
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2018 – 2022

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 10, 2018

met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, July 10, 2018,
Parliament Buildings, Bridgetown.

PRESENT

His Honour Arthur E. HOLDER, LL.B., (Speaker)
His Honour Gline A. CLARKE, J.P., B.Sc., Dip. Ed.
(Deputy Speaker)
Hon. G. W. Payne, Q.C. (Minister of Housing,
Lands and Rural Development)
Hon. R. St. C. Toppin, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of
International Business and Industry)
Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde, J.P., L.C.P. (Minister of
People Empowerment and Elder Affairs)
Hon. D. D. Marshall, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C.
(Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)
Hon. T. A. Prescod, B.A. (Minister of Environment
and National Beautification)
Lt. Col. the Hon. J. D. Bostic, MVO, B.A. (Hons.)
(Minister of Health and Wellness)
Hon. E. G. Hinkson, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., LL.M.
(Minister of Home Affairs)
Hon. D. G. Sutherland, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.B.A. (Dist.)
(Minister of Small Business, Entrepreneurship and
Commerce)
Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C.
(Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational
Training)
Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, J.P. (Leader of the
Opposition)
Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, J.P., B.D.S., F.D.S.,
F.D.R.C.S., M.Min. (Minister of Transport, Works and
Maintenance)
Hon. W. A. Abrahams, LL.B. Minister of Energy
and Water Resources)
Hon. Ms. C. S. V. Husbands, B.A. (Hons.), M.Sc.
(Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Trade)

Mr. R. A. Thorne, Q.C., LL.B., L.E.C., Dip.
Theology
Hon. I. A. Weir, M.B.A. (Minister of Agriculture
and Food Security)
Hon. A. R. Forde, RPh. (Minister of Youth and
Community Empowerment)
Hon. C. McD. Griffith, B.Sc. (Minister in the
Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development)
Hon. P. R. Phillips (Minister in the Ministry of
Transport, Works and Maintenance)
Hon. J. A. King, BSS (Minister of Creative
Economy, Culture and Sports)
Hon. R. R. Straughn, B.Sc., M.Sc. (Minister in the
Ministry of Finance)
Mr. G. P. I. Gooding-Edghill
Hon. C. E. Jordan, B.Sc. (Hons.) (Minister of Labour
and
Social Partnership Relations)
Dr. S. E. Browne, M.B.B.S. (Chairman of
Committees)
Hon. K. D. M. Humphrey, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.P.A.
(Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue
Economy)
Hon. Miss M. K-A. Caddle, B.A., M.Sc. (Minister in
the Ministry of Economic Affairs)
Mr. N. G. H. Rowe (Parliamentary Secretary in the
Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs)
Mr. Speaker took the Chair at 10.00 a.m.

prayers were taken by Rev. Father Mark Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now in Session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of June 26, 2018.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I
beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the
House of Assembly, which have been circulated, be taken
as read.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let these Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am in receipt of a Report of the Attorney-General for the year 2017 and a Report of the Attorney-General on the Financial Statement of the Government of Barbados 2016-2017.

PAPERS

Hon. Miss S. J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Harrison College Financial Statement for the years ended March 31, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Tourism and International Transport, I am commanded to lay the Barbados Tourism Authority Annual Report 2011-2012, and the 2012-2013 Reports.

Hon. R. R. STRAUGHN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay before this House the following:

1. The Investment Barbados Annual Report, 2017.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, 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. D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – INTEGRITY IN PUBLIC LIFE BILL, 2018

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

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, today is a day that many... I still I have to say on this Side, but I now have to say on This Side and the Other Side, have longed for in that we are moving the passing of a Bill called the

Integrity in Public Life Bill. We in our election campaign and as far back as our annual conference committed to bringing to the people of Barbados a new Integrity in Public Life Bill at the first Sitting of Parliament. We were not able to lay it on the first Sitting of Parliament but I think that in this instance we were able to achieve what I consider to be an impressive goal. Of course, the laying of the Bill is not the achievement in itself, but the laying of the Bill so soon after the opening of Parliament demonstrates to the people of Barbados our unwavering commitment to the matter of integrity in public life.

Mr. Speaker, the last Administration in their 2008 Manifesto promised integrity legislation within 100 days of coming to office in 2008. The first they actually got around to addressing it was not in their first term but their second term and late, Sir, in that second term. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they tabled a piece of legislation which went to Select Committee, it was participated fully by the Barbados Labour Party members on that Select Committee, but not a single one of our recommendations were accepted, not one, Sir. The Bill made its way back to Parliament and was duly passed but then sat languishing for years before I believe sheer embarrassment came to befall that Administration and only at that point, Sir, did they bestirred themselves to deal with it.

Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps the embarrassment came in 2017 when the then Prime Minister proclaimed to the country that Barbados still had corruption legislation and that therefore, all was well in our country. Of course, that begs the question if you have corruption legislation then, why the need to bring a new Bill to Parliament. Clearly what you had was inadequate but moreover, Sir, the Prime Minister then spoke about the existing corruption legislation as if it could deal adequately with the ills that beset our society today. He clearly did not take into account that the existing Prevention of Corruption Bill, Cap. 144, commenced its operation in law on 21st June, 1929, halfway between World War I and World War II, a good 10 or 11 years, well maybe not so many, actually eight years before the 1937 riots, that legislation was passed in a Barbados that was very different from the kind of Barbados that we have today. In that legislation, Sir, the maximum fine, I believe, was \$2 400 but the Prime Minister felt that it was alright for him to tell the people of our country that it was appropriate for us to rely on a 1929 Bill. Be that as it may, Sir, I believe that as a result of that public discourse and as a result of the sterling work of a group of civic-minded Barbadians who call themselves by a very simple name, Sir, I think it is Integrity Barbados, I believe that the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Administration was shamed into trying to bring the legislation that they had passed into operation.

Mr. Speaker, on the dying days of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Administration, the then Attorney

General was heard to say that their Bill was going to be proclaimed on 15th June, 2018, a date after the General Elections, and at the time when he made that public statement all of us in the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) jokingly said, perhaps to ourselves, sometimes to others, that if we have our way, he will never get to see it come into force. That was part wishful thinking, part pathetic statements and part a plan to do what history now considers the most sweeping victory ever on the political landscape of Barbados.

Round of applause.

It tells you something, Mr. Speaker, about the level of commitment that Administration had to the matter of integrity in public life. It tells you that for them passing the law was nothing more than an exercise in checking the box, or window dressing just to be able to say that they passed the law. It is apparent to us that they never had any interest in bringing it into operation. At least not while they were still the Government.

Mr. Speaker, during the Select Committee we raised many criticisms of the Bill as passed by them and we are fortunate, Sir -- and I go back to mentioning Integrity Barbados. We were fortunate that group of single-minded people sought last year to bring the matter of integrity in public life to the forefront of public discourse. Mr. Speaker, I cannot say with any conviction what motivated them to do so. I do not know. I am not a part of the Integrity Barbados group, but I believe that even the most casual of observers looking out across the Barbadian landscape for the last few years would have noticed and would have heard many things which would have indicated to them that corruption and an absence of integrity in public life had reached the point where it was now an accepted mode of behaviour among the leaders of this country. The tragedy, Mr. Speaker, is that when people consider the political class to be corrupt or to be lacking in integrity that opinion makes no reservation or takes no prisoners because the political class is treated as an amorphous group of people, including the innocent with the guilty. On our Side, Mr. Speaker, we have spent the last 10 years pointing out to the public of Barbados, both inside and outside of Parliament, the many failings that were immediately obvious to us on the part of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Administration, which brought into question whether or not they were operating to the highest standard, but it does not matter that we were the ones pointing it out because when people say that politicians are crooks they mean all of us. They do not mean the Bees and not the Dees, they do not mean the Dees and not the Bees. It is an eternal tragedy, Sir, that politicians, and I know not just in Barbados, perhaps the world over, have so conducted themselves that the public views them as being dishonest, untrustworthy, thieves and some of them even reached the level of being described as vagabonds. Mr. Speaker, that old aphorism

about one bad apple spoiling the whole barrel holds truer in the political life than in any other realm of life and while a person is likely to forgive most things a politician who gets deemed to be corrupted will carry that title to his grave and regrettably he carries all the rest of us with him.

Mr. Speaker, we do not enter into this debate lightly, but we recognise that the Barbados of today is not the Barbados of Sir Grantley Adams. It is not the Barbados of the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. There was a time in our history, Mr. Speaker, when the political class and our leaders in the public service were looked up to and for the most part, not a hint of scandal or impropriety attended any of their actions. There was a time when those political leaders walked into a room, Mr. Speaker, people stood up. People respected their view, and they accepted that what they said was their word. In those days, Mr. Speaker, there was, I think the Barbados of that era was characterised by a great gulf between the educated and the uneducated, a great gulf between the political class and the labouring class, and the labouring class did not have any educated people in those families and so the Barbados of that day was a very different society of today. The Christians among us would say, Mr. Speaker, thanks be to God that even the poorest Bajan family could afford to have somebody go to the University of the West Indies (UWI), but equality in the context of the delivery of education and access to goods and services also means that every single Barbadians feels that it is his right to stand up and to challenge the status quo. We now call it speaking truth to power, but whether you call it speaking truth to power or simply being brave enough to stand up and say to a person in public life, I see what you are doing and what you are doing is wrong, Sir, it represents a Barbados that has come a long way from the days of Errol Barrow and Grantley Adams when perhaps -- and I do not in any way suggest that those national heroes would have been involved in anything untoward. I am simply speaking of people in leadership roles. At that time, no one wanted to challenge what they did, so whatever they did was well done. Even if it was not well done, nothing was said about it.

Mr. Speaker, we do not have that in Barbados today. We have a Barbados today where social media is the dominant means of communicating. For example, when a Minister drives a BMW 5 Series that he did not have and known not to be able to afford, 50 years ago that might have been whispered but today it gets 5 000 hits on Facebook before 8 o'clock in the morning. When individuals' salaries are made public as Ministers, come into office owing large amounts of debt but can leave office debt free with four or five houses, driving Audis, BMWs and Mercedes Benzs, those things hit social media immediately.

We have a class of Barbadians who no longer need the political class to express their abhorrence at the way

things are done in our country. They are not waiting on politicians anymore, they have all said, “We are going to take this issue into our own hands.” The politicians are late to the dining table. While you may say better late than never, it is the fact that they appear to be late to the dining table that suggest to the public they have a personal interest to preserve, and that politicians as a whole are not and cannot be serious about rooting out corruption.

Sir, today that doubt must be put to rest. We did not commit to bringing Integrity in Public Life legislation alone, in October last year the Honourable Prime Minister, at the time she was Leader of the Opposition, said to the people of Barbados that our party even though we were in Opposition, that we were going to provide the manpower and intellectual resources to draft our own Bill for two reasons:

1. The Democratic Labour Party administration seemed to have no will to put theirs into law, and even if they did;
2. We felt it was woefully inadequate.

We made that commitment to the people of Barbados, and brought together a group of individuals who without expectation of reward or favour, sat and started to draft a Bill not for the Opposition, but for the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, that Bill has made its way into our legislation. Would we have done it without the activist contributions of the Barbados Integrity Group? I would like to think that we would have because it is a little known fact that in 1984, Sir Henry Forde set about bringing Integrity legislation to the parliament of Barbados. He was no longer Attorney General at the time, but my recollection is that a Bill might actually have come to Parliament, though it would have died then. It is never too late to do the right thing. I want to commend Sir David Simmons, who not being a member of the Barbados Labour Party at the time, was brave enough to give a speech called, “Tackling Corruption in a Small Caribbean Jurisdiction”, on October 25, 2017. I would wish to make this speech a document of the House.

Sir, in this speech he recounted the experience of the Turks and Caicos Islands. In his speech he was able to reflect on a number of things all centred on corruption which served to bring the Turks and Caicos economy and Government to its knees. In Turks and Caicos, you had numerous instances where the political class, including their Premier, were investigated for among other things, accepting bribes, selling Government lands at undervalues, and various things of that sort. It reached the point where the British Government had to intervene and take over the affairs of Turks and Caicos.

Mr. Speaker, what the Turks and Caicos Government did was to set up a new Integrity Commission headed by Sir David Simmons and he was able to share with the country what his experiences were in that jurisdiction. He was also able to point out the many flaws of our piece of legislation and he commented in his speech that our Bill was so badly drafted that you could drive a horse and cart through it. Sir David Simmons worked with the Barbados Labour Party to get our draft Bill together, and so it is before you today in Parliament.

At the outset I want to recognise that over the last few weeks since we laid this Bill, a number of individuals have pointed out that the level of fines in our draft have been reduced significantly from the draft that was examined by the public. Perhaps I would go back to this because the Barbados Labour Party has promised the people of Barbados that it would be inclusive. Therefore, we put our draft Bill when it was completed on our website and invited public comment. The public was very happy to see that, many of them wrote in and made comments about what we were doing.

Mr. Speaker, I am suitably chastened but I am also proud, because we put a draft before the people of Barbados that had a high level of fines of \$200 000, \$300 000 and \$500 000. For certain reasons, the Bill that came to Parliament had a far lower level of fines. The people of Barbados said, “Your slip is showing Barbados Labour Party because you said one thing to us before you went into the election and you are now doing something else.”

As I said I am chastened and I want to assure the public of Barbados that the fines that will see themselves being inserted into this Bill when it comes for amendment, will reflect the fines that we committed to the people of Barbados.

There is an explanation for why the fines came down and it has nothing to do with political will, but at this point in time, I do not think any explanation matters. The point is that the people of Barbados weighed in on the subject and that is why I am proud to be able to say it is not that we were backtracking, but I am happy that people are once more feeling it is their responsibility to speak truth to power. So let me assure all of those who were doubting the commitment of the Barbados Labour party to tackle the issue of corruption, and who felt that apparently reducing the fines we were already trying to preserve our own interests and protect them, thank you for your observation but that is not the case. The level of fines will go back to what we promise the people of Barbados they would go back to.

Mr. Speaker, corruption in public life has served to destroy many economies across the world. It is estimated, Mr. Speaker, by recent publication on corruption and

development, that annually across the world \$1 trillion is paid in bribes and \$2.6 trillion are stolen through corruption. Mr. Speaker, those figures will make no sense to Barbados but the fact is that even in our economy bribery and corruption take its toll on our economic progress. Mr. Speaker, I will say two things. There is a perception that bribery and corruption is something that only happens in public life but that is not true. I am not trying to ring-fence anything but I just want to make it clear that the private sector as between themselves have what they might call commission payments, dinners at Sandy Lane or whatever they want to call it, and the public of Barbados also know that a lot of those kinds of happening takes place in the private sector but that is not what we are here to talk about today, we are talking about integrity in public life.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that whenever a bribe is paid or a benefit is conferred upon a member of the political class or upon a civil servant in return for having access to a particular public good, whether it is a contract, a licence or a permit, the recipient of the benefit or the bribe is enriched but the cost to the public and the taxpayers of Barbados is vast because if a contractor has to put in an extra \$200 000 into the cost of a project to grease somebody's palm that is an extra \$200 000 that the taxpayers of Barbados have to bear. Those things are plain and simple wrong.

Sir, what has been happening in the last ten years and perhaps I need to be frank and say what has been happening in this Administration and in our Administration before is that there is a lot of what my mother would call "whizzy-whizzing", nobody wants to come forward. So on the campaign trail or maybe in a barber shop somebody would say: 'Man, I had to pay \$10 000 to a particular politician or to a particular public servant', but when the day of reckoning comes and you say to him we are fighting corruption and I want you to come forward he says: 'No, no, no boh, not me', he is not willing to step forward and give evidence of his wrongdoing. Mr. Speaker, the reason for that is obvious because in a situation of corruption it involves a corruptor and, I hate to say it, a 'corruptee', so the person who pays the bribe is as dishonest and as crooked as the person who receives it. Therefore, there are business people in Barbados who sit back in their executive chairs and they will recount to you gleefully how they gave so and so \$100 000 to get this contract but in his mind he has done nothing wrong, for him that is the cost of doing business. Also, they would tell you that they are not averse to doing business but business in that sense is not proper commercial arrangements, business in that context takes on a whole different meaning and in his mind and in the mind of the other collaborators they have done nothing wrong but it is the person on the other end, the person who gets it, who is the criminal but the persons who pay it somehow is washed in the blood of the lamb and not tainted by the

wrongdoing. Mr. Speaker, that attitude has to stop and we have to tell the people of Barbados that in certain circumstances the corruptor will be treated as harshly by the authorities as the person who benefits from the corruption.

Mr. Speaker, what we need in Barbados is not just a legislative commitment and a commitment which is buttressed by fines, we have to find a way to reverse the mind-set of Barbadians and of the people who come into our shores to do business which says that the way to get your process completed quickly is to pay a bribe. Now, you know, Sir, that we have a lot of Government departments that have the fate of householders and business people in their hands. Sir, I want to make it clear that I am not at all suggesting that any Government agency is doing anything that is wrong but for the purpose of this exercise I want to say that you could take for example the Town Planning Office. The Town Planning Office is known for its delay, the Government Electrical Department is also known for its delay and numerous other Government agencies that have an obligation to dispense licences under certain statutory authorities are all known for their delays so what happens is that somebody who has no patience with the delay seems to feel or takes on the view well the only way to get rid of this 'love jam' is to offer a reward, and believe you me, Sir, there is always somebody there willing to take it. When I say that we have to reverse that mind-set, we have to make it clear to all people either in Barbados or coming into Barbados that all people are going to be treated fairly and with all possible dispatch and therefore the concept of a bribe will not help you. You see, Sir, if the Town Planning Department always deliver a planning permission within six months then there would be no need for anybody to come and say well I got to bribe the Town Planning officer because he knows he will get it within six months but when it gets into year 3 and 4 is when he begins to feel well I got to do something to get out of this situation. Therefore Government has to play its role by re-engineering its processes to make sure that when the public is depending on a service that that service is delivered with all possible dispatch because then the incentive for paying a bribe or for a corrupt activity vanishes.

We also have to insist, Sir, that the rules of Government procurement are followed and are transparent because if the rules of Government procurement are followed and they are transparent then the entire process of offering a Government contract will be done under the light of day. Sir, under the bright sunshine of transparency there is little opportunity for corrupt practices to grow.

Sir, the last Government has to take the blame for bringing Barbados into this situation and I make no apology for it. Mr. Speaker, project after project after project were executed by the last Administration and none of them went to tender. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have rules

called the Financial Management and Audit Rules and we have spent many of the last few weeks drilling into the minds of our new Ministers that these rules must be followed and we have had a full dialogue with the Permanent Secretaries and all heads of departments so that together we all understand that going forward Barbados intends to follow the Financial Management and Audit Rules which requires a public tendering process for any contract worth more \$200 000. If a contract is worth more than \$ 200 000, the rules says must go to tender then, Sir, one must ask why a Democratic Labour Party Administration could award a contract for the construction of high-rise units at Valery at a cost of near \$20 million, without going to tender. As I said, the threshold was \$200 000, but the last Administration awarded a contract to build Valery at a cost of \$18 million or \$19 million, without it going to tender, Sir. They awarded a contract to build Valery, without it going to tender. They awarded a contract to build other high-rise units at places such as Exmouth Gap, all without going to tender, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, upon taking office, we discovered that a contract in excess of Barbados \$119 million was awarded by the Port for the building of a berth, without going to tender, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when you reach the point where it suits a political party and a Government of the day to dispense and to award vast contracts, all requiring taxpayers' dollars, without going to tender, Mr. Speaker, Sir, then you have reached the point where the Government of the day does not care about the people who elected them, and does not care about the fortunes of our country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a reason you have a tender process.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Barbados Transport Board over the last 10 years paid \$28 million to a particular company that was asked to rebuild its transmissions. Now, Sir, this is not a Barbados Transport Board debate but as the Member of Parliament for one of the hardest hit areas by buses, I would want to ask the Honourable Member for Christ Church West how many buses would \$28 million have bought over 10 years.

