the way Berth 6 and Berth 7, eventually I will get to that but we need to think in terms of where we are growing out the economy but the transshipment activity as well in the last eight years has moved from 95 000 tonnes in 2008/2009 to 164 000 tonnes in 2015/2016. We have seen that in excess of 50 per cent increase, Mr. Chairman, which I think is good news for a port that has never really focussed extensively on transshipment opportunities but I think if you look at what is happening in the region, we never had transshipment at that level before but now that we are effectively going after it in a serious way. We can benefit from the expansion of the Panama Canal, for example, and the increase levels of activity in the region. Barbados is also located in a place that can work to its advantage both for calls coming across the Atlantic and even vessels going down South so the transshipment element is something that we can work on and that we must work on going forward. Again, Berth 5 allows us to look at that as well and the see the potential that we can realise from that element.

Mr. Speaker, I should also mention that in the course of doing the completion of Berth 5 we were able, and as contained within the \$64 million budget I spoke to earlier, we were able to do 30 births in the Shallow Draft for yachts and the day-trippers as well. This facilitates, of course, the yachting tourism sector which has been growing but also provides some much needed berthing space for the pleasure crafts and so on, the day-trippers and so forth. It is a rapidly growing element of our tourism offering. It is a fact that many visitors enjoy swimming with the turtles or just simply basking on one of these vessels and the demand is there. I can tell you that we get applications for the duty free concessions at International Transport almost on a month basis to the point where I have even told the officers there that they need to engage with the officials at the Ministry of Environment to make sure that we do not have too many of those vessels and that we start to kill the goose that is laying the golden egg. We have to regulate that whole activity because there are just so many of them. If you look into Carlisle Bay or Payne's Bay some times and you will see them piling up on one another and that is something that needs to be managed, but it is still good to see that there is something that is so attractive to our visitors that we have on offer.

House D 5 Seq 3

The 30 berths in the Shallow Draught is in addition to the 30 berths of the Inner Basin of the Careenage as well so even though we do not have a marina yet, the Pierhead Project is still en train, we at least have 60 berths that we did not have before but we can now, in essence, go after yachting tourism and yachting events as well. This year, for example, we are going to be hosting the Okay Dinghy and the Finn World Masters Championships. I think in the case of the Okay Dinghy it is the 55th time that event is occurring. Having world class yachting events and promoting the destination as a yachting destination is something that I think is very good, a new axis of tourism, and one that we are happy to see that in making a capital investment you want to make sure it is something that has legs so it is not only for an event or a year but for something going forward and therefore that is the way we see it.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is certainly fair to say that the investment in the new berth has already started to show tangible benefits in our cruise, in our homeporting, in our cargo and in our transshipment. Both sectors have shown to growth. This is actual real growth. These are not projections. I am not predicting or anticipating or hoping. We have seen the increases and that is why I am so comfortable in saying that this is indeed a worthwhile investment by the Government and people of Barbados.

These are not times where debt is anything you should engage in lightly, so when central Government takes \$50 million and puts it into Barbados Port Inc. we have to be satisfied that there are returns, and I am satisfied, and the arithmetic tells me, that the returns are there for Barbados.

The other thing that I did not really touched on in the beginning by way of the introductory elements, the explanatory part of my speech, was that the \$50 million investment also strengthens the balance sheet of Barbados Port Inc. and allows it therefor to do some additional things. I believe the paid up capital before was like \$100 000, something very negligible, so we have strengthened the balance sheet of Barbados Port Inc. in this regard and done it for a worthwhile cause.

In essence, Barbados Port Inc. can now build out its own capacity and we have to look in that direction. We all know that we want to move towards having a separate a separate cargo facility and dare I say separate cruise facilities because there certainly has been the talk about berthing beyond the Bridgetown Port for some time. The most significant one of recent vintage would have been the Sugar Point at Trevor's Way. That is of course a very extensive arrangement that not only provides for berths, I think two finger piers, three ultimately, but an extensive

area for upland development and so on. That project is obviously being looked at carefully in terms of the financial modelling and the financing options. It is one that has to be engaged in carefully and it continues to receive the attention between the proponent of the project and of course the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport, so that of course is the one that we have been focussing on lately. It has not been shelved. It is just that we are looking at the various finance options and the financial models.

I mentioned that there was interest shown in berthing possibly in Speightstown. There is a jetty in Speightstown. The Speightstown Jetty is replete with problems, we know that, but the idea or the concept of berthing, whether the vessels are moored out to sea and cruisers are tendered in, is something that has been actively considered and it is something that I certainly do support in terms of cruise as a subsector being taken to other parts of Barbados if that is at all feasible.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has three minutes.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: That is where we are on that, Mr. Chairman.

I should also mention as well that with the strengthening of the balance sheet of Barbados Port Inc., I mentioned Berth 6 and possibly even berth 7 in terms of extending the berthing capacity out in a manner that makes sense. If you see that you have the transshipment business or if you see you have the homeporting business you can look at that as well. We are also looking very carefully at our options where that is concerned because it is clear that even when you move cruise out from in the main Deep Water Harbour you are going to still need to have berthing capacity to have your transshipment centre set up. There is actually in the Port's Master Plan a call for a central examination facility as well attached to this new berthing, so we can also modernise that whole experience of dealing with cargo.

Mr. Chairman, I am sure you have had the experience of going to get a barrel from in the Port and having to get a pass and go down and driving past straddled carriers and swing through a forklift and then going into a dusty cargo shed and that type of thing, but we have gone past that now. We need to have a modern facility, a little more user-friendly and that type of thing. Mr. Chairman, that sort of facility will be on the cards as well as we expand out the Master Plan for cargo activity and transshipment activity as well, so that is where we are with respect to the plans going forward.

Mr. Chairman, I therefore am quite comfortable, based on where cruise is and where cargo is, in recommending to the House and that Head 27 stand part.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. R. St.C. TOPPIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not believe that I am going to be that long, but I listened to the Minister as he really pulled a lot of what was contained in various newspaper articles and so on in relation to the happenings of the Barbados Port Authority, but what we have before us today really is yet another example of the raw and vulgar consolidation of wealth into the hands of a few in this country that has been going on under this Administration.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, to imply vulgarity... Please withdraw the remark.

Mr. R. St.C. TOPPIN: Mr. Chairman, instruct me as to what I have to withdraw because I am saying that there is a raw and vulgar consolidation of wealth in the hands of a few that is going on under this Administration, and I will demonstrate that in the course of my presentation because what we have today in this transaction we see yet again here the same face, the same name that is tagging this Administration wherever it goes.

A contract in this matter was awarded to a Berth Five Limited, that is the only person awarded a contract in this transaction. Whatever sub-contractor went on may have gone on, and incidentally I did not hear the names of any small contractors in the names called in any event, this was awarded to a Berth Five Limited with the same face and the same name that is tagging this Government wherever it goes.

House D5 Sequence 4

Mr. Chairman, Barbadians have to stand up and take note. Say enough is enough and more particularly ask what is wrong with everybody else. Why is this same face and this particular name, why is this person *primus inter pares* in relation to everybody else. We have the shocking award in this matter, a shocking scenario, where an entire Berth 5 project for \$50 million was awarded to a company, Berth 5 Limited, without the facilitation of which not one bid was invited. There was no tendering process. In fact, there was an unsolicited proposal submitted by Berth 5 Limited for \$50 million, a totally unsolicited proposal by Berth Five Limited which was accepted by the Barbados Port Authority without any facilitation of any other bids whatsoever, none. What is worse, Mr. Chairman, is, the company, Berth 5 Limited, has no prior experience at all in

the constructions of berth anywhere, to the best of my knowledge, yet, was awarded a \$50 million contract to build a new cargo berth with no attempt to find out if the project could have been carried out more cost effectively or by anyone who at source had more expertise in the particular area.

Asides.

Mr. R.C. TOPPPIN: I am getting to the sixty four. Do not worry.

Where is the transparency in all of this, Mr. Chairman? In addition, even perhaps more amazingly, as the project was being executed, a different project altogether was embarked upon. This time, Mr. Chairman, the construction of a yacht facility. A different project all together. Again, this different project was added onto the same contractor without any invitation of any tenders at all, or any other bid and awarded to the same face and the same name that is tagging this Government wherever it goes. Sir, the sum involved this time is \$14 million, the \$64 million that the Minister is speaking about. I said I was going to get to the \$64 million. Do not panic. This project again added on without the solicitation of any bid and awarded to the same man. What, Mr. Chairman, is wrong with everybody else? What is wrong with everybody else and where is the transparency?

Mr. Chairman, that is not all. As the new cargo berth was being constructed, as was to be expected, running parallel with the project, that Berth 5 Project was in need for new equipment, that the Minister spoke about, new saddle carriers, crane and other heavy duty and cargo handling equipment, at a cost of \$7 million dollars. Now I accept that in those circumstances, the swift life nature of the equipment, you would not resort to the bidding process. I even accept that in the course of the acquisition of that equipment the Port Authority will have an agent to do that. Sir, would you believe who the agent was again in acquiring this \$7 million? The same man, the same name, the same face, featuring prominently in acting on behalf of the Port Authority in securing this additional equipment, Sir, to run in parallel with the Berth 5 Project.

Sir, the same man who got the construction of the Berth 5 facility without having to engage in the competitive bidding process, who got the construction of the yacht facility without going through any bidding process was also the man playing the key role in the acquisition of this equipment that the Minister mentioned for several million dollars. Once again, Mr. Chairman, I ask what is wrong with everybody else?

Sir, this is the same man who got through with molasses tanks in the Port Authority, the same man. Whether it is a BAMC issue or a Port issue per se, the fact

is, it is the same man again who got the molasses tanks in the Port. The same man, the same face, Sir, who owns and operates to this day a cement storage and delivery facility in the Bridgetown Port. One man is benefiting from all of this. What is wrong with everybody else?

I am surprised to hear the Minister Mention taxi men because he when meets with them today, if he has not already done so, he should really hear what they go through. The taxi men around the Port Authority are merely getting the crumbs in all of this. They are merely getting the crumbs.

You have a situation where recently the transportation needed to take passengers to the cruise terminal, ordinarily done by the Transport Board, the Transport Board is now a diminishing type of Board, and so they could not provide the buses to provide the transportation. Do you know who they called upon to transport from the cruise ship to the terminal? Trams, owned by whom, Mr. Chairman? The same man, same face, to provide transportation of persons from the cruise ship to the cruise terminal and back, same man, Sir. What is wrong with everybody else?

There are taxis associations, three of them to be exact. At least two of them operate in the Port Authority. These taxi men could have been called in to provide that service when the Transport Board buses were down, but instead the Government turned to the trams owned by the same man with the same face.

Sir, taxi permits now in this country are being issued willy nilly, a dime a dozen. There is no point issuing taxi permits all the time, unless you plan to really empower the people you are issuing the permits to and the licences. What happens at the Port Authority is, ordinary taxi drivers have to sit down and watch as the big tour operators pick cruise passengers from sometimes next to the ship, take them out of the Port, driving by these taxi drivers sitting down waiting for some crumbs to fall to them, and these tour operators who own attractions, restaurants and other places, take these passengers on tours, stopping on at their restaurants and other locations to treat them and then take them back to the Port bypassing entirely all the regular ordinary taxi men who sit down out there. It is time when the Minister meets with the taxi men today, because he is to meet with them today, he listens to them very carefully and really also offer to help. These tour operators, because of their financial means are able to go overseas to high level tourism conferences are able to make arrangements and agreements with the agencies overseas directly. So when people come into Barbados tours are already arranged. Money is already spent.

