
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2018 – 2022

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 17, 2018.

PRESENT

His Honour A. E. HOLDER, B.Sc. (Hons.), MSW, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Speaker)

His Honour G. 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)

Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment, Minister of National Security and the Civil Service)

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.), (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A. (Minister of Environment and National Beautification)

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)

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. (Leader of Government Business) (Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training)

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY, J.P., B.A., B.Sc., PgD. (Leader of the Opposition)

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID, J.P., B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., F.D.R.C.S., (Minister of Transport, Works and Maintenance)

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of Energy and Water Resources)

Hon. C. S. V. HUSBANDS, B.A., M.Sc. (Hons.) (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 (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, B.S.S. (Minister of Creative Economy, Culture and Sports)

Mr. I. G. P. 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.S.C., M.P.A. (Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy)

Hon. R. R. STRAUGHN, B.Sc., M.Sc. (Minister in the Ministry of Finance)

Hon. Miss M. K-A. CADDLE, B.A., M.Sc. (Minister in the Ministry of Economic Affairs)

Mr. N. G. H. ROWE

Prayers were taken by Father Reverend Mark Harewood.

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

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 10th July, 2018.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its Meeting of Tuesday, 10th July, 2018, be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

Dr. The Hon W.F. Duguid: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDINGS ORDERS

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

Dr. The Hon W.F. Duguid: 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 Prime Minister.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you very much, Sir. I am still getting accustomed to looking at you and calling you, Mr. Speaker. It is a delightful thing.

I, Sir, rise in this debate just to share a few perspectives because I think that we are all settled that this piece of legislation is critical not just to the tone of the Government that I want to lead but equally to the integrity and health of the country in which we live. Our journey thus far as a nation has not seen a formal interplay between the Members of this Parliament and the Members of the Executive and the formal requirements that we are now asking for in this legislation with respect to conduct at an individual level and the disclosure of assets and indeed the level of accountability which is now being asked of those who come to public life even outside of this Chamber. We do so conscience that in the early stages of this transition to a new framework that there will be those who will be reluctant to want to serve because in a small society the notion of having to disclose one's business to any entity that is outside of your job or your family or even your church is something that may be a load too heavy to bear for some of our citizens because they are simply not accustomed to it. Indeed, Sir, it brings to mind why a previous Barbados Labour Party (BLP) attempt to pass this legislation never got anywhere, and it was because of the Senate, not the Lower House. This legislation was passed

in the Lower House under J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams but it was stalled in the Senate because it could not get the requisite majority and indeed it was the independent senators who said enough is enough and at the stage the legislation stopped.

I have every confidence, Sir, the Leader of the Opposition has two Members in the Senate and will ensure that when it gets there that this time it will pass if only because his signature to the document which commits to this Bill was strong. I know that he has influence over both of his Senators to ensure that the requisite constitutional majority is obtained to the extent -- I do not think it is needed in this instance -- yes it is. It is because we would want to give it constitutional protection. I have every confidence that the Leader of the Opposition will ensure that the fate that befell my predecessor in this party will not befall myself as we seek to make this Bill law in our land.

As I say so, Sir, let us also be real and even in the construction of Boards, as we speak, there have been some persons who have therefore said, we are prepared to serve as members, but we may not be able to serve as Chairman because of how we hold our assets in common with other people and while they may be prepared for the disclosure of the common ownership in which they hold assets means that they have to check with the other person and in many instances, other people are saying, no, we are not prepared to go there. This is not unique to Barbados, Sir. This has happened in other territories. Indeed, it was the reason why the then Prime Minister who is no longer with us - and I refer to the then Honourable Member for St. John, the Honourable David Thompson -- said in an interview before his passing that he was having difficulty pushing forward the notion of the legislation because of the extent to which people were not prepared to serve in this country as a result of it. Sir, for him and for those who succeeded him in the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) that became an obstacle. For us, Sir, it cannot be an obstacle. It is an unfortunate event but one that is entirely understandable where you are breaking new ground and introducing a new culture. Sir, I used a completely different metaphor. When we were growing up and indeed our parents and our grandparents the one thing that people did not talk about in this country and in this region was mental health. It was taboo but as we move around and talk to young people, not just locally but even regionally in the preparation for the CARICOM meetings, the one thing that young people want put fully and squarely on the table are issues of mental health so that values and perspectives change and shift. I have every confidence that once we stay the course with respect to what is expected of us when we hold positions of trust, be they formally in Government or be they in the church or be they in non-governmental organisations, these new standards of conduct shall become part and parcel of the landscape and shall therefore not appear to be unusual or extraordinary 10 years, 15 years or 20 years from now.

Why do we do it, Sir? There is a cost to corruption and the cost is that if I have to spend the money in areas where a person has chosen to spend it because of their corrupt activity then it means the money cannot be spent on the things that we want generally to be able to do as a Government. We cannot spend it in being able to improve the lot of those whose pensions may not be sufficient to allow them to keep body and soul together, we cannot spend it with respect to creating the opportunities for young people many of whom in this country... As I said the thing that has disturbed me most in this journey was the recognition of the numbers of young people who have left school and who have for six years, seven years and eight years never kept or never had a fulltime job, they might get an odd job here and an odd job there. Sir, you in another life ran a post-secondary institution that was designed to create opportunities for young people and older people who may have past that and it was about creating a platform to allow aspiration to become reality. When we have a country that hitherto was able in its years of independence to provide for its citizens now finding that in the last seven/eight years that almost half of the people leaving school, 4 500 or so leave school a year, were not able to find opportunities in this country in terms of regular employment even if they went into post-secondary training or genuine tertiary training.

I have, Sir, a document on my desk that I brought down this morning of a young lady who studied in Canada, came back here but could not get anything for the last three/four years and in spite of that she has reached out to me to share her perspective on what Barbados' future economic development should look like. They want to participate but when we engage in corrupt practices the money is diverted from those noble activities that ought to be the subject of a Government's focus and spent in the pockets of someone who ought to know better and for whom this now becomes the ultimate breach of trust because they were not put there to engage in malfeasance, misfeasance or simple stealing, that is what this is about.

Mr. Speaker, we are not trying to be sanctimonious, we are trying to lay a line in the sand and we are simply saying that there are standards. To whom much is given much is expected. You know, Sir, in July 2008 when I had the first opportunity to lead as the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party in my first encounter in a Budget debate I indicated then that I felt that this moment would come with respect to the passage of this legislation. I felt that it was critical for those who serve in high office and I felt that I would reinforce my commitment to it by declaring my assets to the country at that time. I am not asking anyone else to have done that but I wanted to draw attention to the fact that you cannot hoister yourself in private but want to serve in public office. To that extent, Sir, what this legislation seeks to do first and foremost is to establish an Integrity Commission, in the same way that we established

an Electoral and Boundaries Commission that is clothed with constitutional protection, that would have as its members people of eminent integrity themselves and people who understand the importance of discretion and confidentiality in a small society. Part of our difficulties in a small society is managing what I call the sociology of smallness, that everybody is related and everybody knows one another and there would inevitably be some difficulties and hence discretion and wisdom are also critical. I do not know how many people in Barbados are related but I do know that you cannot go far without finding somebody who is related or who went to school with somebody and therefore how we manage issues of conflict and how we manage relationships in the context of a small society requires a greater degree of discretion than would otherwise be the case in a large country where there is complete arm's length relationships in almost every instance. We are conscious of that and some have even suggested that is why in the past others did not proceed also with alacrity in the establishment of institutions such as this. We get it, we understand it but we say in spite of it we must manage to literally put in place this framework because the country needs it now and people must be held accountable.

It burns my soul, Sir, every time I see people who are voiceless, our people who have no money or power connections, finding themselves before the courts for all kinds of things and those who clearly have stepped on the line, who clearly have transgressed, find themselves watching on as if they are innocent spectators. Sir, this is what destroys people's belief and hope in a society. This is what removes from people the urge to want to participate. When all is said and done, Sir, the mission of nation building requires the majority of us moving in the same direction but if people are despondent or if people lose hope because they believe that there are two sets of laws or, as Adonijah has sang so brilliantly, that there are two 'Barbadoses', then this is why we do not get people moving in the same direction and we do not get many hands making light work. I feel, Sir, that this piece of legislation tangibly represents this Government's commitment to having one Barbados and to having a framework that unites us all in accountability and what is right.