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot hear asides, neither can you, but there is a whisper telling me at least 100 buses. Mr. Speaker, Sir, \$28 million to repair transmissions, not a single tender, not a contract, it was nothing more.... Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot call it a gentleman's agreement, Sir, because gentlemen do not conduct Government's Business in that way, but the threshold of \$200 000 year after year, after year was ignored by the Barbados Transport Board and one company got \$28 million in fees. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I mentioned that company because two Ministers of the last Administration were driving and are still driving two BMW X5 Series

vehicles that are registered to that company that received \$28 million of Barbados Transport Board taxpayers' fund without a contract and without going to tender over the last two years but somehow, Sir, that seemed alright to them. It does not seem alright to me.

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is something that we pointed out to them time and time again, and they would drive into Parliament Yard with the X5 Series BMW and would park them down there, would walk up those steps and would come into these hallowed Chambers and pontificate as if they were blessed, without understanding that there is something called decency, accountability, transparency and a conscience. Mr. Speaker, Sir, for them there was nothing wrong. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the problem for them is that standards of public behaviour do not countenance that kind of activity, because it is fundamental that no person who takes an oath to maintain the public trust could, for any reason, be allowed to drive up and down a vehicle which is owned by a company that their own ministry was paying \$28 million a year, Sir, as if the people of Barbados were not seeing.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, nobody in the Opposition went and dug up in anybody's ministry files, what happened was that people who worked in that particular ministry put one and one together and dared to put the Minister's X5 Series BMW on Facebook. The people are not fools, and I do hope that all of my colleagues on this side and my colleague on the other side will forever accept that we hold a higher duty of responsibility to our people, the people who put us in, the people who we are bound to serve, and understand that they may smile with us but that they will not forgive us for these indiscretions. What you may feel is a benefit to you that you have a X5 Series BMW that you are driving around that you did not pay for and you may feel smart, but what may happen is that John Brown will pass him on the road and say good morning and as he turns away he is going to say: "yuh thief." You may not hear that part but that individual will have judged you.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, accountability must be the hallmark of our Barbados Labour Party Administration and in one of the documents of the Public Accounts Committee Report, which was not allowed to be tabled in Parliament, one of the Exhibits is an opinion by the Clerk of Parliament. Mr. Speaker, Sir, by the way, I want to make this Report of the Public Accounts Committee, 2013-2018, a document of this Honourable House. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we tried to lay the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, the last Administration said they did not know about the meeting, they were busy, they did not get the email, even though they had responded to it, that they could not get there, that they did not have enough notice and so this seminal document, this critical document was not

allowed to become a document of this Honourable Chamber, but it is here now and I hope that the public will avail themselves of the opportunity to look at it, given that it is now a document of this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in that opinion the Clerk cited from a work by a Queen's Counsel from Canada called David G. McGee. He said on the concept of accountability in public life that:

"Accountability is not just designed to catch out its subjects in an illegal practice..." He goes on: "Of course, one wishes to have controlled systems that are capable of doing this, but if accountability relied entirely on catching people out it would inevitably fall short of turning the country into a police state. Accountability is instead about instilling or enforcing an ethos of legal compliance and efficient practice. It works by motivating people in ways that are beyond their direct control to engage in desired conduct. At its highest level, if a Government is required to answer on the Floor of the House for its actions, this is a real incentive for Ministers to avoid improper or imprudent actions that are likely to be revealed by parliamentary scrutiny.

Sir, this then brings me to the work of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). You see, Sir, the work of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is able to shine the light of day on the activity of a Government. It is felt that by having a robust Public Accounts Committee (PAC) process, it will discourage people from engaging in improper activity, precisely because it can be found by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). Sir, let me share with you our experience of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) between the years 2013 and 2018.

Mr. Speaker, there is one public servant, the General Manager of the National Housing Corporation, who was called on to give evidence before the Committee, Sir. I believe that individual showed up on one or two occasions and gave evidence. Thereafter, on the last day she gave evidence we were discussing the Financial Rules and the threshold for awarding contracts. Sir, the next day when she was due to resume her testimony, unfortunately the Committee was informed that she was ill and was seeing her doctor and would submit a medical certificate. The next time she was due to give evidence, the Public Accounts Committee was informed that she was ill and seeing her doctor and could not give evidence. The next time she was to appear before the Committee, the Committee was informed that she was ill, seeing her doctor and could not give evidence. On and on and on and on and ill and ill and ill, and cannot give evidence for month after month after month of being summoned. I believe it is correct to say that the individual sent in about 15 consecutive sick certificates.

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: That individual never came back before the Public Accounts Committee to give evidence. The Chairman of the National Housing Corporation's Board was summoned as well. He wrote first to say that he was in court that day. He was given another day and another summons, and then he wrote to say he was in the Magistrates' Court that day. Then more summonses were sent and he stopped writing to say anything.

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: He did not show up a single time before a sub-committee of this Parliament, Mr. Speaker. In sheer frustration, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee wrote to your predecessor, His Excellency the Speaker. The Rules say that if you are in contempt of a Select Committee, it is for the House to deliver the sanction. There are other interpretations but I think that is where that went. We appealed to the Chamber and to the Speaker to sanction that individual so that he could be made to come and give evidence. The correspondence which we got back from His Excellency the Speaker was downright discouraging. If I could find it, I would read it, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. D.D. MARSHALL: The Speaker basically said that there was so much confusion about the Rules of the Public Accounts Committee and that there was also a Bill which was tabled to revoke the legislation and so on, and on and on, but that he would have a word with the gentleman. That is the equivalent of calling the police for a man. We called the parliamentary police for a man and got back garbage from the then presiding officer. The life of that Parliament and that Committee came to an end, and that individual never showed up.

Act 3, Scene 1: The Committee summoned the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Housing, the Minister of Public Works. Was there anybody else? We summoned the Minister of Finance because he was responsible for dealing with all of the financial arrangements in relation to the National Housing Corporation. For example, the Ministry of Finance did not approve the award of contracts from National Housing Corporation, but the Minister of Finance, despite what his staff said, still signed the contracts. The Ministry of Finance did not have the money to pay the contractor nor did the National Housing Corporation, so the Minister of Finance directed the Central Bank of Barbados to declare a dividend which the Solicitor General's Office said was unlawful, and to take up \$27 million of the Housing Credit Fund to pay the contractor who got the contract without a tender. We, therefore, felt the then Minister of Finance should have come.

The Minister of Public Works at that time used to be the Minister of Housing, and this work all started under him. There is an instance where, on the documents on the file, a project that was in our view unlawfully awarded for \$18 million had its price increased less than a year later to \$27 million without explanation. The Permanent Secretary said he did not support this and it had to be justified. It would make interesting reading of the work of the Public Accounts Committee, because you would see that despite the refusal of the Permanent Secretary to go along with it, the Minister rushed ahead, so he was summoned too.

The last Minister of Housing, the then Member for St. Lucy, who perhaps used to be the most popular politician in the Democratic Labour Party circle, was summoned too, because he continued the same thing. Mr. Speaker, not one of them showed up to answer the summons to the Public Accounts Committee. They brought lawyer, legal opinion and all kinds of stuff. They did not show up, Sir. I am not trying to be flippant, but what I am trying to paint a picture of, Sir, is a decade of mismanagement of the country's financial affairs and major projects going out to tender, and that with the Public Accounts Committee, whose job it is to ensure that the light of day is shone upon the activity, public servants and chairmen of boards behaved with contempt and nothing was done. Then to crown it all off, the Ministers, when summoned, behaved with the same contempt.

Now, Sir, in the country we used to ask whether "neither one could tell the other one come back?" That, Sir, was the morass in which Barbados found itself within the last ten years. Sir, the reports of individuals who say that they had to pay bribes to get ZR permits and taxi permits should scare any right-thinking Barbadian. Who would you pay a bribe to in order to get a ZR or taxi permit, Sir? You do not pay it to a bus conductor. You do not pay it to a teacher. You have to pay it to somebody who has influence on the grant of those permits. Sir, if a right-thinking person does not see the indecency in that, then we are lost as a society. Mr. Speaker, an individual in my constituency confided to me, "Mr. Marshall, do something about this, I had to pay \$10 000 to get a permit." Mr. Speaker, I do not know if he was telling me the truth or if he was telling me a lie but I know that he told me so and I also know that is a story that echoes from the north to the south and from the east to the west. I know, Sir that on the eve of the last election that about 160 permits were issued in the space of two weeks, I know that too, Sir, and while I can bring no evidence of a connection between the two, I feel that these things need to be looked at, they need to be investigated, we need to tear back the walls, Sir, open the vaults and look at the paper work to see what was going wrong.

Mr. Speaker, it will take courage but I have always felt, Sir, that I have been blessed with the courage that it will take. Mr. Speaker, this is not a scenario that is unique

to Barbados. In the country of Belize, Sir, there had two Government ministers one of whose name was Minister Marion and these two Government ministers were sued by the Attorney-General of Belize and this happened less than 10 years ago, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are quoting from a document?

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: I am not quoting anything, Sir, but I am looking at the decision of the Caribbean Court of Justice and I believe that you do not need to make a decision of the court a document of the House. Mr. Speaker, in the opening judgment of the then President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, Mr. de la Bastide, he summarises that the then Attorney-General of Belize brought a claim against two former Government ministers alleging that during the time that they were Ministers in the Belizean Government they arranged the transfer of 56 parcels of State land to a company beneficially owned or controlled by them. It is alleged that the money paid for these 56 parcels of land was almost \$1 million below market value and that the transaction was undertaken deliberately without lawful authority and in bad faith. In Belize the Attorney-General sued those ministers and they appealed all the way to the Caribbean Court of Justice because on the basis of certain technicalities they felt that the process that was taken was wrong but they were not successful in their resistance. They were not successful, Sir, and the words of de la Bastide that I believe should come to haunt any politician who for private gain robs the Treasury are these, Sir:

"If the allegations made against the defendants, the two Government Ministers are true, they disclosed an egregious dereliction of that fiduciary duty, a breach of trust and a substantial conflict between their private interest and their public duty and in such a case, the Attorney-General is entitled to call in aid equitable principles. Equity would regard all personal profits and advantages gained by any use or abuse of the men's status as public servants to be for the benefit of the State."

Mr. Speaker, we went in a campaign telling the people of this country that we are going to hold members of the last Government for whom we can find proof of wrongdoing accountable. Mr. Speaker, that was no idle threat. Mr. Speaker, I have had the benefit of hearing many Attorneys-General speak from this Chamber and beyond and some may say, Sir, that what I am about to say may be beneath the dignity of the office I hold but, Sir, I, for so long as I am Attorney-General of this Chamber intended to strain every sinew of mine to the point of breaking. I intend to engage every agency of the Crown, either in Barbados or outside of Barbados, I intend to do everything that I can, Sir, to bring the perpetrators of that dishonest activity to heel because, Sir, by engaging in that kind of dishonest

conduct they have robbed you, they have robbed me, they have robbed our children, they have destroyed this economy and they have given Barbados a bad name and I for one will have none of it. So, I echo the words of Mr. de la Bastide, “personal profits and advantages gained by any use or abuse of the men’s status as public servants must be for the benefit of the State”, so they need to take warning, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I know that people can find all kinds of ways to try to hide everything, we know that but we also know, Sir, that in time.... Sir, I represent a rural constituency and I am from the country but you know the old people always say that you can hide and buy land but you cannot hide and work it, and every single one of those individuals whom we can identify are going to have to give an explanation to the people of this country as to how they came by those ill- gotten gains and prove to the people of this country that they were come by honestly.

Mr. Speaker, there was no Integrity in Public Life legislation to govern their activity. There was no public declarations of assets were required so the truth be told, we have no effective mechanism of really finding out what they had before and what they left with but as a highly regarded criminal lawyer you know that inferences can be made and when a Government Minister comes into office with significant debt and we on this side happen to know what the salary of a Government Minister is, we happen unfortunately to know, the people of this country are going to be told by me that there is reason to enquire into the method by which certain individuals were able to take certain benefits.

Mr. Speaker, the courts are going to be involved and I want to say that I have already begun to put together a team of individuals to advise and to help to direct the process. Sir, let me say that this work will not be done by public servants. I have got the permission of the Prime Minister to engage such skills as I need from outside of the public service and even from outside of Barbados to be able to help us to ferret out the incidences of corruption in Barbados that we know about Sir, but for which we have no proof.

This brings us, Sir, to today’s business in the Chamber. We are bringing a piece of legislation which has as its centre the obligation of persons in public life to live up to a higher standard. We know there will always be people who will be honest but we also know there will always be people who will be dishonest. We try to ensure that individuals who we appoint to Boards and so on are of the highest calibre but from time to time we will make an error in our judgment of those individuals but objectively the integrity of public life seeks to establish a going in benchmark so that when an individual goes into public life he or she has to make a declaration as to what his or her

assets are and when he or she leaves public life he or she has to make a declaration of what those assets are and periodically, during his or her period in public life the declaration has to be filed. Sir, it is not lost on us that in a small society like Barbados where privacy has always been something that we guard jealously forcing people who volunteer to come to public life to disclose their assets is going to be a very tall hurdle to jump. I can recount to Members of this Chamber that in the last few weeks as I have tried to find people to serve on Boards within my Ministry and outside of my Ministry, one or two of them have said to me, I am not prepared to serve because I am not prepared to tell the public of Barbados what I own and, Sir, I understand that sentiment. Barbadians have always felt that anybody who was trying to find out what they own was “gipsy”. Keep out of my business, but in order for our society to deliver a higher standard of accountability to our people, we simply have to accept that a declaration of assets is one of those things which would become a way of life. The reality is that other than guarding your privacy, if you have nothing to hide, then you have nothing to worry about. That is simple. Board members are not going to get rich from being on a Board. The average Board member will get about \$130 a month and perhaps the most of the Government’s Boards do not even see them being engaged in commercial activity and we really must ensure that our people start to accept that they are modern incidences of governance that will require them to make some concessions towards the public trust because there might be 50 boards in Government and 5 x 100 would be 500. Let us say 500 Barbadians who are honoured to sit on Boards but each of them has to be held accountable to the other 270 000 people on whose behalf those Boards act. Therefore, as much of an imposition as it is, it is one that is in the good governance of our country. I assure the public that any declarations filed under this legislation will be filed and kept confidential. Any individual within the Commission who discloses any of that information will be subject to severe penalties. It is not a case where you will make your declaration of assets and it will be in a file cabinet someplace so that anybody can walk in and go and shuffle through the cabinet and say let me see what Marshall has now. It is not going to operate on that level but as a precursor to that statutory commitment, all of the Members of this current Cabinet of Barbados have answered the call to filing declarations of assets even though it is not required by any statute and that is a brave thing. It is not an easy thing for some Members because they have to try and figure out what it is. I asked my wife what she owned because I had to disclose her assets too.

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: I am not so sure, Sir, that I got the truth. I am a little bit worried. Sir, I would caution my colleagues on this side, be careful for your cross examination but the fact is that we are committed to it and

we are prepared to take the lead. So many times in the last Administration they were not prepared to take the lead or the high ground on anything and when you do that, Sir, then everything sinks to the bottom. On This Side, Sir, we are prepared to lead by example and I believe that by now, all of the various declarations are or ought to have been filed.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is new and I do not plan on going through it with the House of Assembly now. It is online, and it has been online for the longest time and in this current form it is on Parliament's website. I invite members of the public to look at it and to critique it because this is not just about regulating the behaviour of people in public life and no more, Sir. It is also about bringing a new ethos of accountability to Barbados which must last us for two and three generations and today, Sir, it affects us, but there is another generation of Barbadians who are in the University of the West Indies (UWI) today or who may not even be today but who would be walking into this Chamber and sitting on This Side of the House of Assembly as ministers in the 2030s, 2040s and the 2050s. What we do today is not just to deal with today's problem. What we do today is intended to bring about a new ethos so that Barbados can function more efficiently.

Mr. Speaker, this Commission will see staff on the Commission having investigative powers. One of the criticism that is rightly made against the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Bill and Act, because it was eventually passed, is the fact that if their Commission saw there was a discrepancy on your Declaration they could summon you to attend before them and ask you questions. That is it. If they saw a Member driving the BMW Five Series, they could summon you and they could ask you questions but that is the extent of the power. Under the regime as we are setting up, Sir, the new Integrity in Public Life Commission will actually have investigative staff who will be charged with the responsibility, not of snooping into people's business but who will be charged with the responsibility of looking into and investigating issues as, and when they arise, relating to corruption in public life. Rather than just sending you a sterile summons which based on the Committee of Public Accounts experience, the people might decide they are not coming anyway. In this instance, nobody has to wait for you to come anywhere. They will have the power to go to Barbados Licensing Authority as we have and see who owns what. They would have those powers because you cannot truly talk about integrity in public life unless there is an affective arm which is then buttressed by a course of arms. Sir, we are either serious about this or we are not. I am serious about it and I know that my colleagues and I are serious about it too. It is a challenge and a deep regret that we have had to spend our first four weeks in office, instead of getting on with the Government's programme, trying to deal with what contracts have been awarded and trying to look behind

certain financial arrangements so that we can untie the Government's hand and free us up as we go forward, but the problem is that as long as there is a taint on any aspect of Government activity, that taint will spread to every aspect of Government activity. It is incumbent on us to draw a double line so that we can deal with what they have left, root it out, and move on with a cleaner slate as possible.

Sir, the people of Barbados will have an opportunity to attend before a Select Committee to debate this Bill. We have promised to be inclusive in how we govern. We know that the genesis of this Bill was a decision taken by the Barbados Labour Party in Opposition. Notwithstanding that members of the public had the opportunity to comment on it online, we believe, and especially given the make-up of Parliament, no disrespect intended to the Leader of the Opposition, we believe that this is an instance where we have to allow the people of Barbados an opportunity to walk into this place and say to us as Parliamentarians, "Minister I do not agree with this", because this is what the Opposition must do.

I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition, acquit himself having been equipped to do that task. It is important that we have a broad-based discussion on this subject and Bill. At the end of the debate we are going to Select Committee and I believe that the rules related to the work of the Committee will allow the activity to be streamed and made public. So that, whatever contributions are made, unless for some reason confidentiality is required, the people of Barbados will be able to participate through Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and live streaming.