Sir, what you need to do -- this is my suggestion to the Minister. Well he seems to be saying that he is not

meeting with them. That is even more astonishing. He should at least meet with them. At least offer. You just unnecessarily split a BTA into two entities.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member you have three minutes.

Mr. R.C. TOPPPIN: He just unnecessarily split a BTA into two entities. At least one of them could provide the funding to a representative group of these taxi operators so they too can go overseas and interface with these high level cruise line official at source overseas, so arrangements can be made so that when the passengers get here, at least they would be in synch with the local taxi operators here, instead of leaving them out there as outsiders and outcasts as the Government is treating them like, as they just watch the big operators pass by and all they get is the occasional crumbs. It is time we move beyond that.

Sequence 56

There is no point talking about how you are building a Berth 5 and expanding port facilities, if it is not for the benefit of the small persons and small operators in this country.

Sir, we move to the future. The Minister mentioned a Berth 6 and the cost of that -- he talked \$64 million in here today. It is really \$50 million. The Minister wanted to throw in the whole thing that was awarded to the same man without the tendering process, I will give him that. Sir, Berth 6 is going to be astronomical in cost compared to berth 5. I want the Minister to give this House the assurance that he is going to put the construction of Berth 6 through the tendering process. I want him to show this Chamber he has not already given the assurance to the same man and the same face that he is going to be able to build Berth 6. I want him to tell the Chamber that will not happen.

Mr. Chairman, I have not seen any business plan or any financial model that says he Barbados Port Authority can afford his expenditure. This Government had to come here and give them \$50 million today. Now they are talking about another massive Berth 6. The Barbados Port Authority has had its issue with managing its debt. There have been times when the Barbados Port Authority has run an overdraft of \$50 million. The Minister has already authorized and has already enforced, and it is happening, where the Port Authority sold off two tugs and leasing back the same tugs at a cost of \$7 200 per day. That is what the Port starts off every morning having to write a cheque for, \$7 200 per day for two tugs that it sold. Sir, that commitment runs for 15 years. So all of that is debt. The question is, where is this money going to come from? If the Government is going to inject the money into this new

Berth 6 project, that is more debt for the Government which is now debt burdened into oblivion. Is the Port Authority going to be able to afford to do it? If so, tell me how. Sir, the real question which has to be asked, is the Government really paving the way for the privatization of the Barbados Port Authority, to this very same individual to this same name and this same face that is tagging this Government around wherever it goes?

I thank you.

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

Hon. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, I note the contribution of the Honourable Member who just took his seat. I note that the Member has very deliberately avoided addressing any of the fundamental issues in so as the benefits of this project and the long-term benefit to Barbados. He has chosen to dabble in fictitious issues. He said that I am supposed to meet taximen today. I take my Parliamentary duties very serious. I do not schedule meetings on Tuesdays. Where am I going to meet them? In the car park? I never heard such foolishness yet. I meet with the taxis all the time. The most recent meeting I had with them was yesterday. The President, Mr. Eastman, the President of the Bridgetown Co-op, Mr. Layne, or Pastor Layne, he has a church, they did not reflect on any time the Honourable Member for St. Michael North had half a responsibility for the Port, that was not any halcyon days. So I do not know what foolishness where he is crying these crocodile tears for the taxi operators. When he was a minister what did he do? Did he take the taxi co-ops with him when he went to the Sea Trade, no? He was too anxious to get into the malls in Miami and shop. He did not have any time for that. Mr. Eastmond and Mr. Layne will be going to the Sea Trade next week for the first time, Mr. Chairman. The real reason I am not shoulder to shoulder with him is because of the Estimates debate. I have again to take my Parliamentary duties serious. It is something you do not do. Do you know what is scheduling a major meeting on a Tuesday? What foolishness am I hearing? If you have nothing to say, sit down. How many taxi drivers did you take to Sea Trade? Not one.

Asides.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: We are going for the first time and more than what we are doing, Sir, is, we are going for the first time to get those co-ops on the Shore Excursion Programme. It is alright to talk foolishness. The reason why those big tour operators and let us be frank, okay, the way the cruise industry is structured -- the Member knows a little bit about it. He had about six months at the ministry before -- the Honourable Member for the City, a very wise woman, she did not send a lot of files to him, so he probably did not know what is going on, but the way the

cruise industry is structured, you had to be a part of the Shore Excursion Programme, and those large tour buses, as you put it -- yes they fly up to Miami, they pay the \$25 million insurance policy which is required and they get on the Shore Excursion Programme. We have to work with the co-ops now to get them on that programme and we have committed to doing it. We have also committed to making the necessary adjustments so that the parks are inside the Port, they said they wanted two parks, and we have assured them that they will get it. Things are happening for the taxi operators.

By the way, just to say with all the increased activity a lot of them cannot come, they are getting work. That is why we cannot ask them to ferry passengers from the ship to the gate. They do not want to do that. They want to do island tours. They want to do Bridgetown tours. This Honourable Member for St. Michael North we have heard time and time again, he has the lowest view of average Barbadians. That is why we are not associating ourselves with that. That is why we are going to get them in the mix in a more meaningful way. Sir, there are 150 members in the Bridgetown Co-op, 75 independents, 225 taxis. Yes, busy cruise days there are good but we have to make sure through the Shore Excursion activity, et cetera, that they will get more of the action.

So we are working with them, not talking. Not a single whisper in that meeting about the grand old halcyon days. Now I am going to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, of all people. He would probably argue he did not have a lot of time there, and that is true. Now he speaks about the Port and Barbados Port Inc.

Sir, for the record, it was the Barbados Labour Party Government that corporatized the Port, okay. Barbados Port Inc. was created in 2003. I remember the debate very well. Now people would say, why did you not repeal it and bring back the Barbados Port Authority. That is not how Government works.

In 1978 when the Adam's administration created the Barbados Port Authority, when we came to office in 1986 we did not bring back Port Contractors and the Port Department. You accept that Government is a continuum. So Barbados Port Inc. was created by the Barbados Labour Party. Now the moving of the Resolution then was one Honourable N.A. Lynch. Now I know he is no favourite of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North. I know that he is no favourite. He was on the back bench bristling and suffering when he felt that he should have been here as the Minister of Tourism at the time. Listen to when Barbados Port Inc. was created.

There was an Advisory Committee that was set up in 1996 under the Barbados Labour Party and the reason they corporatized the Port was because the Committee had

stated that this particular framework would have allowed the Committee stated for stronger decision making, for stronger independence financial autonomy for the Port. You heard that? Independent financial autonomy.

Sequence 6

It would be able to partner in the concept of raising funds through equity for the Port's development. It will fully allow the Port to enter into private sector arrangements to undertake many of the expansion investment potentials that have been voiced earlier.

Mr. Chairman, Berth 5 Limited is a special purpose vehicle and it is carrying out what...

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, there is more in here. Mr. Chairman, the one thing that he was not short for were words, everybody remembers our dear friend who is now doing a good job down at the Cricket Association. Mr. Chairman, it says that it will also allow for build, operate and transfer arrangements which would allow for immediate private participation in the future development of the Barbados Port Authority. Well, it would not be that anymore.

Mr. Chairman, it goes on to say, it was felt that these reincorporation would achieve these objectives through a higher degree of operating autonomy. Mr. Chairman, that is the point, the Port will be able to provide a quality service at the most competitive prices. It goes on to say, adequate financial autonomy would allow for independent decision-making.

Mr. Chairman, listen to this one, there will be full freedom, full freedom, on the ability to enter into joint ventures and partnerships as I said earlier. Mr. Chairman, this is the Barbados Labour Party policy, so that you appoint a Board and they have to look at what are in the best interest for the Port and by extension the people of Barbados and that is all the Directors have done.

Why does the Honourable Member for St. Michael North talk about the first part of Berth 5 that was down by a foreign contractor? As I said in my introduction there were C.O.W. Construction, PreConco, Maringo which is run by the Cooper brothers. The Honourable Member is only talking about one man but there were several men and women, including people who live in St. Michael North, Grazettes, Eden Lodge, et cetera, who would have gotten work and should take pride in that work. As I said, these companies are all highly sought after in the region for them to do similar projects.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member then goes on to switch to talk about paying \$7 000 for a tug per day. All corporate entities, and I mentioned ones that have full financial freedom as was given by the Barbados Labour Party. I was sitting out there at the time and I remember that debate very well. They said let the Port operate as any private entity would, let it enter into relationships and do what it has to do, that they would assess those proposals and would go with the ones that were in the best interest.

Mr. Chairman, we had two ageing tugs that were costing us a ton of money to maintain. What we did was that we sold them to Svitzer with the condition that they had to replace them at a certain point in time. Had we kept those tugs, continued to maintain them and then had to turn around and looked for \$13 million to replace those tugs, we would have been paying more than \$7 000 per day, but the Honourable Member for St. Michael North does not understand how business works. Mr. Chairman, that is not unique to Barbados Port Inc., several companies have fleets of vehicles, even airlines lease aircrafts. Mr. Chairman, it is not unusual to lease and it makes more financial sense most of the time.

Mr. Chairman, the Svitzer arrangement and the Berth 5 arrangement were looked at and assessed in the interest of what was stated. I do not understand this anger towards spending money on 30 Berths, the same Opposition that has accused us of not getting the marina going, et cetera, that understands the value of getting berthing opportunities for these vessels. We were able again to get it at a very good price and everything was under budget. The management and Directors of the Port have done well and I am indeed very happy about the work they have been doing.

Mr. Chairman, also in his crawl the Honourable Member made passing reference. Mr. Chairman, the Barbados Tourism Products Authority is also doing excellent work in terms of improving the cruise experience, they have done a thorough cruise audit and they are doing various things, maybe as simple as putting murals on the walls at the Port. I am sure the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central will be very proud as we will be using local artists, et cetera, but also dealing with some of the harder stuff in terms of the various things that came up in the focussed groups when we were doing the cruise audit, so that we are looking at the whole cruise experience and how we can improve that, so I do not understand this making light of the work of the Barbados Tourism Product Authority. Mr. Chairman, if you are selling something then you have to know what it is that you are selling and if you accept that there is a product then that product has to be maintained and improved upon and I think that the whole cruise experience and the passengers, from the time they hit the Port...

Mr. Chairman, even the taxi operators have to understand that they too have to get their act together and not to let a few bad eggs spoil the whole bunch. As a matter of fact, they have been policing themselves, there is excellent partnership going on with that group. Beyond that there are the attractions and facilities. Mr. Chairman, let me also commend the work of Barbados Tourism Development Corporation, private sector interest, and what they have been doing, for example, to upgrade the bathroom facilities at some of the beaches and the attractions around the island. Again that is what our cruisers like to do when they come here for a limited period of time. Mr. Chairman, I think that the Barbados Tourism Product Authority has been at the forefront of some of these activities and that their work should be commended.

Mr. Chairman, if I am going to speak about the Barbados Tourism Product Authority, I should also mention that the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc., has recently got the position of cruise director, which had been vacant for a while, filled. That is not to say that the department was not functioning, it was, but the three-year Carnival Agreement expires in December 18. We are also looking to see what we can do with Royal Caribbean. We got some news that was not good, a vessel that was committed to the region has been chartered by someone out of Port Lauderdale. We will lose a few calls there but we are meeting with the Heads of Mediterranean Cruises, MSC, who have a lot of tonnage in the region and a lot more tonnage is being manufactured so that there will be an opportunity with a small partner like that as well. We are also talking to all of them, including Norwegian Cruises. Mr. Chairman, the point is that the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc., in terms of establishing those relationships with the cruise lines, which are similar to the airlines, is something that is ongoing as well, of course doing this all the time with our Port officials, our partner.