What is more, Sir, is that when we launched the Covenant of Hope people thought that it was just an idle exercise. Sir, I am going to repeat it every time I stand from this Chair, there is nothing idle about what the Barbados Labour Party committed to at Solidarity House when we launched the Covenant of Hope and there was nothing idle about what the Annual Conference of the Barbados Labour Party the highest decision-making body of the party agreed to when it agreed at Foundation School in October 2015 to the Covenant of Hope. Politics and representation must stand for something and the platform upon which it stands

is first and foremost values. Are we perfect? No, we are not. Will people transgress? More likely than not but if they do so willingly and continuing in particular to do so then the State must hold them to account.

Sir, it is first and foremost therefore about making sure that there is one Barbados, one set of rules and one set of laws to which we are all bound. Does this society admit that a person can be rehabilitated? Yes, they do, that is why we have the expungement of records in our country, and that is legislation that I believe that the Honourable Attorney-General will, at a soon time, look at to be able to expand because we believe people must be given a second chance. We believe that people must not be condemned to purgatory for ever and ever and ever, but we believe too that people must pay a price for the actions that they make, because accountability is critical.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, for me at a personal level I feel strongly that having ask people to do that, that it is always better for people to come forward and say that they have fallen, that they have done wrong, that they have done the wrong thing, that they should not have done this. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I come from the perspective of someone who used to practise criminal law, and you too, Sir, whereas those who threw themselves at the mercy of the court are treated how, they are treated with mercy more often than not. Those who recognised that there is a cost and time to investigation and who are prepared to obviate that route, to remove from the State that cost, the court recognises it and treats them with a level of leniency that they do not treat a person who has been found guilty.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have struggled at night for the last year and where do we land on this? Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand that the population wants blood, because the population feels aggrieved that the sense of all-out plundering.... I am not going to say thieving, that is for the evidence to come, but that the extent to which public institutions no longer resemble what they ought to resemble because of activities that took place, the people are angry. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the people are angry because they have had to bear a burden, while seeing all of this unfold. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I struggle at night because I remember in the Book of Romans it says Vengeance is mine saith the Lord. This is not about vengeance, this is about setting a line in the sand for accountability.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am equally conscious that a country or a Government that becomes obsessed with multiple commissions of inquiry and looking behind them, what has happened throughout the region.... Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is ultimately what we face, that you can use your energy how you choose to deploy it and while we must make sure that there is accountability, without doubt, this Government must never become so obsessed with anything that approaches a level of vengeance that it forgets to do

what it has to do to move the people of this country forward in a way that is sustainable.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is my job, I believe as Honourable Prime Minister of this country, to ensure that even though we hold people accountable, that this Government must never become consumed with wanting only to achieve a level of vengeance or a level of “we gine get yuh”, while as the same time when the same young people who I talked about who cannot find a job are left on the sidelines yet for another five years or another decade, so that whatever we do has to flow from the evidence and if the evidence is there we will deal with it. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Attorney-General has indicated that upon his desk has already fallen a lot of things that require further investigation, and in his wisdom the Honourable Member has to ensure that without prejudice to the establishment of this Integrity Commission that those things that have fallen below the standard of conduct required by the law ought to be dealt with. At the same time, I believe that our approach to transparency and accountability is something to which we have to remain committed, and you will note therefore that almost in every instance I have tried to say to the country, even when it appears as though we have made a mistake or fallen, as we did with the Constitutional amendment and the two Senators. Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is nothing to be gained by anything called a cover-up, however innocent or however conniving, nothing. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is the example that we want to set for our young people because young people respond also to the examples that lay before them, that is why I say that you cannot have two Barbadoses, you cannot. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hope that we will act in a way therefore that recognises that none of us is perfect but what we must have is a commitment to hold people accountable and to be transparent in our dealings.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish that this transparency could have been reflected even in the conduct of this Parliament. It is of great, great concern to me that even in the very highest court of the land that a person who previously sat in your Chair could find themselves signing a contract without tender. Preparing the legal contract themselves, uniquely leaving off the “drawn and prepared” because they knew that they could not allow a “drawn and prepared” to go on that document, and purporting to issue a contract on January 1, 2017, that would see a contractor receiving \$23 000 for every day that the House of Assembly met and \$17 000 for every day that the Senate met, so that if both Houses met in one week that contractor would receive \$40 000 without this going to tender.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, running an institution does cost money, running an institution does create opportunities for goods and services to be supplied, we get that. We get that there may be people who they may want, even if that is what the Speaker wanted.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister, the former Speaker.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the former Speaker. I wish to make that very, very clear and I do apologise, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point is this, there is a process, we cannot be lawmakers and lawbreakers too, and what is the tune, so that if the House met five times in one month, that is \$200 000 in that month for House and Senate, or if they met as they do at Estimates, as they did in February of this year, that is \$200 000 in eight days, far less a month.

Now, Sir, I am sure that there are a lot of other people providing the same goods and services who would have welcomed that opportunity. So much so that I have said, through my colleague, that my perspective on this with respect to this Parliament is that as they go to tender, we must seek to have three or four people awarded so as to rotate. I really feel so, because these are difficult times and everybody must have an opportunity to be able to keep their businesses afloat. What makes this even more egregious, Sir, is not only that there was no tender, but that I was a member of the Management Commission, that there were other members of the Barbados Labour Party who were members of the Management Commission at that time, and we were not invited to a meeting to discuss these matters. Similarly, the Attorney General made a Document of the House the Public Accounts Committee Report, and this Chamber, under a previous Government, chose to so ignore the Standing Orders of the House, which were very clear as to what happens when a Report is laid. We were advised and we expected a certain course of events to take place, and far from taking place, the Report has never been published as required by the Standing Orders of this House once it is laid.

Sir, I am asking for the Leader of Government Business not to accept that it simply can be a Document of the House but that this Parliament must find, with the advice of the Clerk and the clerks at the Table, a manner in which that Report can properly become a part of the Records of this House. It is in being claimed by this House that the privileges which are attached to the Report can be claimed, such that persons may have a sensible discussion on what transpired with respect to that Report. If we have to seek advice from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as well, let us do so, but what cannot happen is that five to six feet of evidence, taken over three-and-a-half years, cannot be allowed to languish and gather dust in circumstances where there were not just contracts signed and things done without appropriate processes, but a total and complete breakdown in the governance of the National Housing Corporation and indeed of the Ministry of Housing, and in some instances Cabinet Government. This

is because a Minister of the Crown, one well known to the Member for St. Philip North because she relieved the country of him -- the burden of him - could go and write a letter to his Chairman indicating that the Cabinet took a decision to terminate a contract of tens of millions of dollars and to appoint somebody else for the same contract at even a greater price than the one who was terminated.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: When the Yellow Paper came -- for those who do not know, the Yellow Paper is the official Cabinet decision that is sent to the Ministry from the Cabinet Office -- it said simply, "The Minister updated Cabinet on the project".

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Now, Sir, I have been around for a long time but I do not know how the words "update" and "terminate" can equate, or "update" and "appoint" can equate.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: A Prime Minister learns of this within days at least, weeks for sure, of the re-election of the Government, and the Minister is rewarded by going to another Ministry; the Ministry of Transport and Works from which, then, the Attorney General and others have told us, there are investigations going on. One contractor was at the Barbados Transport Board over a period of ten years; the Barbados Transport Board, for which this new Minister would have been responsible for five years and three months. Do not get tied up; it is five years and almost three months that one contractor, and I can only go with what the Attorney General has said because I have not had the chance to see those files yet, but one contractor could get as much as \$28 million without it going to tender. Twenty-eight million dollars, and his bills were paid promptly while United Commercial Autoworks Limited's (UCAL) bills for doing the same mechanical work continued to languish to the point where we have been trying, up to last week, to resolve the arrears owed to United Commercial Autoworks Limited (UCAL). They are struggling. The weight of the debt is in excess of how much?