Sir, again it is about accountability, creating a new ethos and this is not something you do overnight. I do not fool myself, passing one piece of legislation will not do the trick for us. Passing a law against cell phones did not immediately root out the problem. Many people instinctively grab their phone and start using it. It sometimes takes years before that new attitude will take place. In addition, we also have to give the public the tools that they need to fully participate in public life. We are committed to bringing what is called "Sunshine Legislation", also known as freedom of information. This is part of what has hindered us as an Opposition because we were never able to write to a Government department and request that we see the submissions made on a Town and County Planning application. We had no authority in law to do so.

On This Side, we have recognised that with a new Barbadian electorate we have to treat with them in the way they not only demand, but in way that it is a moral imperative. We are going to as quickly as possible bring to this Chamber legislation which will see information in

relation to public process and activity being public. We are about the business of the public, but somehow for generation after generation we feel it is alright to keep what we are doing in their interest away from them, as if their minds cannot digest what it is that we are doing and not equipped to handle the technicalities of the decision-making.

Mr. Speaker, absolutely not, I do not fool myself. I do not think anyone on this side fools ourselves. We represent the people, but there are many thousands of Barbadians who are more intelligent than we are. They choose not to offer themselves in public life, but it does not mean that they cannot make an input into public life. As a part and parcel of this suite of legislation, we will get nowhere if we do not include freedom of information, and I look forward to that day. We all make decisions in good faith. We do not always make the right decisions, but as Ministers we are not asked to be right, we are asked to use our best judgment in the interest of the people. As long as we use our best judgment in the interest of the people, then we are able to defend anything that we do and any decision that we make.

History will determine if we were right. I like to feel that as a lawyer I am right and Mr. Speaker, you and I have that in common, but whether we are right or not is not determined by our puny minds. It is determined by the court, and sometimes the court is wrong. We have to accept that just because we are the Ministers or the politicians that we have no claim to be the right ones, all that we are asked to do is to keep the public trust and make the best decisions that we can. Therefore, I welcome the day when people will say to the Attorney General's Chambers they want to see the documents on a file relating to something that the Chambers is doing in the name of the people of Barbados.

What I will say to you though, is that over and apart from that, this Government as part of our commitment to being inclusive and people-centered, we not waiting for you to ask. We intend to consult in every way, but the consultative process is a process at the start but in order for it to really take hold in our country, we have to accept that information does not belong to me or you but it belongs to the public. There is no point berating what has been happening over the years. We have talked about documents falling off of trucks. Why should it have to fall off of a truck? Why should a contract for the construction of a building using taxpayers' money have to fall off a truck?

Mr. Speaker, I mean there was something so sacred about it that the taxpayer living in Checker Hall or Edgecliff St. John cannot know what the Government has agreed to do on his behalf. I do not subscribe to that view. Everything that I do as part of my responsibility as Attorney-General and those of my colleagues who act in their own ministerial responsibilities have to feel that part

of being accountable is that the people whom you serve have the right to know.

Mr. Speaker, as I wrap up my comments, these are early days for a Barbados Labour Party Administration. We have made solemn commitments to the people of Barbados. We are going to be judged by how we discharge those commitments and the degree to which we discharge those commitments. We have committed to hold to the tenets of good governance and to integrity in public life. I want the members of the public to feel that should any member on this side, I speak not only for myself but for all of my parliamentary colleagues, and even the Leader of the Opposition, should any of us fall away from those standards we have to be prepared to accept the consequences.

This is not our Parliament and even though we often say our Government, that "our" is bigger than the members of the Barbados Labour Party Executives, Barbados Labour Party Parliamentary Group, Barbados Labour Party National Council or bigger than the 14 000 or 15 000 people that make up the Barbados Labour Party.

It is bigger than the DEMS, it is bigger the UPP and it is bigger than the Office of the Leader of the Opposition. It is bigger than all of us, it is about accountability and transparency for our country.

I remind members of the public so that there can be no doubt that the level of fines that we originally committed to will be honoured by this party and that level of fines will go back, so let there be no doubt. I am happy for members of the public to attend before the Select Committee and deal with it too because I am anxious to hear them say that it is not just that you all as parliamentarians set this level of fines, it is that we support you in setting that level of fines, and so if somebody gets convicted there is nobody to come and say 'cud dear', no, Sir. The people of Barbados, I believe, can be trusted with good judgement and I want them to come to the Select Committee and participate fully and if they feel that there is something in there that should not be in there, tell us, and if they feel that something else should be, tell us.

I will only say, Sir, that we are a Government in a hurry. Sir, while I live by the mantra that 'hurried bird don't build good nest', I say we are a Government in a hurry because there are too many things that have gone wrong in our society in the last decade and we cannot take our time to fix them and that is why most of us are in our offices at 10 o'clock at night. It is not that we have the monopoly on hard work but we know that the public demand these things of us and they are not prepared to hear that we will get around to dealing with it in due course or maybe next year or maybe by 2021. We are a Government

in a hurry because we have the interest of the people of Barbados to protect and to serve in the shortest order.

I believe, Sir, that the mandate given to the Barbados Labour Party at the polls demonstrates that the country holds us in high regard and that the country has a lot of goodwill for us but it is goodwill that we cannot abuse by taking our time and one step today and another step next week. I therefore make the point, Sir, because I have discussed this with both the Prime Minister and the Leader of Government Business in the House, that the work of the Select Committee will be done over the summer so we might have to give up a few days of recovery from Crop Over so that as soon as possible after the summer recess we can come back to Parliament, complete our debate and see this legislation enacted and become the law of Barbados. The year 2018 will not come to an end without seeing integrity legislation not just enacted but enforced.

With those words, Sir, I am obliged to you, and beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that, Sir and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Thank you so very much, Mr. Speaker. With your leave and if it be appropriate may I begin my submission by pausing to offer congratulatory words to the Acting Prime Minister on that acting appointment. I share her imagined joy at being elevated and anointed with the oil of gladness above her fellows and I am sure she brings adequate capacity to the assignment.

I want to begin, Mr. Speaker, where my learned friend the Honourable Attorney-General and Honourable Member for St. Joseph began and offer sincere commendation to the integrity group in Barbados for having evolved that movement and for bringing the spotlight of focus upon this very important matter which for a long time Barbadians have been saying we need to address as a Parliament in this country. Like the Honourable Attorney-General I do not know what necessarily their specific and immediate motivation would have been but I think their efforts thus far are more than highly commendable and that this Administration in its early days have come to this point where they are introducing this Bill to this Chamber, I think speaks to a measure of success achieved by that group in bringing that focus on the matter of integrity in public life in Barbados. Also, I want to applaud the Government, the Administration of the day, for making this move very early on in its life to ensure that this piece of legislation comes for debate and passage hopefully in this Assembly. This

Administration has hurriedly, very quickly, sent signals of its seriousness about a few important things. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East has certainly led in sending clearly the signal that they are serious about addressing the sewerage problems both in Bridgetown the City and on the South Coast of Barbados and he and the Government are to be commended for that. We have had some serious signals sent with respect to the intention of this Administration quite early to tackle the issue of lack of sanitation services and lack of transport public service for the people of Barbados, but I do have to be honest and to suggest to this Chamber that I question the level of seriousness that attends the bringing of this Bill on integrity in public life before this Chamber today but I am fully persuaded that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph can be taken at face value and that his heart is fully engaged with this matter. I have heard him speak with respect to these matters not only here today in this Chamber and elsewhere in public but I have heard him in private conversations not before the glare of the camera, not within earshot of John Public but in quiet conversations very passionately espousing the views that we need to do something about legislating in a better way for integrity in public life in Barbados and expressing the strong, strong view that those who are found to be afoul of the tenets of such integrity platforms should be made to feel the weight of the law to the extent that the legislation provides. So I know that he sold out to this, but I am made to question the level of seriousness that obtains on the other side around this manner principally because this Administration would have when in Opposition circulated a draft Bill for public scrutiny and public comment. Signalling very clearly it was their intention not to walk in the paths of their predecessors and signalling very clearly it was their intention to ensure that the right way was clearly established in the minds of those who are principals in the administration of Government and public life in Barbados and clearly establishing that we were serious in making every necessary punitive response where breaches were engaged in at the highest levels in the public service, in the public space and in the corridors of Government in Barbados. Having circulated that draft legislation for public scrutiny and comment that legislation having involves the provision of heavy fines of up to \$500 000 and/or five years imprisonment, \$250 000 on summary conviction and/or two years for those who run afoul of the legislation on the aspect of corruption and those who enable corruption to then having brought a Bill to this Honourable House where those significantly heavy fines which may have constituted a real deterrent are reduced to the levels of \$20 000 and \$10 000 causes me, and I echo the sentiment that I hear coming from John Public, and causes the public to think that we are not absolutely serious about this because you cannot provide legislation which outlines clearly breaches and then provides for fines which constitute no more than a slap on the wrist. Mr. Speaker, Sir, of course, with the exception of the Honourable Members for St. Joseph, St.

James North, Christ Church West, and the Leader of the Opposition, these fines now in this Bill are but slaps on the wrist.

Asides.

Bishop J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph in leading this presentation suggested that there were reasons why provision for these fines came down and by such significant amounts, but the Honourable Member did not go on to give us those reasons. We are left to speculate as to what those reasons might have been that caused this Administration....

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this House. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the Honourable Member to suggest that the fines in a particular Bill would be nothing more than a tap on the wrist for certain members. Of course, the Honourable Member counted the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, I would have to suggest that the Honourable Member not only is misleading this Honourable House but is certainly misleading this Honourable House because I would not have to suggest to the Honourable House that this Bill would certainly prove how poor these Honourable Members really are.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Michael West, please continue.

Bishop J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that was a tongue-in-cheek remark and you would note that I included myself in that group of persons.

Mr. SPEAKER: Noted, Honourable Member.

Bishop J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, believe me when I tell you, I am nowhere as well blessed as those three Honourable Members whose names I have facetiously mentioned.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please be careful with the Parliamentary language.

Bishop J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I was saying, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph told us there were reasons as to why those fines came down but the Honourable Member did not go on to enumerate or identify for us what those reasons might have been that guided the thinking and the sentiment of the Government in revising the provisions for those fines so significantly and bringing them to such a lower level. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member offers kindly to us the suggestion that we need to feel ensured that those fines will go back up,

that we can rest assured that those fines will go back up. Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph said, I believe that and I accept that the fines will go back up, but what bothers me is why the fines would have been brought down in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a lot of intelligence represented on the other side, there is tremendous intellectual capacity. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it would not have taken the Barbadian public to bring it to the attention of this Government that what is represented in the Bill now before us far departs from what was circulated for scrutiny, discussion and consultation in a draft Bill. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it would not have taken the Barbadian public to advise and to enlighten the Honourable Attorney-General, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Acting Honourable Prime Minister, they are all Attorneys-at-law. It would not have taken the voice of the Barbadian public to persuade them that there is something which is at odds here, because if you circulate for my consumption a draft Bill which provides for fines of \$500 000, \$250 000, five years imprisonment and two years imprisonment and then you come with an actual Bill in which these sums are significantly lowered. It does not take anybody with brain power beyond that which exists over there in this Honourable Chamber to draw to our attention that something is amiss here. The fact that you can only act to reverse that when the voices of Barbadians are raised in protest against it suggests that it was not your intention when this Bill was brought here, to provide for fines higher than are indicated in the Bill. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is okay to say that we hear you, but surely that could not have had escaped the learned minds on the other side that that departure was too drastic and that it would have incurred the query and scrutiny of the Barbadian public.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my concern today in this matter is as to how this Bill, as well as the fees debated in this discussion would relate to some matters which I consider to be of tremendous importance and I simply echo what I hear in the public arena of Barbados. The Honourable Attorney-General and Member for St. Joseph has made reference to freedom of information and access to information. I think when we are going to discuss integrity in public life, whether debated in these Honourable Chambers or outside of these walls, we certainly will have to make reference to the matter of the deficiencies in legislation in Barbados which relate to the public, and even principals who act in the name of the public having access to information.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other thing would be the matter of the policies relative to public procurement. Mr. Speaker, Sir, not only those policies but the practices relative to public procurement because as we have seen in the recent past, which has been alluded to by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph already in this debate, policy and practice are sometimes very distant cousins. So, I would be interested

in hearing how the fees that flow this debate and further examining how the stipulations in this present Bill before us will address matters which relate to public procurement, both in terms of policy and in practice.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the award of public contracts is another big area, including public-private-partnerships. The Barbadian public will tell us in this Honourable Chamber that these are areas, especially in recent years, that have caused a whole level of cynicism to obtain around the business of political life and the practice of ministerial governance in Barbados, because we have seen and we have heard stories which are now becoming legendary of apparent corrupt practices around the business of procurement, around the business of public-private-partnerships, around the business of award of public contracts.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, campaign financing is another big area. I do not recall, if I am incorrectly suggesting that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph did not touch on this I would be happy to stand corrected, but campaign financing is a major area. We cannot properly talk about providing for integrity in public life unless we at the same time or equally speak with intensity on the matter of campaign financing in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other major issue that will be of concern to me so far as the themes of this debate are concerned and the provision of this Bill will be the matter is enhanced justice delivery in Barbados. There are several Members on the other side who are involved in legal practice profession and I am sure they understand, perhaps even far better than I do, and yourself, Mr. Speaker, Sir, one of the leading legal luminaries in Barbados now, one of the most prominent or preeminent criminal lawyers in Barbados, it would not escape your attention, certainly if it does that of the others, that the matter of the delivery of justice in Barbados has to be enhanced and while we seek to enhance that, we have got to guard against threats which potentially can corrupt the delivery of justice in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am saying that these are themes which must emanate from any serious and genuine discussion/debate around the business of integrity in public life in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, lack of integrity in public life can undermine all that the current Administration is seeking now to do, and urgently so, under the Barbados Economic Transformation and Recovery Plan. All that we are seeking to do to pull Barbados back from the brink, all that we are seeking to do to put in place mechanisms to ensure that as we go forward not only as an economy but as a society and as a political entity that we get it right; all of that can be undermined by the impact of lack of integrity in public life. This is not just something which relates simply to one person here being corrupt or a group of people there being incorrupt. It has implications for how we do as a nation state going forward, both societally and as an

economy, and so this debate is very important in that context.

Corruption has the capacity to undermine the legitimacy of our key institutions in Barbados. Some would suggest that this undermining and level of erosion has already set in because of the practices of the last Administration. I heard in this Chamber today, we all heard, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph lamenting the fact that the Public Accounts Committee was frustrated in its attempt to do its work in the name of this institution and on behalf of the people of Barbados. It was frustrated by principals on the other side who sought to serve the interests of each other by that frustration. That is perhaps a small reference to a very potentially large challenge which we would face as a nation, and all I am saying is that lack of integrity in public life is something which has to be dealt with. It has to be dealt with forcefully and it has to be dealt with urgently because of its potential to corrupt and to undermine key institutions of our democratic practice here in Barbados in and outside of this Parliament.

Our socio-economic development will always be hindered if we allow this beast called Corruption to run rampant and to run wild. If you look at historical development in many of the Latin American countries, you will see, because a wild beast called Corruption was allowed to have its way unchecked for long periods of time. Not only the economic development but the social development of those countries has been significantly impeded and impaired. We do not want to see that happen here in Barbados. When we talk about corruption, we are talking about a very evil beast, and when we talk about integrity in public life legislation, we are talking about a very important instrument, and we have to be very serious about that. We have to understand exactly the nature of the beast which we are fighting against, and therefore understand exactly the measure of force which we have to bring against that.

Lack of integrity in public life is a real threat to our democracy. Mr. Speaker, you did not have to face the polls in 2003, as I am sure you would have won, but it is my experience and my fairly sound knowledge that we saw emerging in Barbados from as early as 2003 the spectre of an evil which we need to put to death as quickly as we can. That evil is in the form of links developing between the political class and the criminal element in Barbados, especially around the business of drugs. I saw that from the other side. I saw it not practised by Members of the other side -- let me be clear about that -- but from the other side I saw that, in my view, being practised from the Opposition Side at the time.

Asides.

Bishop the Hon. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: I expressed concerns then, because when you have links developing between practitioners of elective politics and the criminal element, particularly the drug element, you are creating an evil the likes of which there is not the equal to.

Asides.

Bishop the Hon. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: The Jamaica experience is one of which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is reminding us in an aside. We sometimes think that these things happen far away from us and that they never happen on our shores. I saw, in my humble submission, the emergence of that beast at that time; that evil at that time where practising politicians were getting a little bit too close to the criminal element, courting them for their support both in terms of finance and in terms of turf. I think that got even worse in 2008. If I am alone in that observation, and if I am alone in that thinking, any of you present in this here Chamber can tell me that I am alone and that I am absolutely wrong, but it will not stop me from my view or from saying that. We have got to be careful, for when politicians look for financial support and turf support from elements which are illegitimate in their endeavours and whose only aim is to make sure that their cartels and their interests and their turf are protected and enhanced and enlarged, then we are in serious danger.

It is a bad thing for politicians to be in the pockets or in the hands of legitimate businessmen; that is a bad thing. It is an absolutely worse thing for politicians to be on the paid roster of those who are criminally bent and whose only interest is to enlarge themselves to the detriment of the Barbadian community, and by so doing, corrupt our democratic institutions. Our democracy stands to suffer unless we correct those things. Ours is a representative democracy, and therefore those who come here do so in the name of the people who elected them; all of us, Mr. Speaker. I come here in the name of the people of St. Michael West, and I am sure you are in no doubt of that, Mr. Speaker. You are here in the name of the people of St. Michael Central. We are all here in the name of the people of Barbados, and so as functionaries we must be made always to be aware, always to appreciate, always to be totally and fully seized of the fact that we seriously have been conferred upon an honour and a high sense of responsibility which we have to discharge in the most ethical way possible, while observing the highest possible standards of conduct. Therefore, the representatives of the people must be held accountable and must be held by the high standard being outlined in this Bill before us.

Mr. Speaker, in today's political economy we have to be careful about our national reputation; our reputation as a nation state. On the Transparency Index of measure for Corruption, I think, we are rated No. 25 with what they call an achievement of 60. Trinidad is at 77, and we are doing

better than them. The point I want to make here is that we have got to guard against having a reputation for being a developing nation state in which corruption is rife. While we guard that position and status, and even improve it, we need to seek to ensure that the cross-border nearness of places which are viewed as more corrupt than Barbados does not itself present a threat to us. In other words, corruption cannot be seen in localised terms. Corruption has to be understood in terms of its potential to reach across borders and persons from across borders reaching into our jurisdiction to perpetuate their acts of devilishness and to perpetrate criminal activity. Therefore, this matter of corruption for us must have a local focus while we remain on guard for how we may here be corrupted by people from outside. I think the legislation attempts to speak to that. In this hemisphere, it is said again in the literature associated with debates on these matters put out by Transparency International and others that one out of every three persons in this hemisphere is said to have accepted a bribe at some time. One out of every three is a lot. We know stories of what obtains at ridiculous in our neighbouring State of Trinidad. We know that and for a long time we have thought that Barbados is almost immunised from these things but we are not because these things have now come home to us and I think that the last 10 years tell us that in stark terms. Therefore, if we are going to respond to this, we cannot respond to it only at the level of paper and documentation, we have to respond to it fully. I think that in that regard the administration of the day has still some work left to do in persuading the Barbadian public that it is fully seized of the dangers posed by this kind of practice and it is fully committed to ensuring that it is stamped out and that it is eradicated and certainly minimise.