Again, I think that the idea of expanding out cruise and expanding the homeporting with a view of ensuring that all of the players can get a piece of the action is a good one. I know this issue of shore excursions is always a vexing one and that it has been a challenging one, the cruise lines always focus on the fact that they get a large part of their revenue from these tours but with a destination like that of Barbados we have a very peculiar challenge with cruise. We tell our visitors who come here that whether they are staying at a villa on the west coast or at a guest house someplace else that Barbados is safe, that they can move around, that they can even use public transportation, but we would prefer if they would spend some more money and hire a taxi or a car.

Mr. Chairman, the point is we tell them that Barbados is safe. I cannot tell people that Barbados is safe and then tell cruisers that they have to go on a guided tour. That is what the cruise lines want but we have to get the

point across that they can move around individually because the island is safe and so we have that situation. Sir, there are some other cruise destinations that do not have that problem, but we have that problem and we are managing it and that is why we have made full partners of those critical transportation services, including our taxi operators.

H:D5(7)

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Seq. 8

Hon. R.L. SEALY: ... Some other cruise destinations do not have that problem, but we have that problem and we are managing it and that is why we have made full partners of those critical providers of transportation services, including our taxi operators. Mr. Chairman, I thought I would just come in and clarify those few bits and, once again, I am obliged to you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. D.D. MARSHALL: I was not surprised when the Minister of Tourism tried to deflect the attention away from the matters raised by the lead spokesman on this side on this particular subject by talking about what that particular individual did when he was Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism, and by asking whether he had ever carried a taximan to all kinds of things, Sir. Those were efforts clearly intended to deflect from the fundamental concerns, not just of the Barbados Labour Party but on behalf of the people who we represent. I would like to remind the Minister that when they came to Government in 2008 they put out a Manifesto and in it one of the centrepieces was governance. I do not know if the Honourable Minister believes that because the Port was corporatised that the Financial Rules do not apply. I would urge him to look at the legislation. He can get a copy from any person here who is a member of the Public Accounts Committee. The Port was privatised, yes, to provide flexibility, but the Financial Rules of Barbados still apply to the Port, and those Financial Rules stipulate requirements for tender processing and so on.

It suits this Administration to forget the ladder on which they sought to ascend and did ascend, but I am going to remind the Minister that in their Manifesto of 2008 they had a very sturdy, high-sounding section on something called good governance. It began by saying that there is a need to clean up politics in Barbados and that the Democratic Labour Party has selected a team of clean, caring, competent, committed -- all the Cs -- politicians who have signed onto a code of good governance. Mr. Chairman, it went on to say that good governance has eight

characteristics, which include being participatory, consensus-oriented and accountable to the electorate. The Opposition has raised concerns about the evident and undeniable monopoly which exists at the Port and which has arisen over the last few years in relation to the various commercial arrangements which the Port has been entering into, but the Minister thinks that it is all right for him to “pooh pooh” what we say. I want the Minister to be reminded that when we raise these issues, it is precisely because we are all accountable to the electorate; so if the Minister wants to get into an argumentum ad hominem approach, he is certainly free to do so, but the time has come when the electorate of Barbados will no longer be denied.

Mr. Chairman, in that list of “Good governance” items the next one that follows says, “Transparent in all decision-making.” One would assume that if there is any transparency to be offered, it would at least be offered on the Floor of Parliament. I would think, Sir, that where one corporation owned by the Crown with an obligation to report to this particular Minister of Tourism has entered into a \$50 million contract to build a berth, when an additional \$14 million for a yacht facility seems to have been sort of thrown into the bag, when that same corporation contracts with essentially the same entity for the acquisition of new and very costly equipment, when that same Port contracts with the same entity for the construction of molasses tanks on the same Port property, when that same Port gets into an arrangement with essentially the same individual where he could build a cement storage facility on Port lands leased from the Port and without planning permission, and when that same Port could enter into a contract with essentially the same individual for the provision of transportation services, then it strikes me that there is a tremendous burden put on the Port to demonstrate to the people of Barbados that all of these arrangements were entered into with the utmost transparency. It beggars belief that every single multimillion-dollar arrangement that the Barbados Port Incorporated has entered into over the last few years, has been entered into with companies which are all part of a vertically integrated group with a single individual standing at the top. However, the Minister wants to talk about whether the Member on this side carried a taximan to seek trade. Perhaps he should have, but that individual left the Cabinet of Barbados in the year 2004, if I recollect correctly; 13 years ago. Mr. Chairman, I would venture that as strong as the memories of Barbadians might be, they are more likely to remember the fact that one individual got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven multimillion-dollar contractual arrangements with the Port than they are likely to remember that the former Minister did not carry a taximan to some trade show in Miami.

This Democratic Labour Party Administration has spat on every notion of accountability, on every notion of

transparency, and on this very Manifesto which they trumpeted and heralded to the people as their salvation. If that was not enough, at ‘G’ of this list the magic word of “equitable” shows up. Sir, we did not write this. This Manifesto is a Document of this House, and it has the face of a man named David Thompson, now of blessed memory, on it. The initials on it are D.L.P. It says that good governance is equitable and inclusive. Pardon us on this side, because we obviously did not understand what was meant by any of these words. From our side, equitable and inclusive would suggest a suite of arrangements where multiple people had the opportunities not only to bid but to seriously expect to be able to benefit from the enterprise opportunities available at the Port. That is what we think equitable and inclusive means, but in the mind of the Minister of Tourism and his Cabinet, equitable and inclusive means one man getting all the opportunities at our only port.

11.39 a.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

House D 5 Seq 9 11.48 a.m.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: ... one man getting all the opportunities at our only port. That is their definition of equitable inclusive, Sir. That is what the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) has been about from day 1 and they are going to carry this country to its grave if there is no change in administration, Sir.

I am obliged to you.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I got up to support this Resolution and to make the point that the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) have always been involved in progressive projects. What the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is complaining about is that this project adds to the productivity and will add to the growth of the country. This money can be identified and there is logic in the growth, not only in the tourism sector but in other productive sectors. We have to understand that a country cannot grow if we do not do things to build up the productive sectors and this is exactly what we are doing here and that is why the Opposition is so angry. Unlike them that would have been given over \$1 billion for capital expenditure and to date have nothing to show that they have spent anything on productive services and that is why they are here angry. All they have done is incur capital expenditure that did not contribute to the growth of the country and did not add anything to the capacity to earn foreign exchange, et cetera.

It is no doubt when one look at what is happening at the Port we have moved to such a stage that we are now at a stage, Mr. Chairman, that we now have to seriously consider whether the happenings at the Port can continue as it is or whether we have to look for another location in order to maximise the returns. It is clear because when one look at the cruise tourism and the goings on as it relates to cargo, many days you pass and recognise that the space in the Port is taken up by cruise ships and other ships have to be anchored offshore waiting to get a space in our port. This means that we have max the space in the Port.

Another thing that we have to consider is whether we can continue holding cargo ships outside of the Port and incurring cost because every time a cargo ship is outside of the Port and it has to incur additional costs, that carries up the cost of cost of living in the country. If we are also involved in transshipment we have to recognise that ship owners are not going to be happy to come and wait on cruise liners when they could easily call at another port because all it is doing is creating delays. When you pass and you look into Carlisle Bay you will see a lot of cargo ships. The question is: Is the time ripe for us to move to another location? It is not only asking about building another port but it is also drawing the private sector out because obviously if you look for a location to have another port the private sector would be forced to invest money because there are certain services that will go with a port that they are involved in and they would have to invest too. That is why it is always very important to insure that sometimes you do the opportunity cost to figure out whether to expand or whether to create another location. As it stands right now we are at a stage where it is better for us to look for another location and see how many other investments we can attract.

Mr. Chairman, we have to understand that everything we do, we have to look at the opportunity costs and to see what benefits can be had in doing things like that. It is alright for everyone to say, "the Bridgetown Port, the Bridgetown Port." Yes, the Bridgetown Port. You have to ask yourself if when you continue to do these things what other investments you are attracting but when you go and enter a green area it is obvious that there are certain infrastructures that would have to come that is to the benefit of the country. People will get jealous.

The Minister of Tourism has been able to attract a lot of transshipment business. He has been able to get homeporting at a stage and let me say this. If we are serious about having homeporting at the level that we want we have to ensure that when we get the ships homeporting that we have alternatives because if we get all of these ships homeporting and we do not have space, we are forcing other ships to go elsewhere. We have to be proactive and it is obvious that the Other Side will be jealous because these are not things that they would think about and that is why

they would grumble under their breaths: "St. Lucy". The truth is, whether people like it or not, any major project coming to Barbados now St. Lucy has a location for it so they could talk what they like. Whether it is an airport, seaport or a new hospital, talk whatever you like, we have the space, we have the capacity and we have the ability because understand how to take green areas and max them out to the benefit of the people of Barbados and also to the people of St. Lucy. St. Lucy people are creative people. St. Lucy people do not believe do not believe in putting everything in one cup. They believe in sharing and using their abilities to expand resources not only in the interests of the people of St. Lucy but also for the rest of Barbados. That is why people always get jealous of them and whenever they have something to say people want to get angry. The point is whenever they have something to say, they say it not with self-interest but they say something in the interest of Barbados and the world. That is why neophytes cannot understand what they are saying and cannot appreciate it.

Mr. Chairman, this Resolution has demonstrated that we are involved in productive projects and that we are not like the cosmetologists that I used to speak about in this House, cosmetologists who used to just do projects to make people look good and create a feel good syndrome but at the end of the day, the country Barbados is suffering. We cannot any longer have projects just for the sake of projects. Yes we must social projects but there must be a combination of social and productive. For the last nine years, that is exactly what we have been striving to do; ensuring that we look for projects that would create capacity and improve the growth of the country, improve the foreign exchange of the country and also create a feel good syndrome but not just for the sake of creating a feel good syndrome.

We will continue to ensure that every ministry has a contribution to make towards the productive sectors of the country and that we continue to think country Barbados and not only to think self, or think friends as the others are known to do. Do you know that we hear a lot of talk about the "two-fews". Do you know what is interesting? In their time the concept of two-few was created by them so now today they come talking about two-fews. Let us say that it is true, it is not known to be new, it would have to be a copy from the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) because for 14 years I spoke in here about two-fews and now they are trying to come to give the impression that they have come up with something new. They know, they have breed it and they have bred it too so do not come in here giving the impression that ...

House D 5 Seq 9 11.48 a.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Hon. D. St.E. KELLMAN: They know, they have breed it and they have bred it too, so do not come in here giving the impression that we are in a concept that is different to anything and that we have created something new. If you are jealous, you could only accuse us of horning you. The only thing you could be accusing us of is horning you and we would not do that because we do not believe in copying your style or your bad habits, so do not come in here creating an impression that it is not known to us but is well known to yourself.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that we had to do these projects. We had to ensure that we had to change the old equipment that we had that was not relevant to the types of ships coming out of the Panama Canal to ensure that we are ready and prepared for transshipment business and also to accommodate the type of ships coming to Barbados. If there is a crime in that, well I am guilty too but I know that I am not guilty. I know that I am in a position to ensure that now that the Panama Canal is expanding and is having bigger ships passing through that we in Barbados are now in a position to ensure that those ships will not bypass us.