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: It is \$15 million to \$16 million as we speak, but \$28 million over ten years to one private individual who, by the way, happens to be the same private individual owning the two BMWs which were driven by the two Ministers affected. Mr. Speaker, when I talk about us trying to bring back one Barbados, it is because there are people in the Farm, in the same Marley

Vale, in the Garden Land, and all about Barbados who, apart from not being able to buy a bicycle, cannot escape the long arm of the law and should not if they have broken the law.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: However, they then wonder how this kind of activity is spoken about. I want to say to Leader of the Opposition -- because I heard him asking some questions yesterday, too -- that when you ask questions, let it be on the basis of work done. When I spoke about the two BMW X5 jeeps, we had already done the work to see who the owner was, and we had all of the information. We knew who was driving them and we knew who owned them. When I spoke about the South Coast Sewerage Project and asked the Prime Minister, as he then was, the former Member for St. Michael South, to call me at Foundation School, it was because we had done the work. It was not a fishing expedition. I want to say that against that background, because I am not going to let things fester or impressions be given with respect to innuendo that would cause people to feel that something untoward is happening.

I heard him the first time, and I am now hearing him the second time with respect to White Oak. White Oak is a company that has been involved in a number of countries with respect to debt restructuring, and let us deal with them. They are Belize, Ecuador, Grenada, Iceland, Mozambique, Pakistan, Seychelles, Suriname, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Lucia. Before they became White Oak, the two principals, Sebastian Espinoza and David Nagoski, worked with firms in other restructuring projects in the Dominican Republic, Jordan, Liberia and the former Yugoslavia. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will make this document a Document of the House because in Mozambique they are still working as we speak, in Barbados they are still working as we speak, in Belize they were responsible along with others for the restructuring of sovereign bonds, in Grenada it was them alone, in Ukraine it was them with other advisors, in Belize it was them alone, in St. Kitts and Nevis it was them alone, in Greece it was them and others, and Greece is the one which perhaps is the most famous in the world, or infamous if you want to call it that. In Seychelles, it was them alone as Seychelles has been so successful that Seychelles has people running it down to come back to the capital markets. In Cote d'Ivoire, it was them and others. In Belize again in 2007 because if you remember Belize had two debt restructurings, it was them as part of team. In the Dominican Republic in 2005, it was them as part of a team. In Grenada also which had two debt restructurings in 2005, they were part of a team and they were part of a team in Argentina. Mr. Speaker, this is to be made a document of the House. This Government will not hide behind anything and I think that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West knows me well enough and

knows also the team to which he used to belong and what obtained in the rooms that he used to sit in to know that we are not going to foist on the people of Barbados anything that cannot be defended under the light of day and that those who choose to whisper in his ears ought to have the courage to come out in public and say what they want him to say.

Bishop J.J.S. ATHERLEY: The Honourable Member is misleading this Chamber. I hate to interrupt the Honourable Prime Minister. I think that she is doing very well and batting solidly in relation to this issue of integrity in public life and what the lack of it implies for this country....

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: She is misleading the House by going beyond insinuation of the facts saying that people are whispering in my ears. I ask in this House as is my right to do, a legitimate question simply because as she stated I have every confidence in that Side that they will not seek to foist anything upon the people of Barbados and hence the question.

HON. MISS MIA A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am immediately willing to remove from this House any insinuation of anybody whispering in the ear of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West because I believe that in so doing that he is now telling me that he is prepared to do the investigation and research himself before making allegations that can be easily understood and found out on his own had he done the investigation because if he had done it....

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: What allegation have I made? I have simply said in here, as is my right to do, when the other Administration ran this country as the Government we asked them to be clear, open and candid with the people. Cahill left a bad taste in our mouths, tell the people of Barbados about White Oak, that is all I said. There was no allegation.

HON. MISS MIA A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have been public life too long and the Honourable Member is a man of the cloth and therefore he understands the importance of juxtaposition of words. When he seeks to speak about White Oak in the same sentence that he does with Cahill do not tell me that you are not seeking to cast innuendo on the quality and the integrity of this Government. If you want to ask about White Oak ask about in the context of Massy, ask about it in the context of Grace Kennedy, ask about in the context of Royal Bank of Canada or First Citizens, or First Caribbean but when you choose to ask about White Oak a company that is purely in the business of debt restructuring and what is more, I have confidence because these gentlemen have presented to the

Social Partnership of Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. Peter, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central can attest to that so that anybody picking up a newspaper and hearing the work Cahill and hearing the word White Oak would believe that the two 'does pick marbles together', that the two of them keep company together and the Honourable Member knows better than that. The Honourable Member is a gentlemen in whom I have tremendous respect, he really is, but when he seeks to put those two together if he did not intend that interpretation then he needs to get up and say so categorically.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I thought it clear what I had said. We can go back and forth on this all day, I simply asked the question which I think that any high school student would ask in responding to the mention of Cahill being used as an instrument on behalf of this country with reference to our credit situation overseas. I simply asked to tell us who is White Oak; this is first time I have even heard about them. Tell us who is White Oaks in the interest of the Government own position of trying to be open with the people of Barbados and let us have people talk about Cahill and all the rest, no juxtaposition intended to cast any negative shadow over what you are doing, not at all. It is a sincere, genuine and legitimate question.

HON. MISS MIA A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I just want the Honourable Member to know that he might have gotten accustomed to seeing a Prime Minister in here who did not relate to a Leader of the Opposition in good faith. I have already told the member that unlike my immediate predecessor in office that he will be shared with information and I will be the first if he says today that he wants a briefing, as soon as White Oak returns to the country next week, I will arrange for White Oak to brief him and his Senators. Let it be known. I would have liked the former Prime Minister to at least have addressed the issue of Cahill and I would have loved the opportunity to cross examine the principals of Cahill. You cannot use the two in the same sentence and not believe that people are not going to think untoward things and if it is that is not what he intended I accept it and I move on now but it cannot be because this Government is working too hard not just to defend the country but to try and restore a level of integrity and to bring a level of transparency and accountability to this country because the country cannot survive without it. Sir, it cannot survive.

Mr. Speaker, I am going all because the Attorney-General has joined us now. I have spoken about the \$28 million that he is show me the files on shortly but at Sanitation Service Authority the same person would have received \$1 million in the last three years of that Government administration, the same Ministry that also

had a Minister driving the same X5. Sir, do you know what is the most amazing thing, and that is why I asked about the Public Accounts Committee Report being able to have the full privilege of this House. When we first raised the issue of the two vehicles, made it a document of the House and everything and even before, the newspapers did not want to carry it, so that a country laboured for four years on the basis of something that could only be whispered or only fall out of the mouth of an Opposition Leader. Do not talk about the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), other than the once a year, when you could not get away from carrying the Leader of the Opposition in here, there was nothing. Sir, do you know that Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) carried every single lunchtime lecture of the Democratic Labour Party and even now when they do not even have a seat in Parliament. I am not going to accept that people are going to labour this Barbados Labour Party in the same sentence with the Democratic Labour Party as the member tried to label White Oak with Cahill.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the bottom line is that we will do our best. Will we reach 100 per cent, no, we will not but when I find out that there have been things that we need to deal with, I keep making the point that I learnt well as a Minister of Education and as an Attorney-General. You do not know what single teacher might do out of the 4 000 teachers that you have responsibility for in a system but what you do know is that if something happens that you have a responsibility to deal with it. you do not know what may in a police force of 1 300 or 1 400 people but what you do know is that if something happens, you have to do something about it because as a Minister you are ultimately accountable to this Parliament and to the people of country for the conduct of the ministry. That is what ministerial responsibility means and this Government is going to restore collective responsibility too and not just ministerial responsibility. This notion, Mr. Speaker, of a minister speaking wildly in conflict with each other and wildly in conflict with Cabinet as has happened with the former Honourable Member for St. James South. Every day he was in the paper talking one way, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West who they told may be the new leader, he in the paper talking another way, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, well he did not talk unless he came in here to excoriate, it cannot happen because when that happens the people of the country have no confidence in the institution called Government and worst still in the institution called Cabinet. Cabinet is not a place where a vote is taken. Cabinet is a place where a consensus is reached and a consensus is reached to allow persons to be able to express themselves with confidence that this is the decision of the cabinet because people plan out there lives, people plan out their investments and people plan out their affairs on the basis of what is said. That is why when a minister lies on Cabinet it is the ultimate and the worst breach in a democracy, even more than stealing. The lying on a decision of Cabinet is the worst possible breach, Sir. It