Mr. Speaker, there is something called the four "Is". I did a little bit of research with something called the "Is", the "Is" approach which I think that we need to adopt and this legislation to some extent goes somewhere to addressing the matter of corruption in public life from that "Is" perspective. The first "i" is information. As we said there needs to be more information. How can we legislatively improve to provide for freedom of information in Barbados? This has to be seen as an urgent consideration of this administration. I am glad to hear the Honourable Member for St. Joseph give the Chamber and the people of Barbados the assurance that this is an immediate consideration for the Government and something which is pending almost immediate action. The second is integrity. You have to set up an independent, autonomous body. This legislation, if I understand it correctly seeks to do that. Sir, autonomy, yes, because we have a practice in our political culture in the Caribbean of setting up institutions and creating positions and entities which with respect to autonomy do not enjoy the kinds of level of the independence that they ought to. Therefore their functioning is impaired, their functioning is deficient and I think that if we are going to seriously respond to the

business of lack of integrity in public life or move against corruption, we have to make sure that whatever mechanism we put in place is truly independent and truly autonomous. The structure of the Integrity Commission being identified in the Schedule here suggests that is the thinking of Government and therefore, it is to be applauded.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that more scope has to be formed for citizen participation beyond those ultra-formal institutions that we may put in place through this Parliament and by other means. I believe that citizen participation and mechanisms which give oversight, mechanisms which provide for accountability to be had from functionaries, this needs to be better encouraged. I believe that type of legislation, that type of mechanism is a corollary to this type of legislation which enshrines the Integrity Commission.

Mr. Speaker, insofar as the justice system in Barbados, I have alluded to this already in this term of Parliament at one of the earlier sitting. Mr. Speaker, we have, if we are talking seriously about addressing corruption and eradicating it, we have to see how we can strengthen and make more transparent and effective our judicial policies and practices relative to the judiciary. Now, we still, in my view, need to look at the legislation that governs the appointment of judges and our Chief Justice. I say again when this administration was in Opposition, it railed against the present legislation with respect to that matter, five long years, it came to office for 14 years and it did nothing to effect a change. It is back in office now with larger numbers, 29 persons, some people suggest 30 erroneously and therefore this administration should feel a huge sense of obligation to address that matter. We have to strengthen and make transparent those judicial system making them more effective.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to corruption, we have got to make provision in this legislation to clearly speak to the matter of cross border reach for the purpose of prosecution and for the purpose of punishment. Of course, those who are better blessed with legal minds and brain could better advise us as to where we need to go with respect to that but we cannot see when it comes to corruption Barbados as a 166 square mile entity, we have got to see the scope potentially for corrupt initiatives which might start on the other side but which might target Barbados at every level whether it is at the level of the political, the level of the judicial, the level of the public service or the level of private business.

The third “i” is impunity. There must be less impunity. Again, I have to ask the question. We know who will have to pay for us to get out of the mess that Barbados is in today, we know will have to pay for that, that is clear. We are all going to have to pay for the mess create but however, I repeat the question: Who is going to pay for

bringing us into this mess in the in the first place? I am encouraged by the voice of the Attorney-General today with respect to that which is not threatening but promising serious scrutiny and action about the deeds or misdeeds of those who led us to this sorry past. Well, I hope it goes beyond the level of threat and go beyond the level of promises because Barbadians are waiting with bated breath to see what actions this Government will take to deal with those who may have brought us to this mess if any criminal effort attended their actions while in office at the time.

Sir, fourthly, there must be less indifference. You cannot just pay lip service to this thing and I encourage every member over the other side to with full heart and full voice and with firm hand sign on to any effort to stamp out corruption at any level in Barbados. This legislation I believe should be part of suite of legislation that addresses campaign financing. Now, we need campaign financing in Barbados but some who are allegedly educated suggest that we do not need that. Now, I do not know how they derive that brand of wisdom but we need campaign financing for some very important reason and not take the time to explore all the reasons that constitute that need in my view but just a couple, a few. We need to be able to protect the integrity of the Party organisation in Barbados. The integrity of the name of the Barbados Labour Party has to be protected. The integrity of the name of the Democratic Labour Party has been salvaged. The integrity of the name of any of the other political parties in Barbados that offer themselves to the public in the future has to be protected and so it is in the interest of this administration to make sure that we have campaign financing. Sir, from a former life I know that it has come up at the level of our conferences. I do not know what has happened beyond that but that is something that needs to be brought forward or brought up to the top of the agenda and must be dealt with in the interest of the political Party organisations. I believe that with all my heart. We need campaign financing to ensure equity in the system. It cannot be a case of all men are equal but some are more equal than others. Those are poorest among us must feel that they have the privilege too of contesting and contending for high office in Barbados so long as they have the heart and the head to give that service. Their hands must be accommodated too and you cannot simply have a situation where certain folks blessed and highly endowed with a measure of this day’s wealth and I do not mean to attract at this moment the interest of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, I see he is looking this way. It was not my intention to attract his attention at this time but you know there is a saying, “who the cap fits let them wear it.” The point is it cannot be that the practice of politics in Barbados and the privilege of Government or office in Government in Barbados is limited to those who are well endowed with the legitimately earned resources or resources bestowed upon them or certainly resources acquired otherwise. It must be that those who do not have the endowments of material

wealth have a feeling that they can aspire to high office in Barbados because there is a level playing field so equity has to be provided in the system. We have to define the criminal element because they are people and you on the Other Side know it and we on This Side know it. There is an element in Barbados who believes it is one of their principle callings in life to try to buy politicians and that is how they seek to advance themselves because our system allows for contributions to political parties and to campaigns which are not recognised, recorded or made public. They believe they can give Minister So-and-So or politician "A" or politician "B" "X" amount of wherewithal and so politician "A" or "B" is indebted while in office and sometimes beyond office to them. Therefore we have got to define that criminal element and we have to nullify their intent to corrupt politicians and own politicians and thereby own the process and get the benefits and campaign financing will help for that and if we are serious about integrity legislation, campaign financing cannot be far behind. Else Integrity in Public Life legislation is a formality and not a reality and we have got to address that. I offer humbly this word of advice to the Other Side. Barbados Labour Party (BLP) has been the champion and the cause of democracy in Barbados. It has built the platform of democracy upon which our practice of governance is logged and soundly so, starting with the Grantley Adams era and Adult Suffrage. The expansion of democracy rights and privilege universally across Barbados so that is the legacy of this party and I have said in another life and said it repeatedly so inside the burrows of that organisation and outside that this 2018 Barbados Labour Party (BLP) team, while it wrestles with the issues and challenges around the economy must also see it as one of their principle mandates and priorities the business of further expanding the democratic privilege in Barbados to include economic democracy so that people like myself will be able to comfortably stand up and look the Honourable Member for Christ Church West fully in his eyes, face to face and not feel like I am unequal as a colleague. We are saying that we have to expand that platform of democracy even economic democracy however if we are to do that we have got to understand what our origin is, what is our heritage, what is the ethos of this organisation. We are builders of democracy and the day we would have, as a Parliament, and the day you would have, as an Administration, introduce and pass in this Parliament, legislation for campaign financing you would have built another plank in that platform of democracy and I humbly offer that word of advice and invite the urgent attention to that as a matter.

Mr. Speaker, too long we have been enduring a situation where the tales of corruption around procure award of contracts, those tales and legends have been myriad. We need to move to having a Contractor General in Barbados. Many voices in public for many a year now have been calling for that and this Administration needs to

consider whether or not we can go there. There are some people who ill-advisedly, in my view, suggest that matters of procurement should be otherwise than the responsibility of elected officials. I do not support that. When you are elected to the Parliament of Barbados and by process you are appointed to an office of ministerial administration and function it is your responsibility to be the principle, in my view, in ensuring that these matters are pursued so award of contract, in my view, should remain the purview ultimately of elected officials but we need a monitoring mechanism, we need an oversight mechanism. We can improve by providing for the position of Contractor General, give us a capacity to review and to monitor and to investigate matters relative to the award of public contracts. We need to ensure compliance with the terms of those contracts. We need to ensure that the culture of deficiencies obtaining around those contracts after implementation is curtailed.

I remember very well, there are some things I never forget, the former Prime Minister, the Honourable David Thompson stood in this place and said cost overruns would be a thing of the past in Barbados. I remember the Honourable John Boyce, Minister of Public Works at the time I think or the Minister of Health, whatever he was, he is no longer anyhow so that is immaterial, he stood in this Chamber and said cost overruns would be a thing of the past and they were talking with reference to the Highway Expansion and the contract that the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) was going into at the time. What have we had since? Cost overrun, after cost overrun, after cost overrun. Whether it is a Barbados Water Authority building or a Sanitation Service Authority building, a St. John Polyclinic, cost overrun after cost overrun. I am saying that we need to have a Contractor General office set up such that these things can be monitored, can be reviewed and that the deficiencies that lead to inefficiencies in the system can be taken out because cost overruns constitute a tremendous burden to the taxpayers of the country and often an unplanned burden to the taxpayers of the country. We need to ensure the absence of impropriety and irregularity. We operate in a cultural context where many of the principle functionaries of Government are known in a social relationship to people operating in the private sector who will tender for contracts, contracts of supplies and contracts of services, but they are known, sometimes they are our neighbours. They are friends and nobody is suggesting that should not be. That is the small context culture in which we live that you know the principles of this company who are bidding for this contract and you play dominoes with them or you drink at their house, this thing happens. All I am saying, in the interest of propriety, transparency and regularity, in the interest of ourselves, there need to be a campaign financing mechanisms that will enable the office of the Contractor General functioning in such a way that these things could be monitored and

reviewed. We need to endow him with a strong power of punitive action.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes when we set up institutions we create lions without teeth. We call institutions into being which have no teeth. It is a dog that can bark, but not bite. The Public Accounts Committee in the last and recent years amounts to just about that, barking but no bite. Public servants can say I am sick 15 times for 15 consecutive weeks, and what can you do? Wait until you get into Government and send them home? This is not always the answer. We need an office, officials functioning in such a way that they can take punitive action. We heard today that the Honourable Speaker received the Auditor General Report. It is a report that will come, that will be debated by us, outside of here perhaps. It will be debated by the public and people will have eyebrows raised, and then after a time the Report will sit somewhere. That is the practice, culture and the history.

We need an Auditor General who has teeth. We need to empower the office of the Auditor General. We need to insulate that office from interference by any political functionary, no matter how high a level. We need to grant to that office powers of referral to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Doing a Report and having it laid in Parliament is fine, but if your findings suggest that there is ill amidst here and that amidst is criminally amidst, then have the power and authority to refer it to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr. Speaker, we are serious about anti-corruption and integrity in public life. This is where I believe we ought to be going. Let me just make a few references to some of the specificities of the legislation. Persons in public life are clearly identified, this includes Members of both the House of Assembly and the Senate, Ministers and public servants at certain levels and Magistrates. Striking to me and I would like to hear this question addressed, it does not include judges. I do not know why it does not include judges, but we include Magistrates, Ministers, Members of both Houses of Parliament, their spouses and children.

Asides.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: I do not understand why we have not included judges in the list of these persons who are identified as serving the public, recognising that they too potentially are subject to corrupt initiatives on behalf of others and therefore should be captured in this.

Sir, justice is one of the principle planks of our democracy and the judiciary if not now corrupted, and I have not heard anything to suggest that it is and that is not what I am saying, but if not now corrupted potentially is a target for corruption because criminals and some business

people are becoming more unscrupulous and embolden as to who they seek to target. Secondly, on the composition of the Commission, it states in terms of how the Commission is made up that there are some persons who are appointed by the Governor General after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. There are some persons who are appointed by the Governor General after consultation with specific groupings.

In the case of the composition as provided for in the legislation, it calls for an Accountant of some years' experience to be a part of that Commission. The

Governor General makes that appointment of that Accountant of some years' experience to the Commission after consultation with one of the accounting bodies in Barbados. There is also a lawyer of some years' experience and the Governor General make the appointment of that lawyer of some years' experience to that Commission after consultation with the Bar Association. Then it states there is to be a member of the Clergy and the Governor General makes that appointment after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

The Honourable Prime Minister substantive or acting, does not know better what obtains in clerical circles than those who are member of the clergy. I do not see why the leader of the Opposition is being consulted on an appointment to the clergy, and the Prime Minister is being consulted on appointment of the clergyman to sit on this commission. It seems to me there is a disparity in how you view. You have the Barbados Christian Council and the Barbados Evangelical Association, the two leading ministerial associations in Barbados. They are credible, registered, doing a lot of work in Barbados and I believe humbly I suggest, if the Governor General is going to consult on an appointment from among the clergy community in Barbados, that consultation should be had with clergy associations.

Mr. Speaker, as with the law the Bar Association, as with the accounting association and that we should not have this seeming difference. It seems to signal to me an insufficiently high regard for the members of the ministerial community in Barbados. I sincerely hope that my recent actions would not have contributed to that. On the matter of secrecy, in Section 35 (1) and (2), it talks about persons who share information that is to be secret and confidential, and provides for penalties. I believe it should also provide for penalty and punishment for those who receive that information because corruption usually involves at least two parties. In this instance, if you are sharing confidential and secretive information, you are sharing it with somebody who is receiving it and that person should be as guilty, and therefore should feel some of the punitive response with respect to receiving if they knowing it to be illegally transmitted.

Mr. Speaker, confidentiality is critical in our culture. Section 7 talks about a Report from the Commission to the office of the Prime Minister annually. The point I am trying to raise is that we need to what is the scope of this Report because I get the impression it is not only a financial Report. The Commission is sending a Report annually to the office of the Prime Minister on its activities. Now, this Commission is supposed to be independent and dealing with all kinds of confidential matters in relation to Government functionaries, including the Prime Minister. In my view, there is something that has to be clarified here as to why this Commission is reporting to the office of the Prime Minister. I am questioning what would be the scope of that Report, and

I am presaging that that report should not disclose matters which were subject to the confidentiality of the presiding of that Commission. All I am saying is that we got to be careful that we guard against potential prime-ministerial abuse of power, and I am not in any way suggesting this in anyway relative to the incumbent, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East or the Acting Prime Minister today, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. I am not imputing any disposition towards abuse of power towards the current holders of that office, I am just speaking in a general way. I am saying if this Commission is independent, autonomous and if many of its functionaries are the products of independent recommendations so to speak, why is it that we have this commission reporting annually to the Office of the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance unless it has to do only with financial matters and in terms of preparing itself for being funded for the next year. We got to be careful with the scope and I do not believe it should reflect on the kind of disclosure to which the Commission itself should be privy. No specifics of disclosure in my view, Mr. Speaker, should be given out.

The legislation speaks of the use of blind trust and I think those in business in this place understand sometimes how people use blind trust especially in small cultures such as ours. People use this to mask the ill-acquisition of wealth and people have used this to mask some of what they disclosed since they are not comfortable with fully disclosing how it was acquired and I am just concerned that we be careful to ensure where we provide for the use of blind trust that we do so in the context that obtains in places like the United States of America and the United Kingdom where there are requirements which constrains significantly those who use blind trust from engaging in the kind of activity that simply helps them to hide from public scrutiny ill-gotten gains. It seems to me between Sections 26 and 29 in this document that there is an attempt to ensure that our legislation squares with the best traditions coming from those jurisdictions with respect to the blind trust. We have an independent Commission, we have full disclosure, we have the oversight of the Commission and

we have provisions for penalties and for investigations and that type of stuff. All I am trying to say at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, is that I acknowledge with optimism the attempt by the Government to address the matter of corruption, to provide for anti-corruption platforms and to facilitate integrity in public life legislation. My simple submission after all of that is that there are some things we must further seriously consider that should be a part of this legislative platform. Some of those things are urgent and we need to go there, and that we got yet in my view to fully persuade the public that we are serious about this effort and you got to explain your thinking as to why those fines were dropped from \$500 000 to \$20 000 and from \$250 000 to \$10 000, and unless we do that there would always be a question. Perhaps if the Bill could have come here and that had not been observed or a loud outcry had not been made against that it would have gone through because certainly it must have been seen by those on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence in terms of time in addressing the measure before you.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.05 p.m. today.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.05 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this Sitting is now resumed. Honourable Members, prior to the Suspension this Honourable House was debating the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018, and to that we now revert. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to give support to this Bill. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that as we started this morning with the Lord's Prayer that this is a good place for us to start, especially the part where it speaks to:

"Lord, lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil,

For thine is the kingdom,

The power and the glory,

Forever and ever, amen.”

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are some who come to public life, and politics in particular, with a view that there is some honey waiting at the end of it all and that politics, by virtue of being what it is, can lead a man or a woman into temptation and that even those of us who come with the best of intentions, as many of us do when we start a political life, we should remember where it is said back in the 1100s that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Sir, sometimes it is practical and smart to have something that prevents a man or a woman from going down the wrong road. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Bill because I believe this will help us and prevent us from going down the wrong road.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and Honourable Attorney-General said to us at a smaller gathering that the law does not necessarily reach back into the past, especially when it is seeking to cast a punishment upon a man. Therefore, this Bill when it becomes law does not allow us to go back and reach into the past, even if it were our intention to catch anybody, maybe it should but it does not. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Bill should serve to anchor all of us who remain in this room to help us to remember why it is that we came into public life. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not trying to catch the bad guy but I have to remember that all of us are prone to temptation and that the propensity and possibility may exist for those of us with even the best of intentions to do the wrong things. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Bill seeks to prevent us from doing the wrong thing and I therefore will wish to support it in the strongest possible way.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, even though we do not extend into the past, and even though we have to be anchored now into the present, we have to be rooted in principle as we do so. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sure that the “Covenant of Hope” which I am sure all 30 of us in this Honourable Place subscribed to, has the principles that will guide us all and Sir it is those principles to which I now subject myself. Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of us in this room, even though the Honourable Attorney-General said we are not bound by law to do so, we have all declared our assets so that when we leave this place we can say that this is what we came with, this is what we did, and now this is what we will leave with.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in many ways we are forced to this point today, it is not that we were not going to bring it because we believe that we were going to bring it anyway, but that the fierce urgency of this moment is wrapped up in many ways with the indecency of the last 10 years and the

way Barbadians were treated. Even now there are some things that nobody can explain and so, Sir, early in our term we bring this Bill so that we can separate ourselves from that which has obtained in the last 10 years, so that when we say that we will bring a new form of governance to this country, we do not only say it but that we put it into practice. This country Mr. Speaker, Sir, is open to business but it will not be business as usual, it will not be the new normal that came to be associated with Barbados in the last 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was at a Calypso tent last night. Mr. Speaker, Sir, section 15 of this Bill speaks to the power of arrest and there was a Calypsonian who last night sang about some former politicians, or they might still be, who needed a rest and many of them, Sir, do need a rest because clearly what has obtained in the last 10 years in this country was not good enough and even though all of us must subject ourselves to this Bill, I would hate to believe that at the end of our time, that we have left a legacy to fellow Barbadians for them to follow, which is not in any way associated with that of the last 10 years. Sir, it cannot be.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, why are we here at this point in our legislation? Mr. Speaker, Sir, I remember, and many people in this Honourable House will remember, that there was a conversation in the last Administration around the Prevention of Corruption Act, which was passed in 2012, but was never proclaimed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it made provision for Barbados to implement a number of international treaties to which we are signatories but it also meant that people in this place would have to declare their assets and that they had to abide by a Code of Conduct. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it spoke very strongly against solicitation, bribery and those other things. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I remember but it never happened, it was never proclaimed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in 2012, I also remember that the former Honourable Prime Minister at a Democratic Labour Party meeting in the Bayland spoke to the fact that the Democratic Labour Party Administration at the time had this legislation to be brought to be passed and that the Barbados Labour Party Opposition at the time as it then was had referred it to a Select Committee. That Honourable Member’s exact words were that it was not yet law of Barbados because the Opposition party had resisted it. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I remember, those were his exact words, and that it was sent to a Select Committee but that it could not stay there from everlasting to everlasting and that it had to come out and that it would be made the law of this Land. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that never happened, it had nothing to do with the then Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member also went on to say that somebody must have been afraid of the provisions in that legislation, but it was not the then Opposition who were afraid of the provisions in it, so that

it does not surprise me that it was never proclaimed in this country. Sir, the Honourable Member also said that there was also a companion piece of legislation called the Integrity in Public Life Bill which will be passed in all of its stages before the dissolution of that Parliament. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that never happened either. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would recall that places where these conversations occurred were not in the public, Mr. Speaker, Sir, these conversations occurred at Democratic Labour Party meetings.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at another Democratic Labour Party meeting in October, 2017, the former Honourable Prime Minister spoke to the fact that Barbados already had a Prevention of Corruption Act, 1929. This morning the Honourable Attorney-General said it was between the First and Second World War, that is how old it was, but he said this same Prime Minister, who said in 2012 that there would be an Act passed, came back in 2017 and said that there already was one and that there was no need for something new, and that the Act of 1929 had the power to bring corrupt public officials to their knees. Nothing happened in between that time. Sir, we know that the 1929 Act could not bring corrupt public officials to their knees but the people of this country did so on May 24, Sir. They said they would not stand for that, and that was not the kind of Barbados which they wished to live in. It was not the kind of governance they expected from the people who they elected to send where we are. All of us, all 30 of us, having declared our assets, having said this is what we have, this is how we intend to govern the people of Barbados.