We have to ensure, Mr. Chairman, that we continue to lead in the rest of the Caribbean and that we are the hub so that when those larger ships come that we have the capacity for the goods to be offloaded in Barbados and then the transshipment can be done. If there is a crime in that tell me because the ships are getting larger, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North knows that, and you have to position yourself to react to the market that is there. The Honourable Member is well travelled. He knows that the ships are not getting smaller and that you are not offloading ships any more by hand and that we have to change the Port to suit the size and the draught of the ships and we also have to have the capacity to attract the business because if we do not do it then somebody else will do it and then we would have to wait for our cargo from those persons. Is that what the Honourable Member for St. Michael North is asking us to do, to continue to allow people to send to us instead of us being the hub and sending it out to others?

At the same time the Honourable Member was making that point you would find that our neighbours to the south are also trying to get the business that we are getting, and if we stand idly by and do not do the right thing the Honourable Member for St. Michael North would come in here and say you see, you refused to do X, Y, Z and now other places getting it and you are not getting it. I know the Honourable Member for St. Michael North. He, like a former Honourable Member for St. Michael South, are geared towards statistics and he will tell you how many cargo boats he brought to Barbados but he will not tell you how many loads of goods were sent back out when the cargo boats came. What we are doing now is that we are hoping that when we expand the manufacturing sector and

the agricultural sector that we are not only the receiver of goods but we would also have the capacity to send back out goods using those same ships, et cetera.

Mr. Chairman, I support this Supplementary and I want to say that I think it is in the interest of the country. It seems that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North knows something I do not know. I do not go looking under rocks. When I swim I ensure that whatever is done is done in the interest of country Barbados and when I look at this I can only see that the timing is right and I look forward to the day when we recognise that we have outgrown our capacity and that we are not maximising the returns and we have reached a stage if we are not careful that we would now be getting diminishing returns from our Port and that the time is right for us to move on and have an alternative because of the competitive world that we are living in we have to start looking for another port. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for an opportunity to participate in this very important debate in respect of the House of Assembly bringing to book so to speak or regularising the arrangements which would have financed this very important development at the Barbados Port Inc., the national port of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I want to start by recognising the point made by the Honourable Member who just spoke in stating that Barbados has to remain competitive in the region and indeed in the world. We also have to remain acceptable. In other words, our quality of our offering has to be such that we can go to these international cruise organisers and say we have a product of which we are well proud and of which we are sure you would be happy to share with your patrons, that is the nature of the business.

The strange reality is that the Barbados Labour Party demonstrated their acknowledgement of this regional and worldwide requirement when in 2003, as pointed out by the Honourable Minister of Tourism, the corporatisation of the Barbados Port Inc. began or started to take shape. We are often reminded that sometimes we have to resort to looking at the contribution of Members of Parliament as they introduced Bills and Resolutions to this Chamber because it is by those contributions that the framework and the thinking and the policy of the Administration of the day is learned. Clearly, one of the objectives of the 2003 corporatisation as articulated by the Minister of Tourism was to make sure that the Port had an autonomy, that the Port had a flexibility to do business, to enter what we now termed special purpose vehicles - we heard that term all the time because business is not like it was 40 years ago, it just

does not work so anymore - to enter into Build, Own and Operate arrangements, to enter into joint ventures and to move on at an accelerated rate and to find ways sometimes to remove a lot of the bureaucracy that can otherwise stand in the way of development, and I stand and say that proudly.

We talk about the ease of doing business in Barbados all the time, so why if we talk and speak to the fact that we need to do business easier in Barbados, when the facility that was set up in 2003 by way of the legislation is exercised so that the Port development could continue almost seamlessly... We have had Port developments in Barbados before. I remember as a young man growing up in Barbados that whenever you brought a crane to help to offload cargo or anything else at the Port it involved five to ten years of negotiations with the Barbados Workers' Union and labour interest and things like that. There is nothing wrong with that, that had its time and place but I think every one of us in this country has begun to recognise that while we are not setting aside the interest of any particular group, we have just...

House D5 Sequence 10

11.58 a.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I think that everyone of us in this country has begun to recognise that while we are not setting aside the interest of any particular group, that we have just to wake up and as they say smell the coffee and put in place arrangements for these kinds of developments to continue seamlessly, other than that we will not have a country.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has made the point, for convenience we get the Opposition coming here today and making these snide remarks and trying to insinuate, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said, look up under rocks. I do not know what the Honourable Member means by that but it sounds very feasible to me, it sound like what we are hearing from that side. Mr. Chairman, they talked about tour buses but who is more familiar with what one does with tour buses than the Barbados Labour Party? Mr. Chairman, the last time they paid their deposits for the election they hired a large tour bus and went to the Treasury and paid their deposits. I recall the image very, very vividly, you did not use 10 taxis. I drove my car to the car park, walked across and paid my deposit. I recall I was the only Member from my group then. The Honourable Member in the Other Place took his normal public transport and went and paid his deposit, but the Members of the Barbados Labour Party Mr. Chairman, hired a yellow tour bus. I remember well because I remember the Minister of Finance and Economic

Affairs saying that he had to call the Chancellor of the Exchequer and ask him to make sure that he locks the safe because he heard that this marauding crowd had arrived on the premises in a yellow tour bus. Mr. Chairman, not even the Barbados Cooperative Taxi Association but they are going to come here today and try to pretend, as has already been intimated, that they are the saviors of taxi men, but this has been the most period of the existence of the taxi men. Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Tourism was able to point out to his Shadow Minister that the meeting with the taxi men is not today nor tomorrow but that it was yesterday. The Honourable Member was further able to demonstrate the kinds of steps that he had contemplated and had put in place to make sure that those operators have recognition.

Asides.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, it is a process and there is a responsibility on both sides, there is responsibility on the side of taxi operators, there is responsibility on us as an Administration, there is responsibility on the Ministry of Tourism and on the Barbados Port Inc., to make sure that the infrastructure, facilities and the regulations are in place for the proper rollout of these events.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the comments too that these tour buses take visitors to their own operations, et cetera. Mr. Chairman, how low can we go? How low is the Barbados Labour Party prepared to go as they try to masquerade around Barbados as some savior? You have tried this game before, Barbadians know the Barbados Labour Party well. They have spoken to you, on you and have weighed you in the balance time and time again. The time will come when the Right Honourable Prime Minister will do what is constitutionally required in this country and to make sure that the people of Barbados have their say but in the meantime, contrary to the views of the Barbados Labour Party, the Government of Barbados, the Democratic Labour Party of today has a Government to run and so we are not going to be distracted by this foolishness where every Tuesday and on weekends with a lot of Whatsapp foolishness, half-lies, half-truths and unsubstantiated reports around the country to try to create some kind of panic around Barbados and then to walk around doing a lot of 'selfies', 'you-ies' and whatever else that they do, flashing them all over the place.

Asides.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Yes, that is the modern trend but that is not how the business of Government is run and that is not how the business of Government will be run under, I am sure the Administration of the right Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. Chairman, we have to lay bare in this discussion the tactics of the Barbados Labour Party. The Minister of Tourism was clear to indicate that there were three contractors involved in this exercise and the Honourable Member named those three. Mr. Chairman, two of those contractors are fairly familiar to me, PreConco and C.O. Williams, a well-known outstanding regional construction company that is capable of carrying out these kinds of works. In the case of PreConco, it is one of two providers of pre-stressed concrete in the country. Mr. Chairman, there is no mystery to it, it is nothing like the building of the Police Station at Crab Hill where you had a totally incompetent, incapable or unqualified contractor who was awarded the contract in circumstances where it cost Barbados millions. Sir, the same situation applied at the Barrack Building at Warrens, so that the Barbados Labour Party knows what they are looking for but they are not going to find it out here, it resides comfortably on the other side.

Asides.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, they are prepared, at whatever cost, to try to disrupt the business of Barbados for their singular gain, or their singular pretense that they have some God-given entitlement to lead the country. Sir, whenever the day comes you can rest assured that I will be one of those out there who will be putting the message of the Democratic Labour Party clearly to the people of Barbados. When I am done, when all the Members on this side are done, the people will decide, but Mr. Chairman, I say again that time is not now, as the Honourable Member was very careful to point out we are dealing with a very simple measure to provide for \$50 million to the Bridgetown Port and that the Government wanted to be involved in providing these funds directly and injecting them into the accounts of the Bridgetown Port so as to improve the overall outlook of the accounts of the Bridgetown Port.

Mr. Chairman, it is extremely important that this be recognised as an important step because it then gives the Port even more freedom and flexibility to get ahead with the business of Port development. Mr. Chairman, Government is well-advised to move ahead with its corporatisation. The Honourable Member made the point, it began in 2003. We never got in here and said that the Barbados Labour Party corporatised the Port in 2003, that it went very smoothly but that we want to return to the situation that portended before. We will not do it, it does not make sense in a modern world. Mr. Chairman, there will be opportunities, indeed, there will be the requirement for us to move in this direction with a number of our....

12.13 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Seq. 12

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: ... Mr. Chairman, there will be opportunities and there will be indeed the requirement for us to move in this direction with a number of our entities in Barbados. We may as well face the fact, and the Minister of Finance made the point yesterday; there are opportunities for privatisation which have to be looked at and we must stop seeing privatisation as a death knell to workers and labour in this country. It is not that. It depends on the conditions that are negotiated, and conditions can be negotiated in any privatisation contract that takes care of those issues. Governments all over the world are getting smaller, and in an effort to modernise and to transform our countries smoothly, quickly, effectively and efficiently, we need to partner with the private sector; not pretend to partner today and then when we are in the Opposition flog the issue and flog the idea of private sector partnership to death. It does not work like that. That is dishonesty, Mr. Chairman. That is dishonesty to preach privatisation and the opportunities of corporatisation when you are in Government, but then when you are in Opposition to come into this Chamber and pretend that you do not know what those words mean, only to be convicted by your own legislation in 2003; tried and convicted by your own legislation in 2003. You started the process. We found there was nothing wrong with it in terms of the development of the poor, and we will continue, as the Minister has pointed out, to look towards Berth 6, Berth 7, and whatever other berthing is needed.

Only a week ago now, maybe ten days, St. Vincent unveiled its new airport at Argyle. I am surprised that the Members over there have not started yet. I am listening. I do not want to anticipate what they are going to say. I am listening first, because when they say it, I will jump up again and ask for your permission to contribute to the Debate, Mr. Chairman. We congratulate St. Vincent but we say to Barbadians and we say to the Barbados Labour Party now that they are in Opposition and pretend that they do not know what privatisation is, we will continue on this journey to improve our facilities and to improve our offering to our visitors. Tourism is our business. It is now the mainstay industry, so to speak, in Barbados, and we will continue to build those numbers, record numbers in 2016 and record numbers anticipated for 2017. Sometimes I cannot even find my way through Silver Sands and Landsdowne; there are so many visitors enjoying what Barbados has to offer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, wrap up, please.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: We need to continue in that direction. Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. R.St.C. TOPPIN: Let me advise the last Honourable Member forthwith to save his voice for occasions when electricity is off and you do not have any speakers or microphones, really. That is the only use to which his voice can be constructively put, but he will decide for himself. Mr. Chairman, the intention is to introduce a lot of red herrings into this Debate. Nobody on this side said anything about not making Barbados competitive. In fact, historically, I have made the point as well in relation to the Port Authority about how well the Barbados Port Authority was run. I am on record as saying that. The prioritising of trans-shipment did not begin under the Democratic Labour Party. Home-porting did not start under the Democratic Labour Party, so to give the impression that these are things which they have come up with now, and that they have come up with some new ideas, is really and truly to try to introduce a red herring into this Debate. The Minister has got into, in relation me, all sorts of ad hominem attacks and I really could care less, but the fact is that he has not really been able to make one single denial in relation to the monopoly created to be one man and the one face at the Barbados Port Authority. The Minister of Tourism will thump himself on the chest that he was able to come in here, either last year or year before, and increase charges on poor, ordinary people using the Port. He increased the charges to subsidise the pocket of one man and one face that monopolises the operations at the Barbados Port Authority. He can feel proud about that. In so far as the historical comment about the legislation is concerned, nobody ever said that the Port should not move towards being more efficient. That was our stated objective. Even as we move towards that, certain rules still have to apply.