is like a priest disavowing his vows. We expect people to operate at a certain standard. I say, Sir, that we will not be consumed with vengeance, we will not be consumed with trying to fight everything because there is just not enough time in the day and we are equally conscious and I say this, I said it Sunday in the interview and I will say it again. There are some things that we will have to approach through a civil process because 1) not to do so would leave a level of liability on the accounts of the Government of Barbados that is incapable of being borne. There were a number of contracts signed in the last few months that were egregious in the extreme and some even before and that if the Government of Barbados were now to accept the full contingent liability becoming real for those contracts, Mr. Speaker, our debt situation would be that much worse. Our arrears which is already, as I said, close to \$1.9 billion although we accept some of that is to other Government institutions like the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) which is owed almost \$500 million, we would be in a worst situation, therefore we have already asked people to walk back from some of these contracts because we cannot afford them. There are still others that I said we are about to do and to negotiate with because we need people to walk away from them to forbear, to move off, take them from the balance sheets as a contingent or real liability because the country cannot bear the weight. All of this as we go through debt restructuring and as we go through trying to settle an International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, Mr. Speaker, to the extent therefore that the Attorney-General can help negotiate along with the Ministry of Finance, those forbearance or compromised agreements, as they may come to be known, they have to be done because I am more committed to making sure that people can walk forward with confidence and with hope that I am in seeking vengeance. I have no interest in vengeance but I have an interest in making sure that Barbadians receive the full opportunity for development. This is not to be interpreted as the AG not going ahead with the ones for which there is clear evidence. I have said it before he came. If there is clear evidence for misfeasance in public office or malfeasance in public office then he must act. If there is evidence for higher then he must equally act too and there are instances that are still the subject of investigation. A contract was signed to do almost \$15 million in work at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre to accommodate Government offices including the Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet, not to build the building you know, Sir, just to outfit offices with no public tender, and in circumstances, Sir, where also some of the professionals were then removed from the project too. Professionals who would otherwise protect the integrity of the costing of the project. Mercifully, it seems as though only \$5 million or less was spent and we have put a pause to it for all kinds of reasons.

Sir, this is what this Government has inherited. I give this country the assurance through you, Sir, that we will not be obsessed with just looking for evidence because

we have a country to run and a people to fulfil with promises of development but we will hold people accountable where the evidence is there. We will also pursue a path of civil forbearance and compromise simply in the interest of the financial health of this country that cannot bear a \$500 million sugar factory or cannot bear an almost \$200 million Berth 6 that never went to tender or cannot bear some of the other contracts that we are now about the full weight of certainly the cost of it. Even if we cannot get rid of liability in some instances we have to reduce to cost to Government and that is why I have asked the Attorney General to establish something called a College of Negotiators by having a team of people. He has already started it with the lawyers. We need to have it with the accountants, we need to have it with the quantity surveyors and the engineers because the Government of Barbados must have access to the best negotiating skills to negotiate in the public's interest. This notion that the Government of Barbados is to be pushed against the wall and ravaged, it cannot happen. There is a public's interest that has to be defended and if we do that.... Business operates on people having a reasonable rate of return. Nobody stays in business to make a loss or should not unless something untoward is happening so we accept that people must have a reasonable rate of return. There is a higher end and there is a lower end and there is an average. In some instances, depending on what side of the negotiating table you are on you will make a case elsewhere and where you are in the negotiations and your level of need determines whether you are prepared to hold out to get at the lower end of the spectrum or whether there is an urgency such that you are prepared to come at the higher end of the spectrum because of the urgency of the situation. These things are normal and what we will not do, however, is have people get rates of return of 200 per cent and 300 per cent on the taxpayers and then the taxpayers cannot get toilet paper in schools, cannot get basic supplies in a hospital. A hospital is under supplied and almost under provisioned for almost 12 years by \$40 or \$50 million for all kinds of reasons. I am not getting into why now, but the cumulative effect of the under provisioning of the hospital moves it from being the premier institution in the Eastern and Southern Caribbean to one that is fighting up just to provide basic services to its citizenry where it is the lone major hospital that the people have to rely on. It cannot work in this country anymore.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing that I want to address is the issue of whistle-blower legislation and the framework for it. This legislation touches it in part but I believe that we need, when it goes to Select Committee, to have it strengthened. The Government will make the point that this Bill will go to Select Committee we hope for no more than two months and that it would be back here by October. It is going there to allow persons to be able to make submissions to it. The Government and the Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament and the Independent Senators

in the Senate along with representatives of the Government and Opposition will constitute a Joint Select Committee in order to be able to take evidence from the wider Barbadian public on the provisions of this legislation. For us as a party we put this out pursuant to the commitment I gave at the Annual Conference at Queen's Park last year. This went out in November, people came forward, we are conscious and we thank them for that but we also appreciate that people would be more responsive to a Government and a Parliament than they were to an Opposition party. To that extent therefore during the course of any summer recess we feel that this will be put out there because this will come to govern the conduct of public officials across the spectrum going forward and the country therefore must take this decision with its eyes wide open conscious that in the initial stages there may be a falloff in those who want to give public service but confident that in the medium- to long-term that there would be a recognition that this is inextricably linked to positions of trust whether in Government, the church, in non-governmental organisations or indeed private employment.

I hope, Sir, therefore that we can move forward with a level of confidence and that when we get to the Select Committee that we may be able to instill in it stronger provisions for whistleblowing, that persons may know.... We know some of them. They may not want to admit that we know them but they may want to come forward and should want to come forward as I said at the beginning to be able to say look these things happened, they should not have happened, we regret that they happened. It is almost a truth and reconciliation moment as happened in South Africa, but we want to have the protection that we would not be prosecuted for coming forward and saying that these transgressions took place and that we need the immunity to be able to clothe us so that we can put this behind us. Does this country give second chances? Yes, it does. I said so. Even when you are convicted having been found guilty after pleading not guilty, all the more so if you come forward and confess up front that look, something happened that should not have happened.

I say to those today through you, Sir that the Attorney-General is available to take and listen to anyone in this country who recognises that there is a come to Jesus moment that ought to happen for some people in this country and that pending the passage of the legislation that they may want to do a sealed statement and give it to the Attorney-General. We have to put this behind us at some point and it is always better as in the case of a family disciplining its own and as in the case of a person going before the law courts this morning for you to say an incident has happened, it is something with which I am familiar, it is something with which I have had a part to play but I wish now to beg for forgiveness and to move on. That is the best way, it is the least expensive way and I can only appeal as leader, things in the past not ongoing in

transgressions because immunity does not extend to today's or tomorrow's transgressions and recidivists are not treated in the same way as a first-time offender. For those who do not know the meaning of the word recidivist, it is those who are repeat offenders. Those who behave badly over and over and over are treated differently in a family from those who just behave badly one day or one summer. These things are appreciated and known by every family and every individual in this country so I am not speaking above the heads of anyone but I appeal as leader of this country to those who knew that they help participate because it takes two to clap. How much ever I do so I am not clapping and if I do so alone it may be a form of theft but it is not corruption in the other way that we have come to understand what transpired in a lot of these institutions. So I ask, Sir, that persons examine their conscience and persons recognise that this Government is prepared to give people the opportunity to come forward, ask for forgiveness and let us move forward. If there are others who are part of the same transaction who choose not to come forward and they are found out, well they would feel the full weight of the law as the law is to be determined because as I said at the beginning there is one law in the country. What we will not do is look to find tens of millions of dollars to go on a witch-hunt, we are not about that, but we will deal with the evidence that is before us or that ought to be immediately before us through nothing more than a forensic audit in dealing with some of these institutions and some of these people who have taken this country for a ride. It must never happen again in the annals of our history. I am not saying that corruption will not find itself in the national landscape, it always will regrettably, just like murders will never be removed from our national landscape but what I am saying is that the wholesale plundering that took place with the fiat of a Government must never happen in this country again.