For me, integrity is such a big issue. It is bigger in many ways than even that which we debate. Sir, all of us have parents. I believe my mother is perhaps the most proud she has ever been in her life now of her son. Many people in this room, I am sure, have parents and siblings and family who are very proud of their children.

Asides.

Hon. K.D.M. HUMPHREY: I am proud of you, too, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. K.D.M. HUMPHREY: Many people, if not all of us, have family who look to us and say, "Well done," and they are happy for us, Sir. We carry not just the burden of this but the hopes and aspirations of a country, of communities we grew up in, of the schools which educated us, Sir. We carry a lot with us when we stand here. I have a daughter, Sir, and it would break my heart to conduct myself in a way which brings some dishonor to her, Mr. Speaker. Integrity has to be bigger than the things we come here to debate. Sir, I believe that they are, but as

Barbadians some things must be so offensive to who we are. We must find some things so disdainful in many ways. As you could see in Barbados around the time of the Election, they pricked the collective conscience of a country to the point where they said, "We will not deal with that, and if anybody brings that kind of stain to public life, we do not want them either." I believe many of us who now sit in this Parliament do so not because we were great, I think we were very great, I am not disrespecting my colleagues, Sir, but many of us stand here because the people said they had had enough of the other kind of governance and that they do not wish to ever see it in Barbados again.

Even if we think we are great, it must not go to our heads to the point where we forget the people who put us here. I am thankful to the people of St. Michael South for putting me here, and I am pleased with the people in St. Michael South for not putting the other man here.

Asides.

Hon. K.D.M. HUMPHREY: They are saying, "Even though you may command the highest position, even you are not above the way Barbadians wish to be governed". Sir, it is with that in mind that I want to talk about a few more things, Mr. Speaker. Sir, I want to first of all talk about the kind of Barbados which all of us wish to live in. Isaac Newton had three laws in motion, but his first law of motion was that everybody continues in a state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless compelled by some external force to act otherwise.

Asides.

Hon. K.D.M. HUMPHREY: The rate of change of momentum is proportional to the applied force and takes place in the direction in which the force acts; that is No. 2.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair, please.

Hon. K.D.M. HUMPHREY: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, Sir. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West is being naughty, Sir. The point was that everybody would continue in a state of rest. Barbados is a country. Sir, unless we had come to this House and made a definitive statement about the state of this country, we would have stayed exactly where we were; either stagnant as a country or proceeding down a line which Barbadians had clearly said they did not want, Sir. Everybody continues in a state of rest or uniform motion. When we come here to discuss this Bill and pass it into legislation, we are saying that we will not allow this country to stay now where it is, because that is not the country we wish to live in and it is not the country we wish

to die in or for our children to grow in. We make a definitive statement.

True to form, the Opposition Leader has brought out some points today, some of which I agree with, Sir. The reality is if we said we were going to do one thing, we have to do it. If we say it is going to be “X” amount of penalties, then it has to be. The Attorney General has said so and it will be so, because we have been so far the kind of Government which has said it is going to do a thing and has done that thing. Promise made, promise kept; that has been the way we have operated, Sir. In terms of integrity, I remember in 2008 when the Government changed, and there were so many promises made to young people in this country. Among the promises was that the new Democratic Labour Party Government was going to look after their interests. Mr. Speaker, they made all kinds of promises to the young people of this country, and what did they get in the deal? Before the end of their ten years, young people had to pay for university. Before the end of their ten years, young people could not get a job. Youth unemployment was skyrocketing.

Sir, I remember when they came into office they promised those in the cultural industries all kinds of things, and they have not got them yet. Nurses, police officers and teachers as well, I think, were going to be able to get duty-free cars, and they have not seen them yet. All kinds of things were promised to people and were never delivered. Integrity has to matter for something. All of these things promised, and none of them delivered. Sir, you have seen the closure of the most small businesses in this country in the last ten years, and people who have shops in all the constituencies. You just have to go into a corner shop, and you would see the shelves empty. They are now catching back themselves, but you would have seen the shelves empty because people had nothing to sell. The very thing which has rooted Barbados has been our capacity to trust one another, Sir, but you cannot go to a single small shop and say, “Let me borrow a little something” or “I will pay you back when I get the money”, because people do not believe you anymore. Sir, we have watched the erosion of trust as a principle in this country. That is why I look forward to the Member for St. George South when he brings the legislation as it speaks to the Trust Loans and what that will do to rebuild the fundamental aspect of trust in this country, Sir.

Sir, I remember -- I am calling on the Opposition Leader again -- what he said back then when he was a Member of this great Barbados Labour Party.

Asides.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: He is still a Member, I understand, but I remember him saying that if we want the people to trust us, we have to trust the people.

Asides.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is for all of these reasons that, yes, I support this Bill, but it is for all of these reasons that I believe we have to offer a new kind of governance to this country. In my constituency, when I walk through Brittons Hill and the Bay Land and those places, little children run up to me. They want to meet Kirk Humphrey, Sir, and Mr. Speaker, they want to do so because they heard what we said on the platform, they heard the promises that we made, they saw the way our leader conducted herself and if you are going to talk about integrity, Sir, you have to talk about the way the Honourable Prime Minister was defamed during an election and the way in which she conducted herself in response. Sir, if you want integrity, that was integrity and that is the way we have to govern this country.

Mr. Speaker, I now have the responsibility as Minister for Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy for dealing with the sargassum seaweed that comes to our shores. The first time it came was in 2010/2011 and you would believe, Sir, that in 2018, some seven to eight years later that this is the first time it is here, that a country has no real response to it, that you have a number of young promising business people in the country whose names I cannot call in here but some are good people who just wanted a little help from the Government to be able to turn that seaweed into fertilizer and into energy, brilliant young Barbadian minds in need of a little support and got none. Sir, at the same time, I have responsibility for the Port and at the same time you saw contracts of millions and millions of dollars with no real justification being given to certain people in this country and young bright minds trying to address a national problem at the same time could not get access to those loans. It is wrong and we have to be a different kind of Government. Sir, that is why I have laboured over the construction of the Port's Board because we know whoever is in charge of the Port, and the Honourable Prime Minister has made it very clear that which obtained in the past cannot obtain now and that everything we do must be done in the public's interest and that everything that we do must be made transparent to the public because we cannot be a Government of secrets. We have to be a Government of the people and for the people and so when we bringing whatever we bring to the public it will be for full discussion and full ventilation and may we never get so arrogant, Sir, as to bring something that we know does not suit the public's interest but we are so committed to the cause because we said so that even though something may not be in the public's interest and it does not sit well with the way Barbadians vision this country that we do not stick to it because there has to be a point at which we say, we are here acting for the people and that is what integrity must mean going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I have no problem declaring my assets. It did not take me very long to do it. I do not have a lot but I have been never been one who is interested in gaining a lot, most of the blessings I have come from God Almighty and when I leave here it is God Almighty that will bless me too. I came to serve and at the end of the day it is by service that we should be valued and it is by service that we should be measured.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make it clear. There will come a point in public life, I heard the Prime Minister said it several times, where perhaps your “No” will have to outweigh your “Yes” but you might have to start telling people no more often than you have to tell them yes and one of the person that you have to tell no more often than not is yourself. You do not have to have everything, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, your constituents as much as you love them and as much as you want to serve them will have to understand that in a new Barbados and in a new model of governance that there is only Barbados. I feel very good something when I see a road being done in Christ Church West because it has happened for Barbados. I feel just as good perhaps as when he does the roads in St. Michael South, which will be soon. I look forward because in this new Barbados, filled with integrity, I look forward to the roads in Kings Village being finished and Beckles Hill, which is right the Prime Minister’s office being done because that is the way we will operate as a Government. There is only one and all of us have to look out for interest of everybody else.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, even as you there, we will have to make sure that the people in St. Michael Central are well attended to too.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am very grateful for that.

Hon. K. D.M. HUMPHREY: of course, Sir, because that is the way that we have to govern. We have to put Barbados first in all seriousness, a country that has given all of us so much. Over the last 10 years our economy has taken a beating, our society and that which made the fabric of Barbados great has taken a beating. Our international reputation that has separated us from many Small Islands Developing States has also taken a beating. Our capacity to be innovative and improvisational in our leadership has also taken a beating. In fact, in the last 10 years, one question if there was any leadership whatsoever at all in the country. We have now seen in the last six weeks since May 24, since the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East assumed the leadership of this country what leadership must look like in Barbados. I am thankful, Sir, to be part of the team that will repair the country but also restore the integrity of a country that I believe has been lost.

Mr. Speaker, it is with those few words that I again wish to support the Bill. Sir, it is with those few words that

I continually wish to remind Barbadians of what has happened in the country. I know that there are many Barbadians now who will not feel good unless somebody or some organisation is held accountable for what has happened in the last 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have heard the Honourable Attorney-General and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph speak the way he spoke this morning because somebody has to be held accountable for this. Sir, in my constituency I know a young lady who went to the supermarket unable to buy anything but wanted to feed her children and I am not saying it was right because she was wrong. She took a few groceries and she was brought before the law courts rightfully and charged for taking something to feed her children because it was wrong and when you do wrong you have to be punished, fair enough. How in a country where somebody takes up a few tins of sardines and a macaroni has to face the full extent of the law, can it be fair that all kinds of people because of the positions that they think they hold can do all kinds of things without regard to the laws of this country and walk about this country like free men, if indeed that is the case. Sir, if it is so it has to stop and somebody has to be held responsible for what has happened in Barbados in the last 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I wish again to support it and to say to Barbadians that there is nothing to fear from this Barbados Labour Party in relation to us using their resources, because they do not belong to us, to do things to advance their interest because that is why we are hear and that no matter how long we stay here, we only get to stay here because the people elected us. Sir, no man here is an island. No woman in this Honourable Chamber, Mr. Speaker, is an island. We have to come back at some point to the people and it is in the people’s interest that we must always, always serve, Sir.

Sir, with those few words, I wish to thank you and I wish to thank the people of St. Michael South for giving me this opportunity. I am obliged, Sir.

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

Hon. Miss M. K. A. CADDLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel compelled to rise in full support of this Integrity in Public Life Bill because, Sir, as a very young, brand spanking new politician when I first came to public life seeking to represent the people of St. Michael South Central almost two years ago now, there was something that I found very disturbing in people’s response. It was the fact that people’s minds could not compute that I would leave a job with a salary that was not so bad, to run for office. In fact, that I would leave before I had secured the nomination - because I had to leave before I had secure the

nomination as the candidate for St. Michael South Central - for the Barbados Labour Party (BLP). Then further, Sir, that I would gratefully accept the opportunity to serve as the duly elected Member in this Cabinet at a salary that is lower than what I was making in my former or possibly would have the potential to make - and I say this in the full glare of my colleagues, the Honourable Members in this House and the people of this country - because we seem to have this notion culturally in Barbados that money matters are supposed to be whispered about. However, I do stand here today and say yes, I walked away from a lucrative job because what was important to me and what remains important to me is to give back to this country that has given me so much. I would say that I was disturbed, Sir, by the reaction and by the notion that existed at the time that if somebody comes to offer themselves to serve at the highest level in this country there must be some fiduciary motive. There must be some reason that is related to what you can get. We, as young politicians, stand on the shoulders of men and women who offer themselves to service and who gave so much to form a democracy of the substance as we now have in Barbados. I was disturbed by the idea that after having been blessed with the likes of Sir Grantley Adams, J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams and people of this stature that we would allow the last 10 years of recklessness and disregard for the rule of law to define for us what a politician looks like. That we would allow, Sir, the reckless behaviour of the last Democratic Labour Party (DLP) Administration to suggest to us that is what a politician looks like. I would like, through you, Mr. Speaker, for the people of Barbados to look around this Chamber and to listen to what we propose under this Integrity in Public Life Bill and to see that, in fact, this is what a politician looks like, people who are ready to declare their assets, people who are ready to say to the people of Barbados, we have nothing to hide. We stand before you fully accountable, we stand before you fully transparent, ready to do the work of the people of Barbados because that is what we have come here to do and it really concerned me that we would now use the indiscipline of the last 10 years as an example of what politics is or what politics brings. If I do nothing else, as long as the people of St. Michael South Central and the people Barbados give me the opportunity to serve, if I do nothing else, it is to prove to the people of Barbados that politicians is, and can be, and should be an honourable thing to be.

As I listened to the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Attorney-General deliver so well the arguments for this Bill, I thought this kind of legislation is necessary. Not just because of what has obtained over the last 10 years and not because the Honourable Members in this Chamber do not intend to conduct themselves with integrity but because, Sir, we have to legislate not for the best among us, which I dear say is represented by the Honourable Members here, but for the worst that may come. This type of Bill has a preventative power. It is

important for this discussion and for this legislation to exist in the public domain because it helps to set the atmosphere. It helps to create the environment for integrity, not just in public life but in the country as a whole.

When I was growing up, my mother would be outside working in the garden or working in the yard and she would call my name to come to her and I busy doing whatever I was doing I would say, "Yes" and then there would be complete silence because the silence meant, you cannot be serious. You are not saying yes, you mean to say you are coming to see what I need. Similarly, there were times when she did not have to say a word. As she needed to do was to "look at me in a certain tone of voice" as we would say and I would correct myself. I think in many ways, legislation of this nature has and has to have this preventative power so that even though it might not be in the nature or in the intent of the people currently serving, it is necessary to create the environment of equity and to create the environment of accountability so that people know that their resources, their hard earned dollars are being aptly taken care of.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the notion of integrity and accountability relates, not just to financial resources and to large capital works - and I would get a bit later in my intervention to talk about the effect of corruption on the finances of a country -- but accountability and integrity and the need for these things relates not just to large projects of the nature that were reference by the Honourable Attorney General this morning but really the execution of every function and the use of every resource be it influence or power or time. It is making sure, Sir, that in every word you speak, in every hour you spend that you remain accountable to the people of Barbados.

There is something that happened over the last 10 years. There is something that took hold and it is because when you have poor governance at the top you start to see the poor governance, the disrespect for the rule of law and the notion that if those at the top do not have to do it then why should I. It starts to take hold everywhere. Stealing money, if that were to happen, would be the same as stealing time. It would be the same as abusing the power of your position to bring undue pressure to bear on the people who work around you or the people who are accountable to you.

Sir, when we speak of integrity we are not just speaking about procurement matters or the execution of large sums of money for large capital works projects, but we are talking about whether we give of the time that we are committed to give whether at the highest levels of office, throughout the Public Service or anywhere. We are talking about certain levels of civility that we have come to expect as an orderly society, but when people start to feel as though rules do not apply to other people but only to

them. When people start to feel as if they are the target of oppressive practices, while another group of people get away scot-free, then there are certain things that start to unravel in a society.

This is why sometimes you may see people claim they need time off when they do not need time off, because if they feel powerless and that this time is the only time they have, they will take it. It is wrong. It should not happen, but it was allowed to happen or it took hold because of the levels of indiscipline that we saw over the last ten years. If you are seeking to address integrity, accountability and transparency at only one level, you have to be able to address it at all levels.

Mr. Speaker, there are costs of corruption, and I would not be able to sit where I sit with responsibility

for Economic Affairs and Investment and not speak to what some of those costs look like. I recall there was some work done some time ago looking at what some of these costs of corruption are to an economy, and they were using a particular corruption index that was developed by Business International and now we have other indices that we use. Those studies found certain things:

1. More corrupt countries have lower levels of growth in their GDP

There are all kinds of reasons for the lack of growth over the last ten years, but I would dear suggest that the high levels of corruption was one of them. Why is this?

2. High levels of corruption deter investments.

Corruption acts almost as a tax on foreign direct investment, and we know how that functions. We know that if someone is coming into a country seeking to make an investment of a certain size but in order to have that business facilitated, they need to make a payment that is also of a certain size. If that person has the kind of integrity that we would want to encourage, that they may choose to go elsewhere, and so the country suffers from the high burden of that tax. Corruption acts as a tax on investment. I should use this opportunity to say as well that while we speak to the notion of integrity in public life, public life does not just include public officials.

Public life does not just include those of us who work in the public sector. It takes two hands to clap and I would like for us in the course of this debate to make clear that in our pursuit of the highest levels of integrity and accountability, we may also be driven to uncover or to take issue with some practices in the private sector as well. For you to extend something and when you withdraw your hand for it to be empty, someone on the other side must have taken it. Someone had to have extended the hand and someone had to have accepted the gift. Mr. Speaker, even

as some of those in the private sector bemoan the absence of accountability and transparency in procurement as they should, they should also be mindful of the fact the lungs of this Barbados Labour Part Government is wide-reaching and has the capacity to sweep far beyond what we ordinarily consider the public domain if it involves acts by private citizens that have corrupted the public good. When we aim for the highest levels of integrity, we aim for the highest levels of integrity across the length and breadth of this country.