There is one thing which I really want to go back to because when I made reference to the tugs in my opening remarks on this side, I did not give details. The Minister, in rebuttal, did not give the details either, but we really should understand the details in relation to these tugs at the Port Authority.

Asides.

Mr. R.St.C TOPPIN: Mr. Chairman, the fact is that the Barbados Port Authority sold two tugs for \$8.6 million. Then, in its wisdom and in a novel approach to doing business, leased back the same tugs to the overseas company to which they had sold the tugs. They leased them back from that same company for \$7 200 per day. Mr. Chairman, a lot of people do not see that in a whole year, but they leased back the same tugs which they had sold, so they had to be good tugs. Mr. Chairman, this was a 15-year arrangement, so multiply \$7 200 per day by 365 days in a year by 15 years equals \$39 420 000 over 15 years. That is

not all that is disgraceful and, I may add, Mr. Chairman, suspicious about the whole thing. It was a dry lease and not a wet lease back to the Port, so it was not that the Port sold all the tugs and transferred the headaches to the owner or anything; it was a dry lease. All the maintenance costs, all the labour costs associated with the tugs, and when the tugs go on dry dock, all those costs are still at the Barbados Port Authority. Sir, when you add that you come to almost \$40 million that would have been spent.

I heard the Minister making the point. Luckily, the Minister of Tourism joins his brother, the Minister of Finance, in having no credibility in this country anymore, so I do not really take anything they say seriously, and nobody out there does. He is talking about the Port not having to worry about spending \$30 million down the road to buy a new tug, when in fact down the road on the lease alone you are spending over \$40 million. Does that make sense to anybody, Mr. Chairman? You are going to spend \$40 million over 15 years, but he is saying it is better to do that than have to spend \$30 million down the road. Mr. Chairman, this is the sort of scandalous behaviour by this Administration, and I find it quite frankly to be disgraceful. I appreciate that the Minister of Tourism and others over there have to sing for their supper, and they are singing; they are singing for it. I appreciate it, but we want the questions which have been raised on this side answered. The Minister has not even had the gumption or the guts -- perhaps it is just a straight case that he is lapsing into honesty -- to deny or to give us any undertaking at all that Berth 6 will not go to the same individual by the same process where there is no bidding or tendering. Mr. Chairman, what have we come to in this country?

12.18 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: They probably want to hear it at another time when the Bell is rung but for now let us deal with some hard facts.

As a result of this, Mr. Chairman, cruise passengers numbers moved from 723 000 in the 2008/2009 year to 757 000 in the 2015-2016 financial year after climbing from a low of 627 000 in 2012-2013, and the projection is that cruise will continue to grow to a large extent because of the investment in this new berth. What that means is that we are taking a proactive measure to enhance our ability to earn sustainable foreign exchange in Barbados, and that is important particularly at this time when of course everybody is debating about our ability to earn our way and our foreign reserves levels. To a large extent the people who have been commenting on that have not brought to the table any iota of alternative strategy to tell Barbados where they believe we should go.

I want to identify with this, Mr. Chairman. It is really to my mind a very purposeful approach. It connects with what Barbadians want to hear. I want to congratulate the Minister because this is not getting up and promising anything, this is a delivery, and I want the Opposition to connect with that. When you get up and you speak you are asking the Minister of Tourism to respond to you, we are in Committee. When you get up and you speak in here I want you to answer the statistics that I have put out to you, connect with it and tell me what the Opposition thinks about it. At least answer that simple question because you do not seem to be able to answer any questions in here. I want you to get up in here and connect with that and tell Barbadians how you feel about this particular projection and about the statistics that I have mentioned that can be checked and checked over again. Tell the country what you feel about that, do not just go and pose questions to us. We are in here as representatives of the country and as you know there are no political parties that are taken cognisance of in the House, so get up. My challenge now is if you could answer that question then I would understand you asking the Minister to answer all of the questions you are asking, so answer that question for me. Any one of you who are man enough or woman enough get up in this House and contradict what I have said in relation to not only the growth prospects of the Port but the actual statistics in terms of what has happened at the Port as a result of this berth being constructed down there. That is real life and it tells you that there is a strategy.

We are not here aimlessly wondering about the place knocking our heads around the place and so on, we are delivering, and therefore on that point I end by saying that this Particular Resolution brings and set the path for what we have been talking about, the earning of foreign exchange. We are doing that, it is delivering, and therefore I have no hesitation at all in supporting this Resolution.

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

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without

division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

House D5 Sequence 14

12.36 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

RESUMPTION

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

Mr. SPEAKER VACATED THE CHAIR. Mr. CHAIRMAN ASSUMED THE CHAIR.

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

Hon. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, this is just a short intervention on this matter. Mr. Chairman, without doubt from my reading the cruise industry will for quite some time continue to be important not only for Barbados but for us as a region. Indeed, I have noticed that between now and 2026, from what I am seeing from Cruise Industry News, that in fact there are 82 vessels on order, which is a high from previous year. In other words, I think the world has recognised that this industry will continue to be robust for quite some time and that Barbados is therefore correct in positioning itself to ensure that it can receive not only additional vessels but also large vessels. We are seeing on average vessels carrying about 3 000 souls and we do know that there are one or two other mega ships that we have been trying to encourage to come to our shores from time to time.

Mr. Chairman, this investment in Berth 5 is absolutely necessary at the time, one might venture to say that it was visionary in terms of trying to roll out a programme that is consistent with where we want to take Barbados's tourism industry, particularly Barbados cruise industry within the next 10 to 15 years. Mr. Speaker, we have been criticised in some quarters, some of whom have misunderstood what we have been doing for the emphasis that we have been placing on tourism. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, yes, we have been placing emphasis on tourism because it is a mass employer and has proven over the years to be very robust as far as Barbados is concerned and so one cannot take one's eyes off a product that has proven to be successful and has worked for you. Therefore, we have continued to look not only at land-based tourism but trying to see how we can amalgamate the two, that is, encourage homeporting and encourage persons when coming through Barbados that indeed why not spend two

days before, go on their cruise, then come back and spend a few days with us. Mr. Chairman, you would have heard from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central that in fact the Honourable Member has been doing all within his power to bring together as many of the actors that are involved in the industry as possible.

Mr. Chairman, I find that in many ways that this industry is very curious because it is actually one of the industries in which Government is expected to take lead continuously, Government is expected to spend money bringing in the cruise liners, Government is expected to spend money bringing in the airlines, Government is expected to spend millions, if not hundreds of million, on marketing but then you are told that Government should not get involved in the industry, that Government should stay out, that Government should not manage hotels, et cetera, so that Government is expected to spend millions on dollars in marketing, in support of airlines and cruise lines, yet Government is not supposed to play an active role in providing accommodation, et cetera. Mr. Chairman, I am not advocating that Government should, all I am saying is that I find this to be very curious that, in fact, in many parts of Barbados you hear the call that Government should stay out of the hotel business, yet we are expected to support the marketing and to provide the infrastructure, et cetera.

Mr. Chairman, if I understand the vision of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and his team that it is recognised that we cannot just stop at Berth 5 but that based on the trajectory we must look see if we might even have to go Berth 6 or 7. Mr. Chairman, one would think that even though there may be change in the technology, we know that cost never comes down on matters of this kind, so that as a country we have to be prepared to make the substantial investment, that we should not to be afraid of the numbers and to recognise that in fact we are providing for generations to come.

Mr. Chairman, I am sure my friend to my right will agree with me that every year we have thousands of young people who come out of secondary schools and I say continuously that our responsibility as legislators and as a Parliament is to ensure that our actions provide the catalyst or necessary facilities so that we can employ more of our young people.

Mr. Chairman, we have been trying as a Government not only to build out tourism, what we have been laboring on over the last few years and maybe we have not been doing a good enough job, I believe, in explaining to the country what we are doing because we are in fact creating a new economy. We have, in fact, been moving this country along, preparing that whenever the next financial crisis comes that as a country we would be more robust and that we would be more able to better respond.

Mr. Chairman, so that the educational activities of the Honourable for Christ Church East Central is not only to provide education for Barbadians but the Honourable Member has been internationalizing the educational system in Barbados. We now have young people coming from Panama and Columbia to learn English at the University of the West Indies. We started with one medical university and low and behold we have another three more applications before us. If you see how that has transformed many of our neighbours in many parts of the world you can understand what we are trying to do in terms of education.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things that Barbados has always been good at is providing first-class educational facilities and we are happy to invite many of our world's citizens to come here and live and learn and with them, so that you can understand the end product, with the person who is coming in for a couple of months or years for him to become educated would want accommodation; he buys food; he uses public transportation or buys transportation; he buys clothing, et cetera. We are not speaking about two or three people but possibly about thousands of young students occupying our shores and being able to use our international educational system.

Similarly, we are trying to transform Barbados as an energy sector, not only because moving away from fossil fuel seems to be the thing that people are talking about, but we wanted to be world-class leaders as we were when solar first started. You may recall in many ways that we probably might have missed the boat because when people were not so sure about the use of solar we were taking it for granted, that you simply turn on your hot water system and that it can be used, so we now have to see how we can move that knowledge that we have had for generations, how we can move it even further. Mr. Chairman, finally, we will not, of course, give up our International Business Sector but we are going to also transform that so that we can make it easier for persons to come to Barbados and live and have the type of service that they would have had in New York, London or Singapore and that they can use our shores for that type of service.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that our discussion rather than being based on one issue that I heard from the other side this morning, our discussion should be are we going in the right direction with respect to cruise tourism. Are there things that we should be doing that we are not now doing? How do we ensure that this industry that is sometimes referred to as being fickle, ensure that it becomes as robust as possible? What do we need to do?

2.33 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Seq. 16

Hon. A.D. BRATHWAITE: ... How do we ensure that in fact this industry, which is sometimes referred to as fickle, become as robust as possible? What do we need to do? You heard, again, the Member for St. Michael South Central. He and I have several conversations, because crime and people's security, not only for us here as residents but for our visitors, is very important; so naturally in the Royal Barbados Police Force there is a tourism liaison officer who spends lots of time with the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association and with the Government-related entities. That relationship is important. The Minister is right: Persons, including the same small taxi driver which the Member for St. Michael North seemed so enthusiastic about, are not going to get the work unless people believe that they can walk out of the Port and walk into a taxi and be driven safely all across Barbados and reach back to the cruise-liner safely. Hand-in-hand, we have to be able to provide all these things.