Mr. Speaker, what this legislation seeks simply to do is to create an institution that will hold each and every Member of this Parliament, each and every member of the Executive, each and every Permanent Secretary or Head of a department, each and every Chairman of a board, it seeks to hold people, judges, magistrates, it seeks to hold all of us who assumes a fiduciary leadership position accountable.

I trust and pray, Sir, that unlike the previous attempts when it reached the Other Place that it would not fall. I pray that the Leader of the Opposition therefore will support it as he has said in other places and that therefore it will get the requisite constitutional support as it needs to pass the Senate such that by the month of October at the very latest this shall be the law of the land.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Members of my Cabinet for agreeing in advance of legislation for the declaration of assets in sealed envelopes being held and in some instances where they are still awaiting accounting

information to be held by the Cabinet Secretary because by the end of this month all of these things must be sealed away even though there is no Integrity Commission potentially for another three months. This is leadership by example and I thank my Cabinet for it.

Finally, Sir, I thank the honourable Attorney-General who really has displayed a level of leadership since the start of this Government with respect to not just to this matter but I know that if I have had no sleep that the Honourable Member has had none either. The Honourable Member has worked with a level of commitment and discipline, reflecting a levelheaded approach that has made me absolutely proud in the choice that I have made with him as Honourable Attorney-General of this country, and I say so with all sincerity.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it also shows me why there was wisdom in also making sure that we have persons who can concentrate on portfolios and when people talk about a large Government, trust me, we got this and I know what they are doing, many hands make light work because Barbados must be rescued as soon as possible. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you. I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. R. R. STRAUGHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to support this piece of legislation 100 per cent, simply because Barbados today not just requires it but with the state of our country, the state of our economy, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we need this legislation. Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a sense in the country of relief, given the result of the elections, the country has seen this Government at work. Mr. Speaker, Sir, for what I am told during the last 50-odd days there is a sense of relief, but let me remind the country that Barbados is in trouble and that this Government is working to make sure that we can get to shore as quickly as possible but that we must never forget who capsized the boat because the waters in this country which we are now in are certainly uncharted but they are waters that we can navigate. As we seek to get to shore, Mr. Speaker, Sir, there will be some amongst us who will attempt to help us to get to shore, perhaps hoping that we would forget who capsized the boat in the first place, but this Government is serious about the rescue of this country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the last 10 years the lack of integrity in public life has brought us to a point where not only do we have a debt problem, we have a fiscal problem, we also have a foreign reserves problem which are all related, Mr. Speaker, Sir, as you have just heard from the Honourable Prime Minister of some of the conduct of previous Members of the Democratic Labour Party Government and how they conducted the affairs of this country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I said, I fully support this piece of legislation because it is critical to ensuring that we can properly manage the affairs of this country and that a level of accountability is brought to bear. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I recall, and permit me through you, Mr. Speaker, to remind the country, that in my younger days, some 15-odd years ago when the previous Barbados Labour Party was undertaking pension reform. I was an economist at Central Bank of Barbados at the time and I recall doing the modeling with respect to the long-term trajectory in terms of where those reforms are likely to go and what should happen. Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I stand here today looking at how this potential debt restructuring would impact not just pensioners but the entire country, and trying to juxtaposition where we were 15 years ago with respect to the state of the economy and the management of the affairs of the country, and remind the country that nowhere within that landscape or scenarios that we were running 15 years ago the consequences of a lack of integrity in public life were not contemplated. Now, while we are here to seek to remedy a situation that has gone horribly wrong with respect to the state of affairs of this country, I want to remind this Parliament that while our intentions are honourable and indeed very noble we must not be complacent in these efforts, and that while we are here to make sure that we must fix these problems we must look forward with a keen eye to ensuring that this kind of thing does not happen again.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to share a few thoughts on the composition of the Commission because I believe how we structure this Commission will indeed determine whether the public of Barbados believes that this Commission would indeed work. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say that during the course of the campaign when this draft Bill was released, and I read it, I was very intrigued by the fact that the Honourable Attorney-General, the legal team, along with some other legal professional put this Bill together very quickly. The one thing that concerned me at that time, Mr. Speaker, Sir, was.... Mr. Speaker, Sir, I knew that we were going to win the elections, but the one thing that consumed me with respect to what I had seen from some of the discussions within the Public Accounts Committee was what would have happened, for example, had we won the election and brought this Bill here where a circumstance could have presented itself where perhaps the former Honourable Members for St. Philip North or St. Michael North West or indeed the former Honourable Member for Christ Church East might have been, under some strange circumstance, be sitting in this Honourable Chamber and one of them might have been Leader of the Opposition and then we are asking them to have input through consultation into following this very Integrity Commission. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am happy that the people of Barbados and certainly my colleagues, the Honourable Members for St. Michael North West, St. Philip North and indeed Christ Church East that they were able to alleviate

my fears of that circumstance happening because Mr. Speaker, Sir, I could not imagine we standing here today discussing this very important piece of legislation with those characters being a part of it. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is why I say it is important that as we do this now that we make sure.... Mr. Speaker, Sir, we do not know what might happen at some time in the future with some set of people who might come along with different motives. So as we seek to structure this Commission now I think we must make every attempt to insulate the Commission from any future consideration that is very different from the intent that we want to have established today. Mr. Speaker, I believe fundamentally that while the legislation is sound, it is sound, the way that the Integrity Commission is to be constituted is fundamentally important to the public of Barbados believing that it will be effective. I therefore just want to share a few thoughts on how I believe that can be done, especially given that the public of Barbados reposed their confidence in this Barbados Labour Party demonstrated that they wanted to be involved in the decision-making process of Government. I think, in so doing, we must revisit the way the Commission is constituted and the process. I believe widening the public participation is key to improving the governance in the country, and this affords an opportunity for that participation to take place, Mr. Speaker. I want to put on the table, while the Honourable Prime Minister has good intentions, and indeed my Member of Parliament who is now the Leader of the Opposition also has good intentions, we do not know what is going to happen in the future.

Therefore, I believe we must insulate this Commission from any political “interference” to the point where we allow credible institutions in this country through an electoral process, the AGM (annual general meeting) process, whatever the case is, so that the selection of persons coming to serve on this Integrity Commission must have the widest possible public participation. Mr. Speaker, I believe doing that would bring confidence and build confidence among the public of Barbados that we are taking this matter seriously, and that it is not just a closed process where decisions are taken without the input of the very people who are asking for accountability in this country. I want to put on the table, certainly as it relates to the accountant who will sit on the Commission, that through the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (ICAB) there be a requirement that every three years or so the person being selected to serve as the accountant on the Commission should be selected from among those in the accounting profession under a process in Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (ICAB). Mr. Speaker, similarly I believe that with respect to the attorney who is to sit on the Commission, a similar process should come within the Bar to elect that person who will be appointed to sit on the Commission. Mr. Speaker, the rest of the Commission speaks to collaboration between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, and there are

three Members who are supposed to be appointed in that manner.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, I believe this is really an opportunity for us to trust in the people to be able to elect members of this Commission, because it is the very people who must have confidence not just in the Commission but in the Government, so that the Commission is allowed to perform its function without reference to those in this Chamber. This should be done from the perspective that if you are asking the Commission not just to oversee what is happening in this Chamber but certainly across the landscape of those whom we may wish to appoint to serve on the many boards and statutory corporations across this country, the public of Barbados must be allowed that opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

I see here that there is provision for a member of the Clergy, and without getting into the details of the electoral process among the Clergy, I know there are many a building fund in this country which seem to be in question, I would want to suggest that we look again at this specific provision, Mr. Speaker. In its place perhaps, as it relates to this and the other two, I wish to suggest that we ask the Barbados Association of Retired Persons (BARP), the credit union movement as well as the labour movement through their own procedures that these three persons be selected or elected through a process from this broader perspective, rather than limiting it to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. I believe that the public will have much more confidence in this Commission to carry out its mandate if the procedures which we use to select and appoint these persons come from the very heart of the public themselves. Such that when the Commission acts it is not acting because the Prime Minister might have got his or her way going forward as to who may sit on the Commission, but there would be confidence in the Commission and the requirement for those persons then to report back to their various constituents, Mr. Speaker. These are credible institutions in this country which work, Mr. Speaker, and which I fundamentally believe would allow us to chart a way forward with respect to this Commission. Mr. Speaker, I want to state categorically that I believe this is the appropriate way to deal with this matter, because the engagement of the very people of this country now is so critical to moving this process forward that we, as a country, must now seek every opportunity to allow people to participate in this democracy.