3. Corruption as we have seen in the last decade also has the potential as the study shows to lower the quality of public infrastructure.

We have spoken ad nauseam about the buildings at the Grotto and Valerie. The fact that they were not subjected to procurement rules to which they should have been, to the rules of the Financial Management and Audit Act of this country. When you remove certain guidelines and rules for codes, how a building should be constructed and the standards it should meet, you find that you lower the quality of the infrastructure. If you are allowing a company or an individual access to a contract to complete the contract, and as we saw with Valerie, to possibly complete the contract over the budget, complete the contract without having delivered all of the items of the building needed to be delivered, then you are starting to compromise the quality of that infrastructure.

Sir, I would tell you the residents of those buildings are paying the price today. There is hardly a day that passes that I do not receive a call with respect to something that is malfunctioning in those buildings at Valerie. It is something that has to be thoroughly investigated because this administration has to ensure that people are not paying the ultimate costs in their lives or well-being of the corruption that took place with respect to those buildings.

4. High levels of corruption limit expenditure on social sectors like education and health

Mr. Speaker, I would say that there is no other place that we have a better example of that than right here. When we look back across the last ten years at projects that should have been properly implemented, often the ones that suffered the lack of implementation are those for which you could not very much “steel in there”. Those are projects like health and education, because what are those types of deliverables? You are not building a building. So what we have seen over the last ten years is that the project did not include some kind of structure going up for which someone could have been paid, it hardly got much attention and so education projects, healthcare projects and things that seek to deliver in the area of poverty reduction were the ones that suffered, and that is why even though you would have heard a former Minister of Social Care bragged about how there were so few people on welfare. There

were so few people on welfare because they excluded the people from welfare benefits because it is very, very difficult to make the kinds of gains that you could make on a welfare project as compared to a Berth 6 for example if one were to find an example.

Mr. Speaker, I say these things to say to the people of Barbados through you, Sir, that we bring this Bill not just because we want to be able to say that we have done it or that we have addressed integrity. We are very serious about the fact that in everything we do we have to deliver for the people of this country in every sector in which we have said that we will deliver.

Mr. Speaker, corruption affects the quality of institutions, and how does that happen. People do not trust institutions if they know that persons who went in there before them before business is done would have been able to write a cheque and have that business done. They do not respect the authority of the institution. There are people on the streets of Barbados today who have no faith right now, for example, in the process involved in getting a taxi or a ZR permit because the streets of this country were awash with them two weeks before the election and those people who sought to stick to the rule of law, who sought to stick to a process to take their documentation, to go and stand in a line and to do things the proper way were left out in the cold. Corruption erodes people's trust in public institutions and public process, and that Sir, is what this Bill seeks to help to restore.

I also want to say, Sir, that if we are going to talk about transparency and accountability, we have to get transparent about everything. I firmly believe in being transparent about everything. In a past life I worked as a consultant for agencies like those that employ my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, who has something to show us about road transparency because when you are a consultant or you are engaged for any reason by those types of institutions the amount of the contract is fully published and available to the public. So while I was searching for a paper that I had written some time ago and I was googling myself, which one should never do, I happened upon the amount of this contract that I had done for this institution and it was clear for everyone to see. My full name, the terms under which I was engaged, there was a link leading to my curriculum vitae (CV), there was a link leading to the evaluation and the reason why I was considered suitable for the job. These are things that should be matters of public record, why not. It gives confidence in the notion that we are conducting the business of Government in the right way. There should be transparency of expenditure, what we are spending on not what we are voting and then coming back time after time after time as the last Government did with supplementaries not that they are never necessary but that the job of this Honourable House when we come to the debate Estimates

is to bring our best judgement of the true cost of what we are proposing to the people of Barbados. It is possible, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to have in real time available for the people of Barbados the actual expenditure that the Government of Barbados is making especially in certain key sectors or in certain key pieces of infrastructure or projects that are of great importance to the country. That stand to have great investment values and that stand as a key public good from which the people of Barbados can benefit and so when we talk about having an electronic dashboard it is not just because we want to create a fancy piece of technology it is because that is one of the important tools of transparency. There is no good reason why most of what we do should not be able to bear the scrutiny of the public of Barbados, but that does not refer, Sir, to matters of national security where the Prime Minister's Office would need to maintain certain private information for the protection of our borders.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has four more minutes remaining.

Hon. Miss M. K-A. CADDLE: It says, Sir, that we have nothing to hide. It says that we have made a commitment to act in the best interest of the people of Barbados and that in our day-to-day activities in where we go, in whom we engage and in what we spend and what we spend it on that we are happy to have the people of Barbados see, reflect and give opinions and feedback. When you walk in the dark you open up yourself to a lot of conjecture about what you are doing but when you walk in full light there is very little space for people to wonder and ask questions.

With those few words, Sir, I want simply to restate my full commitment to this Bill and my excitement on behalf certainly of the people of St. Michael South Central and the people of Barbados that we are taking the charge at the front to lead this country back towards full real accountability and transparency.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess as customarily, as I am trying to do with most of my speeches going forward, I look for an application that is reflective of the matter being discussed from the good Book and the particular verse that really struck me for this particular presentation comes from 2nd Peter, Chapter 2 verse 19. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East is trying to suggest that I should be looking at the book of Exodus but I am looking today at 2nd Peter, Chapter 2 verse 19 and it says while "they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of

corruption: for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved." I take this very seriously, Mr. Speaker, because when you place yourself in a position to accept some bribe or some favour, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph said, a corruptor and you yourself become the corruptee, you are forever enslaved by that person because that person now has certain information on you and has put you in a place that you are up for sale. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Sir, sometimes as a Government Minister you are put in a position to negotiate with companies and corporations and I speak in particular to what we call a multinational corporation, for instance, in the oil and gas industry. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have to understand that some of these oil and gas industries have as their balance sheets numbers greater than the whole Gross Domestic Product of the whole of Barbados.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: The Honourable Member again is suggesting the whole of the Caribbean. Mr. Speaker, Sir, an oil and gas company when they produce balance sheets - we produce balance sheets in the millions - they produce balance sheets in the billions and not millions. With an economy that has just \$10 billion as its Gross Domestic Product, which means that all of the activities and all of the incomes of all of the people of Barbados put together only equates to \$10 billion a year. When you are put in a position to negotiate with BP, Exxon or some of these companies with which we will have to negotiate because we have bid blocs to negotiate with these companies, these companies called multinationals can bring significant influence to bear on people with whom they may negotiate and we have to be very, very aware of this.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I say this because I am reminded of a particular article I read of what happens in certain African countries where multinationals move into an African country and literally take over the exploration and exploitation of that country and they do this in a place where they can use their influence and their money to destabilise those countries. It was said in that article that multinationals prefer to operate in a destabilised country because it enables them to be able to operate at the level at which they want to operate easier and more effectively by giving people bribes. So that when they operate in a country that is run by law and that country is completely following the laws as are stipulated in that country, they would find that they cannot mine the country and they cannot extract the resources of that country in the way that they would like because it is a country that is ruled by law. Therefore, they seek to destabilise the country by producing corrupt politicians and corrupt officials and by destabilising the country they then find that they can extract the resources more effectively, more efficiently and much more profitably than a country that is run by law.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, while Barbados must show the rest of the world that we are a country of laws and that we are run by laws, and that if we had corrupt politicians in the past, we are not going to have any corrupt politicians in the future, because the people of this country spoke loud and clear. They told us that they had had enough of that type of politics and that they want a new breed of politicians and a new politics and that they want a politician that is incorruptible. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sure that this legislation will go a long way to ensure and show the people of this country that the Barbados Labour Party Administration and all of its members are not only talking the talk but that we are walking the walk as well. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are making it clear to the people of Barbados that we are not following the same type of politics as obtained in the past. We are not going down the road where people can get contracts and can take money from certain institutions up to, as was said by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, \$28 million at the Barbados Transport Board and not one contract or tender; \$2.8 million a year or thereabout over 10 years and not one contract nor one tender.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, these are things that we have to speak about in this country because we have to understand where we were in the past and more importantly, to chart our future and our path for the way forward in this country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is extremely important and a very historic debate for the people of Barbados, because for years the people of Barbados were asking for this type of legislation and I am so happy to see that we have now not only taken it on board but that we will be putting this into practice.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and Leader of the Opposition also speaking about what we term 'garrison' constituencies and I fully agree with the Honourable Member. I remember as the Honourable Member said in 2003 we first saw that emergence of close relationships between questionable characters and people looking to seek high offices in Barbados. It was further strengthened in 2008 and went into 2013. Mr. Speaker, Sir, 'garrison' constituencies are very popular in Jamaica for those of you who know anything about Jamaican politics but 'garrison' constituencies are well-known in Jamaica; it is essentially a particular person with questionable contacts and using his influence in a community or district to secure his position in high office. We may remember the Christopher "Dudus" Coke matter. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would remember that Christopher "Dudus" Coke matter quite well, it eventually I believe resulted, I believe, in the fall of a whole Prime Minister on that "Dudus" Coke matter. So this is something that we do not want to see in this country and I am glad to report that I believe from the results of the last election that that kind of 'garrison' constituency mentality has been stamped out by the people of Barbados, who have sent a

strong message to those unsavory characters, that this Government is not for sale, because that is way in which we were going, Government for sale, but that has come to an end and people in this country have to understand that just because you controlled a dollar, it does not mean that you can buy an official because our officials have to be stronger than that. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully support paying officers properly too, to make sure that they are stronger than that.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is so important because if a particular person sees a man out there being hungry and having a need, he is going to try to fill that need for a favour in return. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would understand the term *quid pro quo*, something for something, so that we have to be cognizant, we have to be aware, we have to understand that these things happen, but we have to take the legislative action to stamp them out and to make the penalties right to make sure that people are not encouraged or enticed or tempted, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South said, to go down the wrong road. If it means legislation to keep us on the right road, so be it. My biggest concern with the legislation was the concept of people divulging information which we would have submitted, Mr. Speaker. My concern with that was because, of course, I would not want people out there to know how truly poor I am.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. W.F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, as you know, people out there may look at a person's assets but they have no information as to a person's liabilities. Just because a person may have certain tangible assets which people can look at and ascribe them to you, they may not have equal information about that person's liabilities, Honourable Speaker. Just to make the House understand, looking at assets is not always the whole picture, and sometimes you also have to look at a person's liabilities.

My concern was if we put down our assets and put down our liabilities -- you know Barbados is a small country -- sooner or later that information would be out in the general public. It was a valid concern. It is a valid concern that was shared by many former Members of Parliament who I would have spoken to over the years. I am satisfied about this new legislation and the way it is crafted. I heard the Member for St. Michael West speak about it and about how it would be treated if people divulged that information, and I agree with him that maybe we should be looking not only at who gave out the information but who enticed that person to receive the information. It is something we may want to look at. I am satisfied that as it is written currently, it will be able to protect all of us.

Mr. Speaker, there is another aspect tangential to this legislation which the Honourable Attorney General spoke about, and it has to do with the Public Accounts Committee. Why I spoke about this is because I was not in the Honourable Chamber at the time but I was horrified and mortified that a Government, when under pressure to appear at a Public Accounts Committee hearing and to give evidence to a Public Accounts Committee (PAC), rather than do that tabled a Bill to repeal the same Public Accounts Committee. I thought that to be unconscionable. I thought that to be a most egregious act, because I remember when the Public Accounts Committee was first expanded to include the Senate and other Members; not only Members in the Lower House but also Members in the Other Place. I remember when that was done. We wanted to strengthen the Public Accounts Committee and we wanted to give the Opposition -- at the time the Barbados Labour Party was the Government -- a chance to get a fully functional and a fully staffed Public Accounts Committee. That was done by the Barbados Labour Party. Now that the Barbados Labour Party was on the Other Side -- on the Opposition Side -- and using the Public Accounts Committee to full potential and using it to call sitting Ministers to give account of their Ministries and their actions, the then Government could decide to stop the action and activity of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and they tabled a Bill to repeal the said same Committee. What oversight would there be of a Government if the Public Accounts Committee is repealed?

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. W.F. DUGUID: That was terrible, and I want to go further. I want to suggest that the Public Accounts Committee should be enshrined in the Constitution, so that you cannot come and repeal a Public Accounts Committee just because you have a simple majority. You should be required to have a constitutional majority, and not just a simple majority. I do not believe that is now the case. If I am incorrect, please correct me but certainly it was tabled and I do not think that was correct.

Mr. Speaker, I also heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West speak about the fact that the Leader of the Opposition had to be consulted with respect to clergy and members of the clergy. He did say that he did not think it was right that the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition had the final say because there were the associations of churches and the Christians' associations and so on. I take the point, but remember we are not only a Christian society, Mr. Speaker. We also have many members of our society who are Muslim, many members of our society who are Hindu, many members of our society who are Sikh, many members of our society who may be agnostic; so even though we may have a large percentage who are Christian, it is not the whole society. I take the point that it may be a large percentage but the Members

and elected officials must remember that they do not represent a segment. You represent the whole country, and if you represent the whole country, you must take into account other dissenting views as well. I understand why it allows the input of the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, and not only the input of the Conference of Churches.

Bishop the Hon. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: The Honourable Member is misleading the House a bit on this matter. I did suggest that that person is to be drawn from the clerical community, and I did go on to say, for example, in the church community there is the Barbados Evangelical Association (BEA) and the Barbados Christian Council (BXC), but I was focusing on the clerical community and suggesting that those associations should be consulted rather than the Opposition Leader and the Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: Noted, Honourable Member.

Dr. the Hon. W.F. DUGUID: Thank you very much. I heard very clearly the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, but that does not make the point moot, because even though they are from the clerical community, Muslim leaders of a congregation would say that they are clerics too, and they too are part of the clerical community.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon W.F. DUGUID: Therefore, it must beleaguer the point that they too would have to have a voice in this country. It would not only be the Council of Churches but it would be for everybody. All spirit-based and spiritually-based organisations should have some view and some input on the matter. If they have to have some input through the Prime Minister and through the Leader of the Opposition, so be it.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, I also heard the Member for St. Michael South Central, and I heard her say quite clearly that she walked away from a very lucrative salary in order to give service to her country. I have to fully agree with her, as I understand the sentiment which she is experiencing. I understand the sentiment which she is experiencing and I understand that she would have had to or will have to change her lifestyle to now match her income. I understand, I want to fully support and I agree that service to your country must far outweigh a lucrative salary at the end of the month. I want to share our views because I guess people would be considering that I too would have walked away from a lucrative salary but I feel that I have a debt to Barbados to pay. If it were not for the people of Barbados I would not have not have had the opportunity to get the training that I got, and if it were not for the people of Barbados coming to me as patients, I would not have been able to build any kind of wealth that I may have. so it is the people of Barbados to whom I am

indebted to and if I have an opportunity to serve those people to the best of my ability and to pay back for so much that they have given me, I have to do that because if good men do not come forward and do what they have to do, then you know what will happen because we saw what happened with the last administration and we have come to make wrong things right.

Mr. Speaker, I know with every bit of strength in my body, I work every day to take the Ministry that I have been entrusted forward just one inch. I thank the people of Barbados for having that trust and faith in me and I look forward to continuing to work to the benefit of this country each and every day. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

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

Dr. S E. BROWNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity. I felt that I am probably the member in this House that has the greatest responsibility to speak on this Bill since a large cloud hangs over St. Philip North because one of them being alleged in this corruption has been a Philippine forever, a son of our St. Philip soil and I think that it would be remiss of me not to stand here for the people of St. Philip North. Sir, while this is true that a large cloud hangs over St. Philip North, that is not to say that the showers are isolated, the rest of Barbados also felt them and I stand in agreement and support of the Bill being presented here today.

Mr. Speaker, how do we justify to our people especially the people of St. Philip North.... The Honourable Member for St. Joseph said he had the worse transport system but I beg to differ as we all are different by the way but how do I justify that to my people who have to travel from the country because most people know that work is in town, many of us go to school in town, everything happens in town and we cannot get there because of the dismal transport system when we watch our heroes, so to put it, people that we look up to, driving around in luxury vehicles and we can say nothing and feel a sense of hopelessness with respect to people accounting for what we are seeing going on. How do I justify to a school which I have many in St. Philip North that they leave because of one school bus at three o'clock, there is a paucity of extracurricular activities, many schools up there do not have 4-H Clubs, Brownies, Cub Scouts. Mr. Speaker, I was speaking to a teacher for one of the schools who noted that because of this lack of experience in life, lack of clubs and lack of being able to contribute and participate in these clubs, composition skills for example, are suffering. If people do not know it, they cannot write about it and how do I explain the monies being spent in the Barbados Transport Board when our children are suffering, I cannot.

Mr. Speaker, people have had to give up jobs because they cannot get to work, people have been sent home because they cannot get to work and yet the salaries, although some of us, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, might understand because I guess he is well endowed monetarily but I am not. My liabilities far exceeds my income and I relate to many people in our society who suffer the same fate and watch politicians live in luxury while we drive around vehicles, walk or catch bus, there are politicians because that is now a bad word in our society thanks to what has gone before us. I am one of those who suffered, like some of us in here and how do I justify that to my people when every area of daily is being affected by this so-called alleged corruption.

Mr. Speaker, how do I explain the monies spent in the Barbados Transport Board for consultants when I know for a fact that we have many skilled mechanics in the Barbados Transport Board that probably could have done the same job? How do I explain parts being brought in when we cannot get a bus on the road? Mr. Speaker, I cannot leave here today without mentioning one of my patients who is still owed by Government for jobs done for the Barbados Transport Board. I had the privilege of walking him through sickness and I had the privilege of also walking him through death two weeks ago and he has not been paid up to this day. I would take it that powers that be would see to it that at least his family gets what is owed because he had to shut down his business. Sir, these are happening here and I do not see why somebody should brush across this bill, brush it aside. I do not understand why the last Administration did not see to it. I do understand why they did not stand up to the Public Accounts Committee, that was gross disrespect, the Committee is there for a reason and I think that it needs to be respected and in future going forward we cannot allow things like this to happen.

Mr. Speaker, the people of St. Philip North, most of us, including you, Sir, I believe pass through Parish Land in St. Philip, River Land in St. Philip and have the displeasure of seeing the unfinished houses that were there for a decade maybe. Some of them before elections about five of them were filled in Parish Land but many of them are empty. I have people from the day after elections coming to me, people who have applied to the National Housing Corporation for home. Sir, one lady her house was burnt down several years ago and she is still waiting. It seems like a case of I apply and I am denied housing while those houses sit their empty, sheep can graze in the yard and that is about it. We can do better than this. How do I explain to these people when we drive through St. Philip North and beyond and see the luxury homes still going up, still increasing in size like they will never end. How do I explain to people like that who have families with five children and renting a room from a neighbour after having applied for a house and yet to see it happen.

Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of thing why we are making this Bill and we are seeing to it that this Bill is passed. Sir, everybody who spoke so far spoke about the Grotto, Valery and Exmouth and over \$30 million were unaccounted for, for these "low-income homes". We have \$30 million plus outstanding and nobody knows where it is when we have schools, as I have said before, suffering and people are suffering for housing and the health care system has taken a beating. When I was working for Government many years ago, I was one of the doctors that did home outreach, where we managed to reach the shut-ins that could not get to the polyclinics. We managed to reach the new young mothers that had babies for the first time and did not have a clue how to take care of them but many of these programmes were cut or cut short or not given the staffing that they deserved because there was no money or no funding. Sir, \$30 million could do a lot and I know that it is more than \$30 million.

Mr. Speaker, it is our people that are suffering. We heard before elections that \$50 million were allocated for roads and debushing but thanks to some of my constituents and ministers here the debushing is now taking place but what do I say because people in Barbados despite the belief that we have short memories, we do not. People are still remembering that money and I am still remembering the money allocated for debushing and nothing was done when that money could have been put for that project and give people work. A gentleman called me that was a part of a small debushing earlier up a few years ago and he has not been paid up to now. He is not a supporter of mine but I have to mention him here because he will be shortly.

Mr. Speaker, this is basically blatantly corruption and it is a source of frustration for our people. It is a source of frustration for everyone in here, for my family, for everybody in St. Philip North -- I see heads shaking but it is true. Many of us have dropped in socio-economic class, those of us who have managed not to drop below the poverty line while we see others flourishing. This cannot be fair.

I support the Bill, Mr. Speaker. The truth is I felt a little uneasy as the Honourable Member for the Opposition were saying that the numbers are too little, \$20 000 and five years in prison, but then I am told by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that those numbers would be going back up to \$200 000 so I am grateful for that because I think the punishment should fit the crime. We have people going to prison for less in this country. We have people going into supermarkets stealing a little bit to feed their families, not that I am saying it is right, but they spend some time in prison. Many lawyers are in here and they know what I am talking about and people are allegedly walking away with millions of dollars and not spending a day. It is not necessarily that we want to see people go to prison. What we want is for people to answer for it. I think

the Barbadian public would be satisfied to some extent if people just come forward and answer to these charges. I like the whistle-blower protection as whistleblowing in the number one method for finding fraud worldwide, probably. It encourages people to come forward without fear of victimisation. At this point, I cannot help but mention here, yes, a lot of it is monetary. There is a lot of bribing and perhaps this is for another Bill. I know one was recently passed but I have to say here bribing, at least in my constituency, is not all about money. I have to put in a plug for the women of Barbados because I see it every day. Of course, I am bound by patient client confidentiality but I am meeting a lot of women here that had to give up, what I consider, more than money to get homes and I think something needs to be done about this. Of course, the problem is, people coming forward and speaking but I think, apart from the sexual Harassment Bill, I think this is more than that and it needs to be addressed for our women.

This is the vulnerable group. There is nothing worse than taking advantage of a female who has children and no other support who needs a home and is suffering in somebody else's little room in the back paying \$700 a month when something could be done about it. No woman should have to get to her knees -- no pun intended -- to get a home or anything else for that matter.

The declaration of gifts more than \$1 000, I applaud that and I support it. I see coming to Parliament every week as coming into battle, a battle where we fight for our constituents and we represent them. Unlike the last Administration, this will be a battle without spoils. This is what we are giving back to the people of Barbados who have given so much to us and to the country which has given so much to us and it has to be that we will fight, apart from the usual monthly salary, without expecting more in return than what we should get. I appreciate that Clause in there with declaration of gifts for more than \$1 000.

The people of Barbados really and truly have all but lost faith in the so-called politician. We need to rewrite the definition. I remember in my nomination I looked up the definition of politician in the dictionary and it would frighten you. The definition has changed and we need to change it back. The onus is on us to regain the faith of the public of the constituents of this country, the onus is on us. I do not know the law well but even if we are unable to go back and prosecute, we need to go forward and make it right. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend my voice to this debate, fully in support as will become the reason for which will become apparent very shortly. I, like my good friend, from Christ Church West,

like to bring relations back to the text of the good book. He would have quoted rather eloquently from Peter but that was a long flowery poetic text, the gist of which I remember but the wording I have forgotten. I prefer to keep it simple. Exodus 20 verse 15, that is the law of Moses given by God to rule the people of Israel and the world: "Thou shall not steal."

Asides.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Barbados is largely unrecognisable from what it was 10 years ago. Ten or eleven years ago, Mr. Speaker, Barbadians were full of hope. We had just had the Cricket World Cup in Barbados, money was flowing in Barbados, people built on to their houses in anticipation of the World Cup and beyond. Little Barbados pulled off the third largest sporting event in the world behind the Olympics and being the Football World Cup. We did it and we did it well. Anybody in Barbados in 2007, or everybody believed there was nothing we could not do. We were on the brink of something great. If you drove around Barbados in 2007 a lot of people were fixing up their houses. They painted up their houses and Barbados was looking pretty. The bush was cut, garbage was off the streets, there was no sewage on the streets yet, it was going well, money was in the bank, Mr. Speaker, take that snapshot and then put that one side and look at today's snapshot. Everything has gone wrong and is going wrong at the same time. It is not bad luck. If it is bad luck, then that is on the footing of a biblical curse. It is not bad luck, it is mismanagement and it is corruption. Nothing in Barbados gets done without somebody who is being paid a job to do it looking for something extra on top of what they are being paid. In a lot of departments in Government the systemic delays did not evolve, they were created. We have created delays in every possible avenue of Government where a delay can be created so that people have no choice but to pay or compromise themselves to bypass that delay. Government is supposed to deliver for the people of a country what it pledges to do. If you are the Minister of Transport and Works you are to deliver a proper transport and works system. If you are the Minister of Health you are supposed to deliver an adequate and efficient healthcare system. If you are the person responsible for granting licenses, then you process the application and you grant the license. If you are responsible for giving tax refunds, then you assess the application and, if warranted, you give the refund. That is how it is supposed to work, that is how it worked before. All of a sudden nothing in Barbados is working. Long lines are the order of the day. Frustration is the order of the day.

Mr. Speaker, when those things happen corruption will flourish because people do not have time. Time is money. The man with a lot of money will bypass those delays for a dollar. He will bypass it here and he will bypass everywhere. Then what happens? The person who

took the money to allow him to bypass now says to the small man who cannot afford it, "Well you know, there is a way to get your tax refund processed quicker. There is a way to get your Town and Country Planning approval. There is a way to get a ZR permit or taxi licence. There is a way to get your good out of the port." It goes on and on until there is no longer a suggestion that there is a way, there is an expectation now that way is to be sought and paid for. That is where we have come in Barbados.

I would tell you what drove it home for me how far we have slid, and how far necessity has taken us in our country. When I come from my constituency in Christ Church East, I tend to drive along the South Coast. I would avoid it for so long that I now take every opportunity to drive on the clean-smelling South Coast roads. I drive the entire Highway 7, across the Garrison, turn onto Jemmotts Lane to go to the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, prostitution always existed in Barbados. We know it. We turned a blind-eye to it. Prostitution was localised in Barbados. Prostitution existed in Nelson Street, and it existed out by the Turf Club in Bush Hill. Everybody in Barbados knew it. You had to go to seek it out because you would not meet it by accident. Very few people actually as a matter of course turn and go onto Bush Hill, there are many ways to avoid Bush Hill. If you wanted it, you know where to find it but that is not the case anymore. If you drive on Highway 7, drive across by the Yacht Club, drive across by Government Headquarters and you turn across by the hospital, littered along the way are the signs of prostitution and it is not even discreet.

Two nights ago, on the main road going to the hospital out by Delaware, I passed a lady standing on the sidewalk in a panty and nothing else. Mr. Speaker, this is serious, I am not saying this anecdotally, I am saying this because it says something. It says this is now where we have come as a country. The fact that as necessity someone does that is bad enough. The fact that it is now accepted as common place has shown where we have slipped from and where we have fallen to. It is all systemic. It does not exist alone. The level of that decay, hand in hand the corruption has risen. We know about it, we speak about it, hear about it, everyone knows it exists but what are we doing about it. I can forgive a small man who tries to get a competitive advantage. I cannot forgive someone who has taken oath and sworn to uphold the laws and govern our country properly.

When you use your position in Government, whether it be from this Parliament, from a Cabinet or as a senior official in Government, when you use your position to secure an advantage for yourself over and above what you are entitled to at the expense of taxpayers and citizens of Barbados, then you have done wrong. There is a belief in

Barbados that nobody is ever going to go to jail for this, all politicians are the same.

Mr. Speaker, every time someone says that I cringe because I remember as I sought to rid the good people of Christ Church East of the scourge that occupied that seat before. I cringe when somebody says we are all the same. We are not the same, I am nothing like him. Our Government, this Government is nothing like the last Government. Mr. Speaker, you are not the last Speaker.

We now have to put our money where our mouth is. I was heartened when the Honourable Prime Minister, Member for St. Michael North East said, let us do this. Before getting into Government, let us show the people we are serious, let us draft this.

I was excited until she turned to me, but you know how it is. I accepted that and a committee was set up to draft it. I want with your permission to call the name of the members of that committee because the members were not paid. It is no easy feat drafting legislation. The committee met, it drafted. It met again, it drafted. It put it out there for comment and took those comments onboard and drafted some more. I would like in that respect to recognise Sir David Simmons; Leslie Haynes Q.C.; Stewart Mottley; the honourable Attorney General and Member for St. Joseph; Member for St. James North, the Honourable Edmund Hinkson; and Member for Christ Church South Ralph Thorne Q.C.; and myself.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity now to address something that was raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and his concern is a valid one. We drafted, put it out and went out there to the people of Barbados saying, "When we get in, this is what we propose to pass, these are the fines and penalties." I understand the concerns of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The honourable Attorney General did not refer back to it because I guess for his own reasons he did not want to give the explanation as to what happen, but I am not bound by the same things that bind him.

When we were commissioned to draft this legislation our instructions were simple from the now Prime Minister of Barbados. Her instructions to our committee was to make the Bill tight that nobody could wriggle out, no ambiguity, make it tight, make the powers of the Commission wide, allow them to do whatever they need to do to find, trace and punish corruption wherever it is found in public officers and make the penalties painful. These were her instructions. When we drafted, the penalties we put in there were higher than anything existing in our current legislation to penalise any offences, the penalties were higher than any other penalties found for similar legislation in the Caribbean, we put in the hardest and the highest and it went to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel to

be drafted. Every legislation has to pass through the Chief Parliamentary Counsel. Normally, they would draft it. We drafted it in Opposition, it was sent to them when we were Government for them to stamp it and approve it and put it through the proper channel before you. Sir, those fines were changed by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel without reference to the Committee or to the Attorney-General so they came back in here and it was laid before we caught ourselves and the mistake was then discovered. The reason as I understand it why they were changed is that the Chief Parliamentary Counsel said well legislation has to be harmonious, fines must bear some sort of relation to other offences. In the rest of the laws in Barbados there were no fines like this for any comparable criminal offence so those fines were adjusted down by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel to bring it in line with what existed in the legislation of Barbados because otherwise you then have a problem. If I am convicted of something under this Act I could go back to court or appeal on the grounds that the fines here are disproportionate, that they are much harsher than anything else that exist in law. Mr. Speaker, Sir, as perhaps one of the most known criminal lawyers in Barbados you would see that immediately as a ground for appeal if one of your clients were found guilty of it, but our position was this when we drafted it, we do not care, let the people feel the wrath and let them appeal and we would deal with it then but we need to show we are serious. The Chief Parliamentary Counsel being the good officer she is and doing her job sought to bring them down and harmonise them with what existed in the legislation, it is as simple as that. It is not that we backed down from it. When we caught that mistake we had two options, pull the legislation back out of Parliament and give instructions or deal with it once it came up in Select Committee.

Mr. Speaker, we did not wish to waste any further time with getting this legislation through the necessary steps in this House and it was determined that we would deal with it in Select Committee which is why the Honourable Attorney-General this morning said well although it looks as if the fines are lowered do not worry about that we are going to sort it out. Mr. Speaker, I know what went into that and why they were put there. I have been given that assurance from the Honourable Attorney-General and I believe him because I and the Honourable Members for St. James North and Christ Church South did not waste our good time doing what we did to fulfil our mandate and our promise and the directive of the now Prime Minister of Barbados for something to slip. So I wish through you, Mr. Speaker, to assure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and any other Barbadian who is concerned that there was no subterfuge and no deception. The law will go back to what it was when it was drafted, the heavy fines will stay in and those who run afoul of this legislation will be prosecuted as intended to the fullest extent of the law, that is our promise.

The Honourable Attorney-General did not wish to stand up in here and say that changes were made without consultation with us but I have no qualms about saying it and that is what it was, so I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and anybody else who had a concern souls are now at peace because at the end of the day we have to send a message.

Mr. Speaker, we then have the other side of the coin. We then have people who say but this is unfair, that it is asking too much of public servants, it is asking too much of public officials and you are going to get people shying away from public office and I say why. Everything in this legislation makes sense. If we look at it from the top to the bottom, in a nutshell the Integrity Commission is an autonomous body, it needs to be an autonomous body, because we may have to investigate the Commissioner of Police. I am not saying that he is on the cards. My point is simply this. The body that normally investigates crimes in Barbados is the Royal Barbados Police Force but what if you had a situation where you had to investigate high-ranking members of the Force, that is why the Integrity Commission is an autonomous body with wide powers, it can designate special investigators. These investigators have effectively the same powers as the police, they can go and get a warrant, they can enter premises, they can arrest people and they can search and seize. This is necessary for this legislation to have the teeth that is intended.

With respect to the declaration of assets that almost everybody is concerned about, the aim is not to penalise or embarrass you. If you come into Parliament and you do not have a lot of money, that is okay, you came to serve, you are not going to be embarrassed, it is not going to be out there, it is going to be sealed unless you become the subject of an investigation at which point your statement will be examined and used as a reference point, this is where you were then, explain where you are now. Equally, for those most affluent Members of the Chamber, I would not point any finger at anybody because I do not know anybody's wealth or debt or financial standing, but anybody who is now coming into office who has money or who has property or who has investments, that is nothing to be ashamed of. You work hard. If you have them honestly, you have nothing to be worried about. Any person standing or sitting on a statutory board, you have nothing to worry about. The question comes or the issue comes if after being in a position of power and authority you cannot explain how you got from Point A to Point B, then you have a problem, that is the reason for the declaration of assets. It is not meant to embarrass anybody, it is not meant to make anybody uncomfortable, it is nothing that should frighten anybody who is coming into politics or coming into public service and their heart is good and pure and true and they intend to do the work of the people and do the work of the people honestly. There is nothing to fear from this legislation.

In other countries, Sir, and as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, I hope this is the start of a suite of legislation because for this to make sense other pieces have to come, the freedom of information. I have a nice new letterhead with Wilfred Abrahams at the top and I was writing a letter the other day and my personal assistant took it away and tore it up and said Mr. Abrahams this is not your letterhead anymore, this is your letterhead. When I sign in my capacity as Member of Parliament or Minister or when somebody signs as a Chairman of a statutory board you are not doing it in your own name, you are doing it in the name of the people of Barbados so those same people have a right to know or to be able to access information on every single thing you sign on their behalf. There are no secrets in Government. If I borrowed for my ministry \$10 million I must be able to explain what it is being used for and when the project is done where it went and if anything is left over where it went too. We cannot have a situation like what happened in Cahill Energy. I do not even think that this current Government has yet seen the actual signed contracts for Cahill Energy. How could it be that four Ministers of Government signed binding the people of Barbados to a multi-hundred million dollar deal, a big deal, \$700 million, and we cannot tell you what is involved. We now, the current Government of Barbados, is still trying to find out what are the details of that. How can that be so? That cannot be allowed to continue. They did not sign in their own names. I know who signed. We all know who signed. They did not sign in their own names. They signed as agents, servants and/or agents of the people and Government of Barbados. They are responsible for any commitment that we entered into and they are responsible for any profits we make and any loss we incurred as a result of them entering into these contracts, so yes I agree with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that there must be a freedom of information suite of legislation coming soon but first further, Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is something very self-explanatory called an Explanation of Wealth Act. We do not have it in Barbados as yet but you must be able to account for what you have.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not begrudge the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, if the Honourable Member has four houses and three cars and can tell you where these things came from and can show you the winning Lotto ticket, then you know that these houses and cars were purchased through legitimate means. If the Honourable Member came to Government and has shares in Banks, in Fortress, and his grandmother has left him some property somewhere that is rented out and the Honourable Member can show that although the Honourable Member is in Government but that this is the money that he earned through his declared assets, then nobody can raise a finger if his wealth or his circumstances increases. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is where you come to Government riddled with debts, when you were bouncing your cheques in a gas station before getting into

Government; it is where you were evicted from your constituency office because you could not pay the rent before you got into Government; it is where your water and electricity were cut off in your constituency office and your car was repossessed before you got into Government. Mr. Speaker, Sir, those things are not conclusive but they are indicators that you are in difficulty, those are sure indicators that your expenses are greatly surpassing your assets because as the good Honourable Member for Christ Church West would have alluded to, assets are tangible and visible while debts for the most part are invisible. They only become visible when the assets are seized because you cannot pay, but when you go from there, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to driving a BMW X5 and you not only have one car you have two, a BMW X5 and a Suzuki Vitara, that is where you go from struggle to living in a big house, that is where you go from scrambling and ducking from the marshals and from the creditors to spending wildly, buying drinks for everybody, having lavish Christmas parties and the most hampers in the world. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when you go to that point that is when you have to explain your wealth.

Asides.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is real simple, when people are caught at the airport or if the police raid a common man's house and finds \$100 000 under the mattress....

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you would not find that in my house, I do not have it.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if they raid your house and find \$100 000 under the mattress, then the presumption is that you must be able to explain where that money came from because if you have \$100 000 under your mattress or in your safe and you cannot tell us where it came from: that somebody paid you fees, that your mother died and left it for you. If you cannot account for it, then the presumption is that you got it illegally.

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

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Oh, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am aware that the last time you notified somebody at five minutes, but you caught me off-guard.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I apologise for that.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point simply is that people need not be afraid of this piece of legislation, this piece of legislation is intended to catch, investigate and punish corrupt official, corrupt politicians, corrupt public servants. Mr. Speaker, Sir, honest people

who are taking their salaries and living their lives normally have nothing to fear by this legislation.

I also applaud the Whistleblower protection because the reality is that the only way that you are going to be able to investigate crimes, especially crimes in Government where power is abused is if some of the people who were abused are going to step forward and say that it happened to them, or where you have an employer or an employee who knows that their employer is involved in corrupt practices, then you need their evidence. So the Whistleblower legislation allows people to give that evidence without fear of being victimised and protects them once they have given that evidence.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other thing I agree with the Leader of the Opposition on is that we need to get our justice system up and running quickly because with the best legislation in the world and the courts are in shambles, then we are going to have a problem, so I applaud the efforts of the Honourable Attorney-General in trying to get us back on track but it is a notable deficiency, it was not occasioned by this Government, we came and found it but steps are being taken to address it as quickly as possible. Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the end of the day I believe that the same laws that apply to the small man must apply to the big man because we in Barbados must be able to walk around confident and comfortable that the same rules apply to everybody. That justice for me is the same as justice for you, that the law is not interpreted differently for you than it is for me, for the man in Silver Sands or for the man in Parish Land, so I am firmly joining those who believe that it is high time that somebody 'big' gets locked up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wind up.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not believe in witch hunt, I believe in using the powers in this legislation, using the powers of the Police Force, using all available lawful means to try to find the missing moneys of Barbados, to try to find all those funds that went awry for which we cannot account and trace those funds where people have assets that they cannot explain. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not pointing my finger at anybody who I want to be targeted, but if you ask me I can point them to a few, but my point simply, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is follow the law, apply the law, enforce the law and if it falls that a politician or a 'big up' in business or public official has offended, then they must get investigated, tried, convicted and locked up in the same way as the small man. The law is for all. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I completely support this legislation. I thank you.