Again, Member for St. Michael Central, I am sure that you and your team can identify with this correctly, and that in fact home-porting also means providing replenishment of food and drink and other substances. There is a myriad of opportunities there for us to offer to our people. We have been talking about it for too long as a country, and maybe when it suits us. What we have to do is put our collective minds together and work out what we need to do. What are we not doing in terms of the Government and the private sector that we should be doing to make this industry more robust?

If I can make one comment on this morning's discussion, we are committed to having procurement legislation. I believe that the Ministry of Finance has been working vigorously to ensure that the draft is finalised and so on. We have committed to enhancing the governance structure in Barbados. We will not vacillate from that commitment. I believe that because the draft is being done in Chambers where I presently have responsibility that I can give that commitment; that in fact we will have the necessary procurement legislation before Parliament so that some of the issues which we have been discussing from time to time certainly should become a thing of the past. Mr. Chairman, I believe, in closing, that we really should spend more time on positive matters and positive energy; and it saddens me that in fact when it suits certain of our colleagues -- I say colleagues here, including the Members of the Opposition -- they talk about, "Let us form a committee to address these issues. We want to stand with the Government and give them ideas, et cetera." That is one day, but then the other six days of the week it is doom and gloom, doom and gloom.

I could not believe this morning that on a matter such as this; a very positive move in terms of enhancing our tourism product.... Mr. Chairman, I see it when I am driving home sometimes; the buses coming down from the

airport. In fact, one of our challenges which you may recall, Mr. Chairman, was that we were concerned in terms of how were we going to shepherd all of these people through the airport down to the seaport and so on. I remember having this discussion with the Member for St. Michael South Central, and I said, "What a good problem to have." That is a good problem to have, so in closing, Sir, this has my utmost support. I understand where my colleague Minister is trying to take us as a country, not only in terms of cruise tourism but tourism overall, and I want to encourage the Members on the other side to come on board and let us work for the development of this blessed country. I am obliged.

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

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make a small contribution to this important Bill before the House. Mr. Chairman, it is important to look carefully at the tourism product in Barbados. It is important for us to look at its contribution to our national life, and we have to examine from time to time where we are going to see if there is a need for further improvement, and above all to see how it contributes to our national life in terms of providing jobs for our people and, of course, providing revenue for the Government. It is important to note that the cruise tourism over the years has been exciting, in that it provides employment opportunities for a number of our people, including taxi drivers and other persons involved in transportation. We have to also look at where we are going as far as the Bridgetown Port is concerned, and what more can be done. It is true that when you look at the Bridgetown Port, it was opened in 1960, about 57 years ago. I think it was opened in April of 1960 by the Father of the Barbados Labour Party, Grantley Adams. Mr. Chairman, it was officially opened in that year, and since then we can safely say that the Bridgetown Port has provided lots of opportunities for our people. Lots of mega ships have come to our Port, and certainly over the years more was done to improve the operations of the Bridgetown Port. I listened carefully to the Member for Christ Church South, and he provided a history that it was corporatised in the year 2003. It was opened by Grantley Adams as a national treasure in 1960, it was corporatised by the Barbados Labour Party in 2003, and since 2003 a lot of work has been done.

We are told that some entity has bought off a number of the piers within the Harbour, and we want to find out if Government is moving towards the full privatisation of the Port even though it was corporatised in 2003.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: On a Point of Order, Mr. Chairman. I attempted to say Elucidation but no, a Point of Order. Nothing was mentioned in here about privatising any piers to any entity. I do not know where that is coming

from. I am just saying that maybe the Member genuinely misunderstood what he heard, but no-one on the Government side has said anything about privatising piers.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: The Member for Christ Church South introduced the whole concept of privatisation. He said that we were against privatisation of any of the Port, and that we are against privatisation period. He said that this side, when in Government, preached privatisation, but when in Opposition we seem to oppose it. That is what I heard, and therefore the concept of privatisation was introduced in this Debate. I made the point that it was corporatised as a Government entity in 2003, and since then we have heard that this Government has been involved with a number of players in the private sector, either in a joint venture programme or to further privatise some aspect of the Port. I want to find out where we are going because the Government has now accepted that privatisation, as far as Government is concerned, is an option; that privatisation must be put fairly and squarely on the table.

2.30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

House D 5 Seq 17 14.39 p.m.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: ... the Government has now accepted that privatisation as far as Government is concerned is an option and that privatisation must be put fairly and squarely on the table.

The Government is now selling off a number of things. They are selling off our oil reserves, ...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I want in this haste of selling, I want to say that I also believe in some aspects of privatisation because I remember in 2008 the very first Budget of the former Prime Minister, he felt that joint-venture was not supposed to be part and parcel of the Government programme and that the public partnership was not an option. In fact, I know that the now Prime Minister was the Attorney General at the time and that public partnership was not part of the Laws of Barbados. I recall that speech from the former Prime Minister. Since then the Government has not brought on any new Bill and I was waiting carefully to see if any legislation would come to Parliament to introduce this who concept of partnership with the private sector. The guards have not been changed but we know that the Government is involved to a large extent, in the whole aspect of involving the private sector.

I want the records to reflect, Mr. Chairman, that we are not opposed to privatisation. We have put it as an option and we believe that privatisation must come but

must come where everything is put above board, that you cannot just sell things out. I heard this morning that a tug was sold for \$7 million but Government stand to lose over \$50 million in 15 years. We have to be very careful. I want to say, and I have always made the point that we have to be here for the next generation. We just cannot sell off everything and leave that generation out to sea. We have to be careful of what we do. Everything must be discussed whether you are selling to the private sector because Government needs money and we are not standing in the way of Government obtaining money because we were able to privatise the ICBL but we were able to do it in a way that Barbadians were given shares in ICBL along with the private sector and if the Government is thinking carefully about this whole aspect about privatising we need to know.

I heard the Minister of Finance, I listened very carefully to him recently and he never said why the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados fired or not fired. The Minister said nothing about that and we have no problem with what he has done but he made the point that very soon more and more will be privatised in this country but we want to hear what are these things that will be privatised. There are two things left, the Bridgetown Port and the Airport. We are just asking the Government if these things are to be further privatised to be sold off to the public we would want to know. We would want that the Government comes to this House and say to us, we need to get the private sector involved but we also need Parliament to be aware of these things that are sold off because, as I said, the Bridgetown Port was opened by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) in 1960. It was corporatized in 2003 and any further development at the Bridgetown Port because it is a thing of the time now. We would like to know what is happening because it is indeed one of our treasures and I can tell you that we feel very proud that a small country like Barbados can have such an important treasure in the Bridgetown Port and, of course, the Grantley Adams International Airport. There is a need for further expansion of the Port to bring in mega ships. I know that the Minister has said before that there is a need for further expansion and I too would want to see further expansion of the Bridgetown Port to accommodate in today's world, those mega tourists liners, those military ships, and all the large ships that we have but we would not want to see it in the hands of certain persons only. We would not want to see the Bridgetown Port fully in the hands of those oppressors who oppressed this country, oppressed black people before and after emancipation. I personally feel that if a black Government was to put this into the hands of certain people we could be in trouble as we go forward. I want to send a warning to the Government, privatise by all means but allow ordinary Barbadians to have a share in the prizes of our country. Ordinary Barbadians must be given a chance to buy some of the shares.

Firstly, the corporative credit unions. The credit unions are awash with money. Some of them do not know what to do with this money. We know that they are saving. In fact, it was only drawn to my attention today that most of these credit unions and banks are not banks anymore, they are financial institutions because people cannot save any money and there is no incentive for saving in the country anymore. People will want, Mr. Chairman, to have an opportunity to invest their \$100, their \$20, whatever money they have, ordinary Barbadians can have a share in the Port.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, I guess you should know this more than ever, that it was the agriculture sector that built the Bridgetown Port. It was out of the levies of the sugar that built the Bridgetown Port and therefore we are seeing from this side that if the Bridgetown Port is to be sold to any entity that the sugar industry should have the first claim on it.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The sugar industry, the people who work in it. When I say the sugar industry I do not mean the absentee landlords.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you only have one minute.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I mean those people who work in it, the National Insurance and, of course, the credit unions. I feel strongly and I want to make to tell the Government that we do not oppose the privatisation but we want the Government to come to this House and say this is what we have been doing and give ordinary Barbadians a piece of the pie. I feel that when the Government was selling the oil company that the people of Barbados should also have a say in it. I understand that you said that one of the clauses said five years down the road, you will get a piece of the pie. Five years down the road is too long. Give them a piece of it now.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

Miss. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise just to make a short intervention given the interest of time. The Honourable Member on This Side, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North would have made an intervention in relation to this supplemental for the sum of \$50 million which is to assist the Barbados Port in paying ...

House D 5 Seq 17 14.39 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: The Honourable Member on this side for St. Michael North would have made an intervention in relation to this Supplemental for the sum of \$50 million which is to assist the Barbados Port in paying the cost related to Berth 5 Project including the repayment of \$12 million to the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. That Honourable Member would have spoken at length in relation to issues which have arisen in relation to this particular Supplemental concerning the concentration of wealth in what I believe could only be described as in the hands of a privileged few. The debate has taken a completely different turn with Honourable Members on the other side seeking not to address the concerns that have been raised by the Honourable Member and the spokesperson on tourism on this side but has taken a turn to give us a history lesson as to how the Barbados Port Inc. came to be in operation, even citing...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, one moment please. Because of the fact that we have to finish by 3.15 p.m. I will grant you ten minutes.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been taken on a history lesson as to the Barbados Labour Party's position as it relates to the issue of encouraging entrepreneurship within the private sector and certainly in relation to the Barbados Port Authority, but what has still not been answered is how is it that one company has been allowed by this Administration to not only have the sole contract in relation to the Barbados Product Authority in the construction of Berth 5 but also in relation to the supply of the equipment and the materials to be sourced by this company.

Mr. Chairman, I listened attentively to the Honourable Members on this side making certain representations and I heard no interventions by Honourable Members on the other side in relation to rising on a point of order to contradict the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, and therefore I can only assume, as I am sure the listening public would have to assume, that the record as put forward by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North as it relates not only to the allocation of the contract for Berth 5 but also to the further allocation of the equipment and the supplies for Berth 5 have in fact been concentrated in the hands of one individual and company.

It does not matter that in this situation the Honourable Minister of Tourism has indicated that three and four other subcontractors have received work under this contract, the point that has been made and will continue to be made by the Barbados Labour Party is that we have no difficulty with persons who have demonstrated a certain expertise in a particular field receiving contracts. We appreciate that it is a small society and there will be

times when the same persons will reappear in terms of contractual arrangements being given but it is something that has reached the point now where I do not think that we can ignore that this Administration continues time and time again to award contracts in a manner which now leads us to question the manner in which these contracts have been allocated.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North indicated that there has been no competitive bid in relation to Berth 5. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North asked the question of Honourable Members on the other side what is the position with Berth 6, is the same individual going to be allocated the contract for Berth 6, and not one Honourable Member today in this debate has addressed this issue. I know the Honourable Minister has the opportunity to wrap up but I do believe that the record needs to be set straight as it relates to the concerns that have been raised in this Chamber in relation to the governance of the Barbados Port Inc. in the awarding of this particular contract. The same faces constantly appear. If the same faces were appearing and it was the Barbados Labour Party awarding contracts Honourable Members on the other side would be giving us hell.