I believe that this is too important to leave to politicians. As I said, I have no issue with the current Prime Minister or even the current Leader of the Opposition in their wisdom to consult and select people, but I think it would be remiss of us right now to not seize the opportunity to get the people involved in this process of establishing this Integrity Commission such that the Commission can set about its work knowing that it has the

full backing of the people of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, as I said in the Budget Debate a few weeks ago, there is no economic strategy that would be successful when there are corrupt practices taking place. I want to remind the public of Barbados, as certainly the Prime Minister did in her presentation a few moments ago, that when decisions are being taken with respect to the allocation of hard-earned taxes by the people of this country for purposes which are clearly selfish and greedy of a few, what you witness is the deterioration of the delivery of public services.

Mr. Speaker, we have reached a stage in this country where the cost of the corruption has led us to the point where we now have to restructure our debt. As we seek to restructure our debt, there is a cost to restructuring our debt, Mr. Speaker. There is a financial cost, there is an economic cost, there is a social cost, but there is also a psychological cost because Barbados has always been known for paying its bills, Mr. Speaker. Prior to 2008, the Government of Barbados went about its business in a manner that gave confidence that we knew what we were doing, not just to consumers but to businesspeople and to investors. Mr. Speaker, over the last ten years the conduct of the Government and those associated with the Government has placed Barbados in a position where we are now seen as incapable of handling our own business. As we move forward not just with the establishment of the Commission but certainly with the way in which the Government conducts its procurement, I am happy to report to you and to the House, Mr. Speaker, that I took a briefing on the procurement legislation, which is to come to Parliament perhaps in the next two to three months that there are some very strong provisioning to support the work of the Integrity Commission which the new procurement Bill will seek to instill. So we are not just doing this in isolation because the way that the Government conducts its business is important to the way that this Integrity Commission would be able to do its work and therefore, these things go hand in hand. This is the moment I believe for us to widen the participation of the public in this process and it would be remiss of us as a Government for us to miss that opportunity. We must take the people with us on this journey because as we reach shore and safety the procedures that we now must undertake to make sure that where there is malfeasance that those who are responsible for capsizing the boat both metaphysically and physically, Mr. Speaker, that they are held accountable. It is not vengeance, it is justice, Mr. Speaker. The people of this country have suffered at the indifference of the last Government and some of them have benefitted from that indifference. I have heard the Honourable Prime Minister say that if you get a conscience, you should come forward and yes, if you have a conscience you should but we cannot wait on them to develop that conscience, Mr. Speaker. Therefore, the organs of Government will work to make sure that as we go through this process of right-sizing Government, of

bringing some order back to the affairs of Government that those who orchestrated deliberately to bring harm to the people of Barbados that justice must be done. We have quite a ways to go, Mr. Speaker, as far as this economic recovery is concerned but psychologically, Mr. Speaker, this country has been scared. It has been scared by people that eat souse like us, pitch marbles, play cricket, our people, Mr. Speaker, and so as we seek to restore a level of integrity in public life, to bring confidence to the young people that Barbados is worth fighting for, justice must be served, Mr. Speaker, and however long it takes to bring people to justice, the people of Barbados must know that this Commission will set about doing its work because the confidence that is required not just at the investor level but at the business level and at the consumer level will also be boosted when people believe that the people administering the affairs of the country are doing so in their interest.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the practice of economics and sound economic policy is often rooted yes, in numbers but it takes the confidence of people going about their business every day to determine the success of economic policy. It is that confidence in the system of Government and the system of governance that will determine how quickly this Barbados recovers from this very bad episode over the last 10 years. I believe that the way that we constitute this Commission so long as we engage the people and involve the people in this, this will set us on the way to economic recovery. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. R.A. THORNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to first of all congratulate the Honourable Attorney-General and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph on urgently bringing this legislation to the House and, of course, Your Honour will hear me say that I support the legislation. I congratulate him because he has met a public demand. It is fine for an Attorney-General to bring legislation and to have that legislation press its way through both Houses but the other aspect to this initiative of the Attorney-General is that it seems to me that the public has demanded that some order should be brought to the financial affairs of Government and I therefore, congratulate the Attorney-General for in less than three months responding to that public demand of urgency.

Mr. Speaker, you will permit me I hope to make the point that there may be several valid interpretation as to the result of the last election. I think that one of those valid interpretation is that the result reflects a public revulsion against what was clearly the stench of corruption in Government in the country. I do not myself come to you today with any evidence. I cannot make such claims expect to remind you that the public believes that the last

Government was an extremely corrupt Government and the public believes that it is the duty of this Parliament to bring some order to the financial affairs in Government.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of us, and the younger ones among us of whom I am not one, over the last weekend saw a video of a marauding gang across the sacred lawns of a cemetery and apart from not understanding it, we were repulsed at the very thought that people could bring themselves to that quality of conduct. I am no less repulsed that men and women in public life constitute themselves similarly as a marauding gang across the sacred territory of the public finances of a country because every Government is meant to be a trustee not only largely for the people's interest but public moneys are sacred. Those young men and I understand they were a few women on the scene were televised, the last Government had the luxury of not being televised. It reminds me of the song by Gil Scott-Heron when he said, "the revolution will not be televised". What this last Government did was not televised and that is why I say to you, Mr. Speaker, I have no evidence except as I have said before, the public believes what the public believes, perhaps on strong circumstantial evidence therefore this House must do today what it is doing. We have no choice except to do what we are doing today.

To come to the legislation itself, and I shall be brief on this, every Bill which hopes to find life as Act of Parliament has a title and the title of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is Integrity in Public Life Act, 2018. We lawyers refer to that as the short title but in every Bill and in every Act of Parliament there is a portion which is described by us as the long title and it is that long title that seeks to give explanation to the glibness of a short title. Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to reflect on that long title. It reads as follows: "An Act to establish a regime including and Integrity Commission to promote the integrity of persons in public life and strengthen measure for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of acts of corruption." The operative word on which I wish to focus is the word "promote". It says that this Act presently a Bill seeks to promote the integrity of persons in public life. The Bill itself makes the confession that it can give no guarantee that persons shall conduct themselves with integrity, all it says is that it seeks to promote it so that the Bill itself accords with the truism that you cannot legislate integrity, neither in private life, nor indeed, in public life. If there is any dilemma that is where the dilemma exists that while you may hope for a man's integrity, you cannot legislate it. Persons may come here with their hearts and they may render their hearts to public service such as they are but this Bill, hoping to become an Act, and I have no doubt it will become an Act, seeks to establish and architecture that will ultimately control the conduct of men and women who dispose themselves to public service. The long title gives explanation to the short title but I think, Mr. Speaker, that beyond the four corners of the Act, this House is

entitled to some further explanation of the conduct that besmirched and defiled the public life of Barbados over the last 10 years. As I have said, I am absolutely certain that the result of the last election... it is unprecedented that the result of the last election reflects that public revulsion against the stench of corruption that afflicted this country.

I want to root that behaviour and we must say to the public that behaviour will never be repeated, certainly not in this Administration and certainly not in the public life of Barbados. Thirty-love is the most damning statement against a Government that used to have numbers. Not one of them can make his presence felt in here today and that is a damning statement against a Government. I am not speaking of a party but that is a damning statement against a Government many of who are still young men and young women, but how did they get into that position.

Mr. Speaker, please permit me to root the reputation of that last Government in a statement made by their now deceased leader. He came to them and told them, perhaps it was his credo, that you must not intellectualise politics and that is a dangerous statement. That is dangerous language.