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

Hon. Ms. S.V. HUSBANDS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to join this debate feeling extremely pleased with what is being done in the name of Barbadians with this piece of legislation. I want to express my sincere appreciation for the presentation that was made by the Honourable Attorney-General, giving Barbadians the assurance that something will be done about those who seek to corrupt, to pollute and to rob our nation and its people of the resources.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also want to applaud the Leader of the Opposition for the issues that the Honourable Member has raised in stating before this Honourable House that this could only be a beginning. That if Barbados is to take seriously its democracy, that if we are to take seriously our quality of life, that if we are to stand and take responsibility for the quality of nation, the quality of society which we designed, then more legislation must come to support this first step that we can ensure that the nation and its resources are properly guarded. So that each Barbadian can have the assurance in his or her heart that when it comes to a nation that is well-ordered, well-managed, that they can have a hope for a future because the road has been leveled, that they can have the hope of access to the opportunities and resources which abound in the country because fairness exists in the way in which those are managed.

Also, more legislation must come so that our senior citizens can look forward to a comfortable life and a retirement and end-of-life in which they are not struggling to put food or medication in their mouths, because the public resources are properly managed and what has been promised is delivered to them so that they can look forward to that quality of life. This is why I am very happy today, Mr. Speaker, and I have no doubt that you yourself are happy to see this piece of legislation here and to see the further assurance that those who have perpetrated ill against this nation and have done grave injustice to the high office they have held will be held accountable. This evening, I am happy. I am pleased.

When we talk about the power of integrity and the price of corruption, it is important for every single Barbadian to understand that this cannot and must not be treated as some disease which lays ahold of people in political life, but rather this is a threat to their very wellbeing. Therefore, they must care about it. They must not accept as normal and they must not accept as usual that they will all do it or that this is the norm, for when citizens send forth that signal then there is more and more relaxing of the social values of integrity guarding every aspect of economic and social life.

Mr. Speaker, when I watch the news and I see the distress and the breakdown in societies across the world brought about by corruption and oppression, sometimes

when you watch it you feel that it is something distant and far away which would never touch us. Watching the news and constantly analysing what is going on in countries across the world, you recognise that any time you allow corruption to take root, you make it the norm of the day and it does not stay there. It grows bigger and bigger like a huge cancer until it destroys that society, makes it ungovernable, and makes the place unlivable. That is why every citizen must care about this piece of legislation and must be vigilant in ensuring that this is not only implemented but that it is properly exercised, so that it does the job which it has been designed to do.

When economic and social injustice occurs because there is corruption in the civil system and in the political system, the things around you begin to deteriorate. Small people with dreams to establish a business, to go after something that is in their heart, to pursue their potential, find that every door is blocked and every obstacle is in the way, because system is readjusted to allow only a few who are able to pay and are able to do favours to get by, to grab the opportunities, to get the contracts, and others are shut out as though they are strangers in their own land. That must not be the case for Barbados, and that will not be the case for Barbados as long as a Barbados Labour Party does what it has pledged to do to protect this society and ensure a better life for all. That is why we have come to office. That is why we have given ourselves in service.

Sir, when you have this problem of corruption, I think it comes because people do not understand the absolute importance of integrity. I remember as a little girl my mum teaching me the dos and don'ts of life. My mum was an excellent mother, and she tried to make sure that we lived by certain values so she shared values of honesty, keeping your word, doing your best and those things. One of the things you used to hear a lot as a child was that if you stole or if you did wrong or bad things, you were not going to go to Heaven and God would be mad. So many children grew up with that notion that the only reason for being honest and living in a particular way was so that God would not be mad with you and you would get to go to Heaven. As time passed and as you grew older and understood what a society was about, you learned that this, strictly speaking, was not the truth. That was not the purpose for integrity.

Integrity is not a passport for Heaven. Integrity was designed to make life on Earth possible. Without integrity in your systems, social and economic life is impossible. Mr. Speaker, I may go to a pharmacy and present my prescription and I am given medication to take care of a particular health problem, but the persons who manufactured that medication did not act with integrity towards their profession or their promise or the advertisement which they put out on their product. If they caused that medication not to have the desired effect

because they were cutting corners to make money, they have now jeopardised my life. It makes living impossible when you do not have integrity underneath all of your systems.

Mr. Speaker, if I purchase a car I do not have the luxury of checking the qualifications of the technician who put it together. I do not have the luxury of making sure that it passes all of its inspections and that the claims which have been made by the engineers and the technicians will hold up. When I purchase that car and I sit in there and I swing that engine, I expect everything in there to be where it ought to be and that they have acted with integrity towards the construction of that car. Without integrity, human life is impossible. That is why it has to be guarded. That is why it must be guarded by everyone. That is why, whether you are king, prime minister, civil servant, postman, agriculturalist, teacher or nurse, integrity must permeate everything that you do so that our human life is possible.

Therefore, it is a quality we must commend to everyone in our society. Where it is breaking down, a society has a responsibility to repair the breach. If that breach is not mended, it will cause a collapse at the point where the breach has been made. A huge breach has been made in the trust of the people of Barbados in relation to its political actors and to political life. This generation of the Barbados Labour Party has the responsibility and the call to purpose to repair this breach. This is the work of our time, and part of our job is the restoration of the public trust in its political system, in its economic system and in its social system. We must not fail the people at this point. Therefore, I highly commend this piece of legislation and I highly commend the men. I did not hear any women, and that is a severe breach, Mr. Speaker. However, we commend the men who sat on that Committee and drafted this piece of legislation. It is my hope that as it goes to Select Committee its business will be done with swift dispatch and that it will be passed and gazetted and Barbadians will have the opportunity to see a piece of legislation that has the power to transform the economic and social platforms in the country.

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why I was very pleased with our decision to draft the legislation even before we were in office and to make it a piece of early business for this Parliament is because every day in my constituency I see the impact of corruption on the social and economic system. I had the heart-breaking experience, Mr. Speaker, where a two young men sat in front of me and they were sharing with me how desperately they needed a job and they shared what their skills were and they said that they need it urgently because they were living on the street. I said to the young man, "do you not have relatives, what about your parents?" He told me he could go home and look at his parents if he wanted to because there is a space

there for me but my girlfriend does not have anywhere to live, there is no room in her former household to house her so how would it look that I get up and go home because things have come with us and we have been put out of the house we were renting and I leave her on the street. He said, "Miss, I could not do that, so I stayed on the street with here but I am asking you, I am pleading with you, I need a job and I need a job quickly so that I can do something about her condition, so that I can take her from off the street." Mr. Speaker, I was moved and as I pondered on those young men who sat and told me similar stories and I said to myself, "How did Barbados get to a place where so many people do not have homes and are on the streets". They may be hidden from the eyes of the regular public but the people in the communities and the surrounding areas, the neighbours know what is happening and what is going on, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, when I listened to the skills of those, one in particular had good construction skills and I said to myself that young one would not be on the street if our construction industry had not been made subject to the worse acts of corruption this country has ever seen. He would have a job, he would be working as a mason, he would be making good money every week, he would be going to the supermarket, he would be paying his child support, he would be able to pay his rent and he would not be on the street with his girlfriend unable to provide for her not knowing which corner to look at, where to go to get relief for her.

Mr. Speaker, any time you allow imbalances, injustices, corruption in your economic and social system, there are people who have to pay the price and it is generally not the person who created the corruption in the first place. Sir, that is why this legislation is important and that is why the penalties are important and that is why the jail terms are important, Mr. Speaker, and if those of us in high office have to pay the small price of putting our assets in an envelope and handing it over to someone to put in safekeeping should our affairs come into question, we will do it because it is the right thing to do and because it will help us to keep a political system that is clean.

Now, there is issue, Mr. Speaker, that we have to consider and that we have to think about. Barbados is a small nation and that create a number of problems that you would not necessarily get in a large population where people do not know each other. When you have a small population and everybody knows everybody and everybody is related to everybody and everybody went to school with everybody this becomes a problem when you have to exercise justice. So one of things I am praying for is that when we appoint the Commissioners to the Integrity Commission that we search diligently for Commissioners for whom Barbados is first.

Mr. Speaker, people who understand the importance of the rule of law and the certainty that there must be in law and the application of that law to ensure that there is not a breakdown in the society. That we have an seek out persons of courage because sometimes you have to be stand up and be counted and you must stand up and be counted when it matters most, so they must have the fortitude of spirit that they can call a spade a spade, that they can be consistent in the application of justice that when something needs to go to the Director of Public Prosecution that it goes so that we give life to this piece of legislation so that it will do this country good, that is what must happen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to restore confidence and if we are going to take our democracy seriously I want to urge that we seek those Commissioners who will do the necessary job for Barbados and be guardians of this nation but there is another piece that is needed. We have heard the need for additional legislation but, Mr. Speaker, I want to put it to you that the safeguarding of our nation and of our resources, the levelling of our playing field, the free access by all to opportunities and resources that battle will not be properly won or properly completed unless citizens engage in their democracy. What do I mean by that, Mr. Speaker? Sir, citizens have to be watchdogs, they have to be firm craftsmen of their own fate, citizens have to speak loudly when things go awry, they have to demonstrate to the powers that be that we will not tolerate certain behaviours.

Mr. Speaker, on May 24th, as my Honourable colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South said earlier, that it is really important that as a people pay attention to all that is happening in our name. He said that on May 24th, Barbadians spoke with a loud voice that the type of governance they had been subjected to over the past 10 years was not acceptable to them and they were sending a massive signal. I believe that signal is not only for the side that has left, it is also a message to us that we Barbadians are awake, we are alert, we are on the watch and this must not happen to us again and I want to applaud Barbadians for that. They must now engage in civic action that allows them to be able to ask the questions that is why I welcomed when we introduced Question Time in Parliament especially now when we have such a large majority, Barbadians should be able to ask questions that we, as Parliamentarians, should get up and answer, explain ourselves, put the fact and declare the truth. This is what must happen in Barbados but for citizens to be engaged in their own democracy, citizens, not only had to informed having freedom information, they must also be educated about what other interests. If they do not understand and appreciate what their interests are then it is possible that they might think differently and may not be able to appreciate why something has to be done. One of the things that we have to do, as a Government, is to start the process of not only communicating but adding into that the

education behind it that people can understand and say the “yea” and “amen” when they agree and to be able to say “no” when it is not adding up. Mr. Speaker, this is why one of the things that we have to do is find various channels for our citizens’ participation. I am extremely committed to civic engagement. I cannot tell you how fervent I am about the absolute need for people to be engaged. One of the things I want to compliment our Government on the amount of information they have put in the public’s domain to be able to help people to understand what we are doing and how we are doing it but civic engagement must provide opportunities for people to talk, for people to have input and for people to participate. In keeping with my fervent wish for that engagement, in St. James South one of the things that we are continuing in that constituency is to ensure that we not only report to the people but that we give opportunity to them to ask questions. That is why, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow at Queen’s College at 6.00 p.m. we are meeting with the constituents so that they can raise any questions they may have about the Budget, about the sewerage, about what has transpired so far. If there are things that they need me to research to get back to them with an answer so that they know I am holding myself accountable to them and that our Government is being accountable to them to allow them the opportunity to put their ideas -- and I want to encourage every Barbadians, please go on “ideas for Barbados” and put your ideas down because we need to get everybody’s input into building this nation. We started that process when we invited people to comment on the Integrity Bill and ask them to make their voices heard if something was not tight enough, if something was too hard, if there was a gap or if there was a loophole share with us so that we could ensure that Bill was not just a Barbados Labour Party (BLP) it was a Barbados Bill. That must be a continuing activity where people are able to come and speak with their representatives, get the information they need, share the thoughts that they have. It will also be time, Mr. Speaker, when I will be asking them: what can you do to help take Barbados forward? How do you want to make an input into making Barbados a better place? What can we do together?

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I feel we need to have if we are going to make what we are doing meaningful and produce the result is that Barbados desperately needs a Consumer and Civic Association. If we do not do that where citizens exert pressure on the system, exert pressure not just on Government but exert pressure on businesses, then what will happen is that people will sit in a room and decide what is best for us and the attitude will eventually come over, you can take it or lump it, but if we form a strong consumer association what the citizens will be able to do is to begin to press back when things are done that seek to take things out of their pockets. One of the things that hurts me is that the corruption that has taken place in this country has resulted in losses to the pockets of

people because now you have had to use heavy taxation to try to rebalance it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two more minutes.

Hon. C. S. V. HUSBANDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to encourage citizens: What are the way do you wish to engage us? How do you want to make inputs? What do you wish to see in your democracy that would help to make Barbados work better for you and work better for your family? I want to encourage every single Barbadian that this is not a time to be afraid. One of the things that was disturbing to me is that when these things were happening so many people were afraid to speak up and I could understand the fear because you live in a small society and you can get hurt, you could lose your job and so on but what came back to me as I thought about that attitude, if everybody does that, corruption would just be rampant but the Bible tells us the remedy for this. It says, if any man, he who seeks to save his life shall lose it and that is what happens when you feel that you are protecting your job by saying nothing. When you see corruption, that corruption will eventually eat the very job that you were trying to protect and that is how you will lose it. I want to encourage Barbadians this is the time to be brave, this is a time to stand up, this is a time to be bold and this is a time to engage, not just to watch us as we govern but to come and partner alongside of us as we govern so that we are able to take Barbados to where it needs to be and that Barbados can work again for everyone. I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

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

On the motion of Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, seconded by Hon Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW, further consideration on the Bill was deferred until a time convenient for Parliament.

RECOMMITAL

Hon Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware on the second occasion of this Sitting we would have made arrangements for several committees to be put in place. It has been drawn to my attention that the Minutes reflect that you are listed as a member of the Committee but really you should appear in your ex officio capacity therefore, I would want to replace the Honourable Member for St. John with the Honourable Member for St. Joseph so that we have the full capacity for that particular committee. Sir, the Management Commission of Parliament would be the Committee in question.

Hon. E. G. HINKSON: I beg to second that, Sir.

On the motion of Hon Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW, seconded by Hon. E. G. HINKSON the Honourable Member for St. John was replaced by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph as a Member of the Management Commission of Parliament.

The question is that the change be reflected in the Management Committee that the Member for St. John be removed and that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph be placed in his stead was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, there is one other amendment in respect of the Committees and that would be to be the Public Accounts Committee. The Committee should actually have seven members, so we are asking for the deletion of your name in respect of that Committee.

His Honour Gline Clarke: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question is that the Honourable Speaker be removed from the Public Accounts Committee was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business for today, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 10.00 a.m.

His Honour Gline Clarke: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

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BROWNE, Dr. S E.

CADDLE, Hon. Miss M. K. A.
DUGUID, Dr. the Hon. W. F.
HINKSON, Hon. E. G.
HUMPHREY, Hon. K.D.M.
HUSBANDS, Hon. C. S. V.
HUSBANDS, Hon. Ms. S.V.
MARSHALL, Hon. D. D.
STRAUGHN, Hon. R. R.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Opening. The convening sentence says the House ‘met at 10.15 a.m.’, but the next line reads ‘Mr. Speaker took the Chair at 10.00 a.m.’ The convening sentence also begins in lower case, without the words ‘Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly’. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Announcements by His Honour the Speaker. The Speaker announces ‘a Report of the Attorney-General for the year 2017 and a Report of the Attorney-General on the Financial Statement of the Government of Barbados 2016-2017’; these are presumably reports of the Auditor General. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Recommittal and Adjournment. The heading ‘RECOMMITAL’ stands over changes to the membership of the Management Commission and the Public Accounts Committee, and two seconders appear as text paragraphs (‘His Honour Gline Clarke: I beg to second that, Sir.’) rather than as speech headings. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 1, speech labels. The Member for St. James South is labelled both ‘Hon. Ms. S.V. HUSBANDS’ and ‘Hon. C. S. V. HUSBANDS’, and the Member for St. Philip North appears as ‘Dr. S E. BROWNE’. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Order No. 1. The second reading was not concluded: further consideration of the Bill was deferred on the motion of Hon. D. D. Marshall, although the debate speaks of the Bill going to a Select Committee. Noted for the record; no text appears to be missing.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 10th July, 2018, with Mr. Speaker, His Honour Arthur E. Holder, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Rev. Father Mark Harewood. The Minutes of 26th June were confirmed, and the Speaker announced reports received on the year 2017 and on the Financial Statement of the Government for 2016-2017. Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw laid the Harrison College Financial Statements for the years 2005 to 2013

and the Barbados Tourism Authority reports for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, and Hon. R. R. Straughn laid the Investment Barbados Annual Report, 2017. Standing Orders were suspended.

Under Order No. 1 the Attorney-General, Hon. D. D. Marshall, Member for St. Joseph, moved the second reading of the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018. He said the previous Administration had promised integrity legislation within 100 days in 2008 but brought it only late in its second term, ignoring the Opposition’s recommendations in Select Committee. He acknowledged that the fines in the Bill were lower than the \$200 000, \$300 000 and \$500 000 in the public draft and promised that the original levels would be restored by amendment. He cited a Port contract of more than \$119 million awarded without tender, \$28 million paid by the Barbados Transport Board to one company to rebuild transmissions, and a housing project awarded for \$18 million, and said the new Commission’s staff would have investigative powers and that the public would be able to appear before a Select Committee.

The Leader of the Opposition, Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, congratulated the Acting Prime Minister and addressed the Bill at length, warning of links between elective politics and criminality, citing the Jamaican experience and asking why judges were not among the persons covered. After a point of order from Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid he explained that one remark had been tongue-in-cheek, and the Speaker cautioned him on parliamentary language.

After the suspension Hon. K. D. M. Humphrey, Member for St. Michael South, began with the Lord’s Prayer and supported the Bill as putting Barbados first. Miss M. K. A. Caddle, Member for St. Michael South Central, said the Bill showed that the Government had nothing to hide. Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, Member for Christ Church West, discussed how assets are declared and suggested that the Public Accounts Committee be entrenched. Dr. S. E. Browne, Member for St. Philip North, Hon. W. A. Abrahams, Member for Christ Church East, who said someone found with \$100 000 under a mattress faced a presumption to explain it, and Hon. Ms. S. V. Husbands, Member for St. James South, who urged citizens not to be afraid to speak up, also supported the Bill.

On the motion of Hon. D. D. Marshall, further consideration of the Bill was deferred. On the motions of Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, the Member for St. Joseph replaced the Member for St. John on the Management Commission of Parliament, and the Speaker’s name was removed from the Public Accounts Committee, which

should have seven members. The House was then | adjourned until Tuesday, 17th July, 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

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