In 2008 a campaign platform was led by the Democratic Labour Party accusing this Administration of corruption in high and low places, and we expect that having come to office claiming that there were all these scandals and the concentration of wealth in the hands of a privileged few that this Administration owes it to the people of Barbados that where these allegations are now raised against them that they will clear the air with the public of Barbados because it does not sit well on this side where this Administration has said they are going to give 40 per cent of the procurement to small businesses and small contractors have still not gotten it. It does not sit well that the Honourable Attorney-General can stand in this Chamber almost a year after the Honourable Minister of Finance spoke to the issue of the Procurement Bill and say that it is drafted, it is coming soon. The Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs indicated that a year ago to this Chamber and it has not come to pass. This was an election promise from the Democratic Labour Party along with all the accountability and transparency legislation and good governance that this Administration came to office on a tide of and the people of Barbados will hold them accountable for that. It is one other chapter in the unfulfilled promises of a Democratic Labour Party Administration.

It is not by chance that we debated in here the Empire Theatre just a few weeks ago when we were talking about the Jewish Synagogue and the Empire Theatre contract was also given to the same individual. The Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth was put on the spot because he really did not know what to say in relation to

where that contract now was because nothing has happened with the heritage building of the Empire Theatre for the last few years but it is in the hands again of the same individual at the core of this debate as well, so I would love to hear the clarity coming from the other side because I think that these are the things that now concerned Barbadians especially at a time when the wealth is being concentrated in the hands of a privileged few. It is not the privileged few that the people of Barbados have a problem with because the privileged few cannot get the contracts if the Democratic Labour Party Ministers do not give them to them, so we do not have a problem with the individuals and the contractors who are getting the contracts, we have a problem with you because if it is that you ... with each other to ensure that decisions are passed that allow these persons to have this wealth concentrated in this particular way we will have a problem with that.

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

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It is against the House to impute improper motive by using the word ..., that kind of stuff really and truly it is not parliamentary language.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did not hear exactly what you said you know, so could you just repeat please.

Hon. S. A. LASHLEY: I am raising a point of order and I am saying that the Honourable Member is in breach of the House by making allegations that Honourable Members are ... with each other in relation to acts that are wrong or illegal and that is not in keeping with the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not have the gist of it. Thank you very much.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: The act of facilitating individuals and companies in this country to allow the concentration of wealth is being facilitated by Members of the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, no. I heard you and I think it has some substance here. It is illegal, that is the first point. I mean if you are saying that it bothers... Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I heard what you said. I completely understand what you said and I heard it and do not make it any more difficult than it is already. Now, all I am saying is that it comes over wrong and I would ask you please to withdraw the comment.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I will withdraw the comment.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: The public of Barbados have already determined that wealth has been concentrated in the hands of a privileged few. Those privileged few are not in a position to give contracts to themselves and therefore they are being aided and abetted in having that done by Honourable Members of this current Administration. I will move on, Sir.

Asides.

House D5 Sequence 18

2.50 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, therefore they are being aided and abetted in having that done by Members of this current Administration.

Mr. Chairman, I will move on. The construction of Berth 5 in principle, I believe the Barbados Labour Party appreciates and understands the necessity to development the Port. There is no difficulty there, Sir, but what I believe that has to run counter to the development of the Bridgetown Port is a vision by the Democratic Labour Party Administration for ensuring that cruise ship passengers have somewhere to go when they disembark those ships. Sir, much has been said in this debate about the issue of privatisation, but the reality is that we have to have a serious discussion, and this Government must be held to account for it as well, because on the one hand you cannot be concentrating wealth in building out the Barbados Port Authority but in the same token you have taxi operators complaining, you have businesses in the City of Bridgetown that are complaining, you have World Heritage Sites within the City of Bridgetown that have not been developed by this Administration, and oftentimes there is nowhere for tourists to be able to go in order to fully explore Barbados when they visit this country. Mr. Chairman, the concerns that have been raised by my colleagues in relation to taxi operators are genuine concerns, there is no point in developing one particular piece of infrastructure if equally you are not working in tandem with other areas to develop those areas to market and to fully exploit in what you have invested. Mr. Chairman, it makes no sense having this discussion without a full discussion as well on what are the things that this Administration is doing or facilitating within the private sector to ensure that the City of Bridgetown, the closest facility and area to the Bridgetown Port, is being developed.

Mr. Chairman, I have before spoken about the conditions at Pelican Village, the fact that the railings there

are falling down, the fact that the businesses complain that people walk on the other side of the road in order to get to Bridgetown, they do not traverse the actual Pelican Village because they are told to come through the Port, walk straight up the road into Bridgetown. There is nothing directing them specifically to the Pelican Village area. Mr. Chairman, these are things that need to be addressed.

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

Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, through you let me thank all Honourable Members for their contributions to this Resolution. Let me start by way of responding to the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. George North before the Honourable Member left the Chambers. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member's contribution was actually an interesting one, beyond the swipes about privatisation where the Honourable Member was talking about the history of the development of the Port and doing which I think is appropriate. The Barbados Labour Party should actually take a measure of pride in the Bridgetown as we know it, it was developed by a Barbados Labour Party Administration, the Port Authority was established in 1978 by a Barbados Labour Party Administration, and the corporatisation was done by another Barbados Labour Party Administration in 2003. I thought that the Honourable Member for St. George North actually tried to anchor that fact and take some pride, correctly so.

Mr. Chairman, the truth is that the Barbados Labour Party should be quite happy by what we are doing, in essence, in terms of enhancing a facility that they can correctly take a great deal of pride in, but of course people prefer to search high and low for scandal which I am going to get to. Mr. Chairman, before I get there, let me just say on the issue of privatisation that was introduced by Members of the other side, because in my earlier presentation I did not say anything about privatising the Port. It is a fact that the private sector already plays a great deal in the Port, for example, the Bridgetown Cruise Terminals is, in essence, a private sector organisation partially owned by Cave Shepherd and Goddard's. There is also the class "C" shareholders.

Mr. Chairman, I heard someone talking about remembering the small man. When we did the Bridgetown Cruise Terminals there was a facility to allow for ordinary Barbadians to participate in that effort, so that I do not think we need to be lectured in that regard, I think we are looking at a successor arrangement to that as we continue

to develop the Port. Certainly the directives that have come from this Government to the Board of Directors is that whatever that is done along those lines must have the opportunity for ordinary Barbadians to participate, very much like the class “C” shareholders in the Bridgetown Cruise Terminals. Sir, that that is a fact. Mr. Chairman, I just want to give that assurance. We have to take a collaborative approach towards that facility. Indeed, much of tourism as we know it is private sector-led where Government facilitates and works as a partner in many respects, so that we are happy to see that continue.

Mr. Chairman, if I could respond to the concern that the Barbados Port Inc. went on some frolic, that it was directed by the Cabinet of Barbados to “concentrate” wealth in the hands of some few. Mr. Chairman, Berth 5 was stated in 2006 by the then Government, it was done by a company called Lagan Building and Civil Engineers out of Ireland. The contract was \$55 million in 2006. It included, in all fairness, some refurbishment to Berth 4 and the cross berths but again if we are to compare the 75 metres that we got from this Berth 5.... I was corrected, so I am taking out the \$14 million for the yachting facility, so that \$15 000 215 we got a much better facility and it was done by local specialists.

Mr. Chairman, the issue of creating the SPV Berth 5 Ventures Limited, this is a specialised facility and frankly speaking there is only one entity doing precast and pre-stressed concrete right now in Barbados and it is called PreConco Limited. I am not going to run away from that, I am going to stand by the Board and by the management team of the Barbados Port Inc. for making the correct decisions. Mr. Chairman, of course, C.O. Williams and Earthworks company, Maringo Construction who specialise in marine construction all over the Caribbean. Mr. Chairman, I do not get it, this notion that somehow it is all about one man only. I understand, the time is drawing near and there is a reason they call it the ‘silly season’ but let us not allow facts to escape us, the Barbados Port Inc. has made the right decision.

Mr. Chairman, I heard about going out to tender but do you know where you would have to advertise? We would probably have to advertise in New York, Ireland and probably Alaska. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph would probably like us to go to Alaska because the Honourable Member is now lecturing us about governance issues and so the Honourable Member should tell us about the prison. Did the prison go to tender? Did the Coast Guard go to tender? Did the justice facility go to tender?

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, we have to get real about these things. I just want to stand by the Board, but this perennial search, every time something good is

happening there has to be a scandal. Mr. Chairman, Sandals is employing 700 Barbadians and is doing miraculous things for Barbados, it is about to employ another 600 after they have expanded and so there has to be a scandal in that.

3.02 p.m.

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Seq. 20

Hon. R.L. SEALY: ... Sandals is employing 700 Barbadians and doing miraculous things for Barbados, and is about to employ another 600 after it expands, so there has got to be a scandal in that. When the Rihanna Concert brings in people, there is a scandal in that, so I am not surprised. When I hear the Member for St. Michael North talking about scandal, I know that means something good is happening for Barbados. That is what I conclude. Again, I am not surprised that he is not in his seat. He knows why he is not in his seat, because he misled the House. Regarding the Svitser arrangement, he said that maintenance of the tugs was at the Government. That is not true. The maintenance is at Svitser, which provides a tug, insures it and maintains it. We provide the labour. That is all we provide. I had it checked as well, and I will apologise. I said \$30 million, but I was wrong. Do you know why I was wrong? There were two tugs with different sized engines; one is US\$9 million and the other one is US\$12 million. Nine and 12 is US\$21 million. It was really BDS\$42 million to replace those tugs. When you are doing a sale-and-lease-back arrangement, you have to look at the overall position. We do not have to maintain the tugs, we do not have to insure the tugs; when the tugs are on dry dock we do not have to lease another tug from a different jurisdiction and bring it in, and of course we do not have to look for the \$42 million to replace two ageing tugs. When you do the analysis, it works out to our advantage, and again I stand by the Board on the decision they made. Everything you are digging up under and under a hole.

Mr. Chairman, the Port very wisely decided to lease or rent some trams from Bushy Park for \$250 a day. These are trams which we normally pay the Transport Board \$320 a day for. Do you know why? To buy trams is US\$411 000. We can order them and get them, but the point is that here you are paying \$320 and these professional men and women sitting in the boardroom decided they would save \$70 a day; and they have to listen in to Debates in here and hear it being suggested that they are doing something untoward, something sinister or trying to concentrate the wealth into one or two people’s hands. It is not true. This is a CAP 308 company so I have to protect the Board. This is why sometimes it is hard to find people to sit on Boards, because they have to have their names dragged through.... Sometimes. I am just making the point that we still need to be careful of the signals we send.

I am particularly disappointed in the Member for St. Michael North because he knew what he did; he pipped the entire brief from the Port Incorporated. He did not have half of a brief but the whole brief, but he decided to read the piece that suits him, and would not tell the full story. That is wrong. Tell the full story. He found it on the back of a truck somewhere. I already know where he gets the briefs from. I say he can have them all. Tourism is doing great. He can have everything. There is nothing he can say in here that I cannot stand up and defend.