I submit to you today, Sir, that statement of the former leader and former Prime Minister of this Parliament and of this country, created a climate of vulgarity, the vulgarity that is corruption among his Government or within the four corners of his Government. How do you tell a man who is involved in any activity whatsoever, not to intellectualise it? The problem is, we seem to believe that the word intellectual relates itself to matters abstract. That is not so. If you go to a boat-builder in Oistins today, a man who is building a large wooden boat, he cannot complete that task unless he uses his intellect. It is not simply a matter of knocking nails into wood, it is an intellectual activity. How does a man create something that braves the elements, the wind and the waves? It involves Mathematics and Geometry, that a man builds something out of wood that goes 100 miles off Barbados and finds perfect balance and also finds that it is safe against leakage. For him to build that is no easy exercise. He engages his intellect in a very serious way to create that thing of beauty. Over the last weekend, I saw a house being constructed in my neighbourhood and when they reached -- I suspect you know these terms, Sir -- ring beam, that is where it become absolutely fascinating. They take a piece of wood and it goes up the middle of the house. This is the carpenter. You know of the story. For him to construct that roof and the good carpenters tell me that a roof basically supports itself. It is nothing that a man without an intellect can do. You must have an intellect for that roof to be perfectly balanced for those beams to support themselves. The point is, to watch a carpenter build a roof is a most admirable activity that he undertakes. Again, from the boat-builder to the carpenter, he cannot proceed to create that thing of finished beautiful unless he employs the intellect, good common

sense, good mathematical principals, all that he has learnt he brings that together in an intellectual exercise. He engages the mind, the word that they use today, it is a cognitive exercise. He engages the mind to create that thing of beauty. Is his foreman going to come to him one day and say not to intellectualise his activity? He must intellectualise his activity but the foreman - and I insist he was the foreman - of the last Government told his troop, not to intellectualise their activity. This is not about reason, this is not about moral purpose because I want to submit to you today, Mr. Speaker, that every man and woman that comes to public services does not come properly prepared unless he or she comes with moral purpose. There must be a purpose and I submit to you today, Sir, that purpose must be moral. You must be able to defend it against principles of righteousness and justice and things that are good for all mankind and all people who are in search of fairness and fair play and justice, that is moral purpose Your Honour, and so when he told his members not to intellectualise politics it was to engage vulgarity in its worst manifestation and therefore men who come to public service with that quality of thought or lack of thought must necessarily find themselves disposed to corrupt practices. There is no honour and beauty in what they pursued. There is no moral purpose. The Leader has exhorted them against intellectual activity, the kind of intellectual activity that gives formation to the beauty of a boat that sails on the ocean, the kind of intellectual activity that gives stability to a roof against all hurricanes and all forms of bad weather, rain and tempest, yet that is how they came to public life in Barbados.

Sir, I want to again caution this Government against rooting itself in those purposes, in those practices or in those philosophies that negate the value of moral purpose and that negate the value of intellectual engagement. All work is intellectual. Public service is work and public service is intellectual work, you are dealing with people, you are dealing with people's problems, you are dealing with public finances and you are dealing with how those public finances ought to be distributed among the various sectors of society, that is intellectual work.

The high point or should I say the low point of the former Prime Minister's edit or dictum to his Members was when he followed on that by the enticement that public service was to be characterised by the search for a piece of the fatted calf. I used the word vulgarity earlier. There has never been a more vulgar statement made in relation to public service that you abandon the use of the mind, you abandon morality, you abandon values, you abandon the intellect and you go in search of the vulgar and you go in search of material gain for yourself, and that is what the last election was about. It was a public revolt against men and women who were not interested in the country but were interested in self. Thirty-love (30-love) is no mean statement and I note that I do not have to caution.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member you have good time, continue please.

Mr. R. A. THORNE: Thank you very much, it is not that I was hoping to hear what the Clerk was saying to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. R. A. THORNE: I am obliged to you, Sir. I was indicating that the result of the last election certainly is a reminder to this country and to this House as to the kind of revolt that is possible when we in public life do not conduct ourselves with probity and so we must not be afraid of integrity legislation.

My colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, says if 10 to one is murder he himself does not know how you would define 30-nil but again I say that 30-nil constitutes a revolt not against incompetence because we have had incompetence governments in the past and perhaps it is not even a revolt again laziness, we have had lazy governments in the past but every Barbadian is now telling us that we must do two things: Ensure that that conduct does not repeat itself and ensure that justice should be done in relation to those who perpetrated fraud upon the public finances of this country.

You have given me a lot of time, Sir, and I do not think that I need a lot of time today.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Rules give you a lot of time, Honourable Member.

Mr. R. A. THORNE: All I would say to this House today Sir, is that this legislation should be our new covenant with the public of Barbados that our conduct will be propitious, that there shall be rectitude in the way we conduct ourselves. Personally, I want to say to you, Sir, that the cautionary sermon of Reverend Gerry Seale was well given at Bay Street on the Sunday when my colleagues were sworn in and if we ever believe that we are in the midst of some honeymoon, I certainly do not believe in them, in politics anyhow, that the public never ceases to be watchful of their governments even if they give them 30-nil and certainly Reverend Seale's sermon was a reminder that this country will have no tolerance for corruption in Government and therefore this legislation does not trouble me in the least.

Sir, I believe I would have some say within a Select Committee. I do not often speak of my professional exploits but permit me today, Sir, to claim some little qualification in these matters to speak not qualified as a perpetrator but qualified as a man who has been professionally engaged in matters of public corruption when they came to the courts, and so I bring that

professional experience to this exercise. I promise you Your Honour that I will be very active when the time comes in exercising my intellect towards the safe and good passage of this legislation, I promise you that, Sir and to say to this country again that service and good public service is a thing of beauty, it is the aesthetic almost, and that the moment that you disengage your intellect is the moment that you expose yourself to the vulgarity of corruption and that this is a Government that will not abandon intellect, that this is a Government which will run counter to the principles as articulated by our now deceased Prime Minister and that there shall be probity that shall characterise this very busy and industrious Government.

Sir, I certainly for myself am proud to be a part of this Parliament at this time, I am proud to be the representative for Christ Church South at this time, and I am proud to be the representative of a constituency that sent repeatedly and over many years a standard bearer for integrity in public life, and I pause to pay tribute to Sir Harold Bernard St. John. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would permit me to repeat what I have said in other places, that this is a man who so valued integrity in public life that he sacrificed -- and I can say this to you, Sir -- the outcome of an election, against the urgings of his colleagues within the bosom of the party headquarters. They were saying to him to tinker with numbers, they were saying to him and this is not a criticism of them this is praise for him, they were urging him to liberalise taxation. They were saying to him that if he did that that the people of Barbados were so fickle that it was likely to secure an election victory. Mr. Speaker, Sir, his response was that if they wished him to do that, that they could and should have to remove the cup of leadership from his lips, that he was prepared to sacrifice the leadership of the party and ultimately he sacrificed Prime Ministerial leadership for the sake of integrity in public life. I am profoundly proud. My shoes cannot follow the footsteps of that gentleman, but I can promise you, Your Honour, that I intend to walk in his footsteps when it comes to disposing myself with integrity in public life and that my intellect must be carried with me, whatever is its quality. I will not abandon reason, I will not abandon cognitive engagement, and I certainly will not abandon moral purpose because I believe that there certainly is a correlation between intellect and integrity. I believe that and I urge all of my colleagues, whether there is a honeymoon or otherwise, to maintain the level or the quality of probity with which they have visited this country in less than three months in office. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is an admirable Government that has gone about to fix the wrongs that afflicted this country over the last 10 years, and they have done it and they will not claim to be more competent than any other person but what they will claim by the symbolic passage of this legislation is that they come with pure hearts. They will claim to you, Your Honour, that they will engage their intellect, they will come to you as the legislation says, demonstrating that there shall

be integrity in the public life of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is a Government of which I am proud to be a member and so my personal congratulation and my congratulation from this place is for the Honourable Attorney-General who has brought this legislation to this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are aware that the last Government brought similar legislation to this Honourable House and if we smile we smile at the destiny of that legislation; it is now an academic document consigned to the dustbins of history. I am not arguing a case for nor against them but the people of Barbados will ask the logical question, why do you pass legislation to promote integrity in public life and that legislation cannot enjoy the signature that brings it into proclamation, that brings it into life, the legislation that they felt constrained to pass. The public wants to know why did it not find life and while it was struggling for life, it seems -- I have no evidence -- that like that gang at Coral Ridge last weekend that certain persons were marauding across the quietude, sacredness and sanctity of the public finances in this country and that is what this good Government has inherited.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I listened to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, the Honourable Member sits particularly and peculiarly in a position in his ministry where I am sure the Honourable Member will discover much, where I am sure the burden is on him to recover much from what this country has endured. I have listened to him very carefully and I wish him all the best. I really do wish him all the best.