Asides.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, I am just making the point that it is wrong to tell half of a story. Those decisions were correct decisions. I have, of course, before I take my seat, to refer to some other important activity going on in the Port. I believe it actually was a Member of the Opposition who made the point that it is not only about having good facilities, but it is about having good people. Of course, having said that, no-one over there ever thought to mention anything along those lines. As a matter of fact we heard ... I would not bother to get into that. Let us just say that Barbados Port Incorporated has been training its employees at unprecedented levels. There is actually a programme through the IDB (Inter-American Development Bank) and they provided \$500 000 for competency-based training for dockers in the stevedoring operations, foundation level and equipment operators, and of course stevedores at Level 2 as well. I think it is important to discuss this, because when you speak of taking your Port operations to another level, first-class facilities are fine but what is also important is that you have the people who are trained up to scratch. You cannot talk about being the hub for cruising in the Southern Caribbean, and we cannot talk about building out a logistic hub and trans-shipment point that is of a world-class standard and we do not get our dockers and our stevedores trained and up to scratch. We have had 43 dockers trained; 22 certified and 21 to be certified. I think they are all certified by now. Stevedoring operators at Level 2: Of 48 equipment operators, 26 have already been certified and I suspect that by now those other 22 have also been certified as well.

There has been training in occupational safety and health as well. In workshop multi-skill training there have been 18 persons: mechanics, electronic technicians, auto electricians. In security, there were 47 security officers trained in International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) code; ISPS port facility personnel and container control and security. That is a serious issue. The Member for the City is a security specialist and he will tell you that port security is a very serious thing, especially in these times when our vessels and so on are becoming softer and softer targets. It is good to see that we are not taking our security for granted, and we are training our security personnel. That is the sort of thing that owners of ships will look for when

they are deciding where to trans-ship and where to do business. They want to see that you are up to a certain standard. Of course, there are our cadets as well, thanks indeed in part to the same Svitzer arrangement and their connection with Maersk line. We have cadets going abroad to train as well.

We can see that there is an effort to invest in the human resource component, and I could not possibly allow this Debate to finish without making that extremely important point. The mortar, the concrete and the infrastructure are fine, but you also have to get the personnel. It is small wonder that the relationship with the Barbados Workers' Union is at its best in years. The industrial climate is smooth and we are investing in the workers, and negotiations are continuing to see that we can get our Port more efficient. We were able to see 43 people separated from different departments, because we consulted with the union and got them to understand that there are some things which we needed to correct. We have gone from three shifts to two shifts, and that has encouraged staff levels going down. There have been reductions in the engineering and maintenance department in the graveyard shift. The terminal operations department saw reductions in clerical officers and cargo supervisors, and all in all in 2015, for example, 13 persons were separated and, of course, another 13 via attrition. Others went as well last year.

We are working to make the Port more efficient, as efficient as we possibly can be, and of course we are negotiating a collective agreement that makes sense. I think it is important just to make those points about the human relations element and about what we are doing in terms of investing in the critical human resource component.

The other point I need to make about cruise that really was not made in the Debate -- and I think it is important -- is that cruise is highly seasonal, and we are working hard to see how much more tonnage we can get here during the summer. As it stands right now, we only have the Carnival vessel which comes every Wednesday, and there is a Royal Caribbean vessel that comes every other Thursday out of season, but we are talking to see if we can get some other commitments.

3.09 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

House D 5 Seq 21 15.08 p.m.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: As it stands right now we only have the Carnival vessels that comes every Wednesday and there is a Royal Caribbean vessels that comes every other Thursday out of season but we are talking to see if we can get some other commitments. The possibility of a second

Royal Caribbean vessel and maybe some other lines as well, to start to look at the Caribbean as a summer cruising option. That is a big priority and one of the things that we have been doing is working with our partners in the Southern Caribbean. We have formed the Southern Caribbean cruise alliance with a view of formally approaching the lines which we have done. Some of them have actually shown an interest. Again some of the smaller lines like Pullmantur to see how we can deal with that issue of year round cruising. Again the crocodile tears I was hearing for the different players in the sector, if you have a year round cruise industry then you have income year round because the reality is, it is very much a feast and famine situation for a lot taxi operators and others. During the off season it is tough but the Courts bill and light bill still come during the off season so it would be nice if we could have a situation where there could be some income as well coming beyond year.

One of the other things that this Government did is allowing cruise ships to open facilities. I would admit that only 16 ships have taken advantage of that legislation that was passed since 2012 but we are working to see how we can get others on board. I do not think it is onerous. Five calls a year once you berth before 10 o'clock and you are hear for at least 16 hours you can open your facilities after 6 p.m., the bar, the casino, et cetera. The whole idea is to give them a little encouragement to stay here so that people who are not interested in going to the casino can still go and enjoy the destination again. If you do an island tour during the day you can still go and have dinner at night. More spend, more business, more foreign exchange inflow into the country so we are going to continue to push that as well because I think it is important.

Mr. Chairman, the point is that if you look at what we are trying to do with the transshipment and cargo activities, with cargo and especially homeporting, cruise are also playing its part insofar as seeing this economy improve and grow. Tourism has set some very interesting targets, achievable targets with the hotel development and the rooms. They can help reduce unemployment they can help the inflow of foreign exchange that in itself, but generating more economic activity you will increase the GDP, and naturally the debt to GDP ratio would come down, all of those things so we have to work hard in this sector to see that they can get this country to another level. The same way that the long stay is going in the right direction, investment levels up, confidence up, arrivals up, everything is up, cruise is also going up and spend is up for the record as well. If you care to look at the CTO latest surveys, but no you do not look at them. You only look at them when it suits you, I understand. That is the reality but again, it is the silly season. Cruise is playing its role and cargo is playing its role therefore, Berth 5, this investment, given all the other things happening as well in this sector is to be supported and commended.

I therefore beg to move that Head 27 stand part.

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

The question that Head 27 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. R. L. SEALY, Mr. Chairman, reported to Mr. SPEAKER, the passing of one Money Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the Money Resolution was read a first, second and third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, with that we have come to the end of Government Business for the day and with that I beg to move that this House be now adjourned until Tuesday, 7th March, 2017 at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, speaking briefly on the adjournment, on that day, Tuesday, 7th March, we will have laid by the Honourable Minister of Finance, the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 2017/2018 as is the custom and the debate on the Estimates will commence in the House of Assembly on Monday, 13th March, 2017 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, 7th March, 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 5 Seq 21 15.18 p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE.....	1
Hon. D.o'n. Inniss, 1.	

PAPERS

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE.....	2
1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (The Refresh Milk Art Platform Incorporated) Order, 2017;	
2. Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Accountant-General for the financial year 2015-2016.	

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE.....	2
Hon. D.o'n. Inniss, 2.	

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 14.....	2
-------------------	---

HEAD 27

Hon. R.L. SEALY.....	2
Mr. R. St.C. Toppin, 6, 16; Mr. R.C. Topppin, 6, 7; Mr. D.D. Marshall, 10, 11; Mr. J. D. Paul, 11; Hon. D. St.E. Kellman, 11, 13; Hon. J.D.E. Boyce, 13, 14, 15; Hon. S. A. Lashley, 16.	

RESUMPTION

ORDER NO. 14 (resumed)

Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, 17, 19, 26; Mr. G. A. Clarke, 19, 20, 21; Hon. R.L. Sealy, 19, 23, 24, 25; Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, 21, 22, 23; Hon. S. A. Lashley, 22.

SUSPENSION.....	17
-----------------	----

ADJOURNMENT.....	26
------------------	----

Hon. J.D.E. Boyce, 26; Hon. A. D. Brathwaite, 26.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

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)
INNIS, Hon. D.O'N. (St. James South)
KELLMAN, Hon. D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. S. A. (Christ Church West Central)
MARSHALL, Mr. D.D. (St. Joseph)
PAUL, Mr. J. D. (St. Michael West Central)

SEALY, Hon. R.L. (St. Michael South Central)
TOPPIN, Mr. R. St.C. (St. Michael North)
TOPPPIN, Mr. R.C.

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

EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while 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. Committee of Supply, Head 27, after Mr. R. St.C. Toppin's second speech. The source file carries a second copy of the passage from the end of Mr. D. D. Marshall's speech to the first part of Hon. D. St.E. Kellman's speech (take-slip 'House D 5 Seq 9 11.48 a.m.')., placed after the take-slip 'H:No.D5 (12) 12.18 p.m.'. The first copy is printed in its place and the second (about 1,380 words) has been left out. Please confirm.

Q3. Committee of Supply, Head 27, Hon. S. A. Lashley. Hon. S. A. Lashley's speech begins in mid-thought ('They probably want to hear it at another time when the Bell is rung...') and Mr. R. St.C. Toppin's second speech has no closing words or call of the next speaker. Part of the record between take-slip 12 (12.18 p.m.) and Hon. S. A. Lashley's speech may be missing from the source.

Q4. Opening. The convening sentence reads only 'met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 28, 2017.', without 'Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly'. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Minutes. Mr. Speaker refers to 'the Minutes of Tuesday, February 28, 2017', the date of this Sitting; presumably the Minutes of the previous Sitting are meant. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Speaker labels. Mr. R. St.C. Toppin is also labelled 'Mr. R.C. TOPPPIN' (twice). Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 28th February, 2017 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Mark Harewood. The Minutes were confirmed after Mr. Speaker noted two inverted times on page 2. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce laid, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, the Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (The Refresh Milk Art Platform Incorporated) Order, 2017 and the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the

Accountant-General for 2015-2016, and Standing Orders were suspended.

On Order No. 14 the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. J. D. Paul in the Chair, on a Resolution to grant \$50 million to supplement the Estimates 2016-2017 (Supplementary Estimates No. 2), under Head 27. The Minister of Tourism and International Transport, Hon. R. L. Sealy, called it a housekeeping matter: a US\$25 million loan from CAF for the completion of Berth 5 at the Bridgetown Port was now treated as a \$50 million equity injection into Barbados Port Incorporated, from which \$12 million had been put back into Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. for its bridging finance. He said the work, by C.O. Williams Construction, Morenco Limited and Preconco Limited, ran from March to October 2015, and that the berth was commissioned in April 2016 and had brought home-porting by the Britannia and Mein Schiff.

Mr. R. St.C. Toppin spoke of a 'raw and vulgar consolidation of wealth in the hands of a few', which Mr. Chairman asked him to withdraw. He said a yacht facility had been added to the same contractor's work without tender, and that the Port Authority had sold two tugs for \$8.6 million and leased them back for \$7 200 a day. Hon. R. L. Sealy replied that the Member had avoided the benefits of the project. Mr. D. D. Marshall cited the good governance section of the Democratic Labour Party's 2008 Manifesto and spoke of one man getting all the opportunities at the port.

Hon. D. St.E. Kellman supported the Resolution, raising the cost of cargo ships waiting outside the Port and the growth in transshipment. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce spoke on ease of doing business and the responsibilities of taxi operators, and accused the Barbados Labour Party of trying to disrupt business. Hon. S. A. Lashley said cruise passenger numbers had risen from a low of 627 000 in 2012-2013 to 757 000 in 2015-2016. After the lunch suspension, Hon. A. D. Brathwaite called the investment in Berth 5 visionary given the cruise ships on order until 2026. Mr. G. A. Clarke spoke on privatisation, and a point of order from Hon. R. L. Sealy was raised during his speech.

Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw asked how one company had been allowed to gain so much at the Port. After a point of order from Hon. S. A. Lashley she withdrew a remark imputing improper motive to Government members. In reply, Hon. R. L. Sealy said Sandals employed 700 Barbadians and would employ another 600, and spoke of the Carnival and Royal Caribbean vessels and of the 16 ships using the 2012 legislation allowing cruise ships to

open their facilities. Head 27 was agreed to and the Money Resolution was passed.

On the adjournment, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce said the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 2017/2018

would be laid on Tuesday, 7th March, and the debate on them would begin on Monday, 13th March, 2017. The House was adjourned until Tuesday, 7th March, 2017 at 10.00 a.m.