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

Mr. R. A. THORNE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do wish him all the best in his efforts to rescue the public finances of this country and to join with all the Honourable Members in this Honourable House, including the Leader of the Opposition, to give public guarantee that the public finances of this country shall from hereon be well safeguarded whether this Act comes into being next week, next month or in December, that this shall continue to be good Government, this shall continue to be Government that employs the intellect, this shall continue to be Government that employs the intellect to create the beauty of a finished product, and to avoid the vulgarity of corruption. I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support completely this Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018, that is before this Honourable Chamber today and has been for a little while. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Bill because if leadership is to be effective, if it is to make

sense to those led, if it is to build capacity and to build people, that leadership must be grounded, must be founded in integrity. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I hear the word integrity my mind goes in a couple of directions but in one situation it goes to a passage in the Book of Job where after quite a bit of suffering God is able to say of Job, that he still retains his integrity. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I mentioned that passage of scripture because as I go through St. Peter and as I speak to constituents, especially the ordinary people of St. Peter, one of the things that upsets them and sometimes offends them is that the idea of bad behavior is sometimes associated with poverty or having limited means. Mr. Speaker, Sir, they say to me that what they believe they have seen over the past 10 years, what many Barbadians now refer to as the 'lost' decade rather than the 'last' decade, what they are seeing or what they believe they have seen is not opportunism but rather crass, unethical, almost criminal behaviour in public life. Mr. Speaker, Sir, they have sent me here to say to this Honourable Chamber and to Barbados generally, that they are not prepared -- and the last speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would have said similarly -- they were not prepared to accept that kind of behaviour from those whom they have elected to lead and to manage the affairs of this country; that they will no longer accept that kind of behaviour from those they elect to lead and to manage the affairs of this country. They will no longer accept that kind of behaviour. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that integrity is fundamental not just to human behaviour but especially to leadership, and we and those who have served in this Honourable House and those who serve in the Other Place, as well, have been elected or asked to serve to be good stewards, to manage the affairs and to manage the resources of this country. Therefore, those who have elected us or those who have selected those in the Other Place have placed a significant amount of responsibility and have committed to us and to them a level of trust, and they expect us to be faithful to the trust which they have placed in us. We are managing their resources, and they expect us to manage their resources with a measure of integrity.

As leaders we are held, and I will say properly so, to a high standard. We are held sometimes to a higher standard than persons in other occupations at other levels of society, and it is proper that we are because we are in a position to either use effectively and efficiently and ethically, or to misuse, significant amounts of resources. Therefore, when we as Members in this Honourable Chamber are held to that higher standard, I say we are properly held to that higher standard. Therefore, this Bill, the Integrity in Public Life Bill, is a Bill that seeks to codify the views of Barbadians; those views which say those of us who are here must act with integrity, must act with honesty, and must be faithful to the calling and to the responsibility that have been placed upon us.

Mr. Speaker, some of my colleagues have spoken to the costs of unethical behaviour; behaviour which is lacking in integrity. There are some costs which I would wish to mention to you, and one of those is the cost to the fabric of society, Mr. Speaker. When we see what the last Honourable Member referred to -- the marauding gangs -- and when we see certain kinds of behaviour manifesting themselves in our society, we sometimes have to ask the question: Why do people sometimes feel emboldened to do certain things? I want to submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that there are times -- I am not saying that it happens in every situation -- when persons act in particular ways because they see those who have been entrusted with leadership acting in inappropriate ways, acting without integrity, and acting as if there is no moral compass that guides them. I say to this Chamber that there are people looking on, and when those entrusted with leadership at this level and at the levels of Permanent Secretaries, judges and magistrates, heads of departments and chairpersons of statutory boards act badly and behave badly or misbehave, then those in the society sometimes see that as an indication that they too can behave badly. Therefore, there is a cost to society for bad behaviour, and one of the costs is a destruction of the fabric of our society.

I want to say to those in our country who may feel that they are insulated just because they have wrought-iron bars or just because they have alarm systems; I want to say to all of them as well as to all of Barbados that when the fabric of our society is destroyed, none of us is safe, none of us is secure. We have heard in the Chamber in the debate already references to the costs more on an economic side, and we have heard that there is a cost as it relates to over-charging. If a businessperson pays more and it is in relation to something which he or she will be charging for afterwards, then in order to recoup what the overcharge is, the price of the final product has to increase. There is a cost not just to the macro economy, but lack of integrity creates a cost to the ordinary people of Barbados in the form of higher prices for goods and services because of what people call the fat, the bribes or whatever else has been built into the cost somewhere further down the line.

Mr. Speaker, there is also a cost in the encouraging of corrupt businesspeople in the society and in the economy. That is a cost, because when bad behaviour is allowed to continue, businesspeople who have little or no scruples submerge to the top, as some former parliamentarian has said, and it also serves to discourage businesspeople who want to act in an ethical manner. Therefore, we find the business climate in the country beginning to take a turn which is not sustainable if the country is to grow and develop in a proper way. I am saying to the country, as I am saying to this Chamber through you, Mr. Speaker, that these are costs which a young democracy cannot afford to bear. The country must be aware that the reason why we are having this Bill, why

it is being debated and why the Bill, as the Prime Minister indicated, is intended to be proclaimed by the end of October, is because we are intent on protecting this country. We are intent on seeing this country grow. We are intent on creating a sustainable country, not just for us but for succeeding generations.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say that when corrupt practices obtain, when leaders act in a way that could be considered unethical or lacking integrity, there is also a cost as it relates to our standing among the family of nations. I do not want us as a Chamber or as a country to underestimate that cost. As we move around in international circles, we must remember that the family of nations often acts in a similar way as groups of friends, so once a country loses its standing, when it becomes seen as a “banana republic” or a place where anything goes, your standing is lost and your ability to influence at the regional or international level is significantly reduced and that is a cost to the country because it can result in situations where you are not able to obtain benefits that you might otherwise obtain and I am saying to the Chamber and to the country that we have to put in place legislation like the one we are debating because as a country and especially as a small country, as a small economy, a small society, we have to make sure that our system are robust enough so that we can maintain a high standing among the family of nations.

Mr. Speaker, the last Government and certain members of the last Government as I watched debates taking place in this Chamber on Tuesdays I often heard members of the last administration speak to a statement that I think that is more familiar to the legal community that those who come to equity must come with clean hands. Now, I have heard that statement repeated and I have heard it repeated often by especially, Mr. Speaker, by persons who as I went around Barbados people were saying to me that those people who were using the State’s money they did not think they had clean hands. Sir, I do not have any evidence, the Attorney-General has not shared any information with me but the members of the public were saying to me that they did not understand this constant reference to clean hands. They did not, for example, understand what clean hands meant when people were given contracts of significant sums and then those who give them the contracts were driving cars, well vehicles because they were not cars, they were too big and used too much gasoline to be called cars but those persons were driving vehicles registered to those same companies and the people in Barbados who I am talking to could not understand where clean hands would fit in to that kind of activity. The people of Barbados were saying to me that they could not understand this constant reference to clean hands when multimillion dollar contracts were being awarded without those contracts going to public tender. They could not understand what the reference to clean hands meant, they focused more on clean hands than coming to equity

because many average people do not understand what coming to equity means but they do understand the reference to clean hands and they say to me that hands cannot be clean when these large contracts appear to be given to friends of the Government and that is why as our Prime Minister has said today, even a contract that speaks to the provisioning of Parliament must go out to tender because this Government, this Barbados Labour Party will not operate in a system or with a structure where persons can talk about clean hands but still award these contracts to their friends, multimillion of dollars but no reference to any kind of transparent way of determining who receives the contracts.

Mr. Speaker, the people of St. Peter do not understand the reference to clean hands when just before the last Government is removed from office they can sign contracts that are not yet expired, not yet within the period for which you would normally renew a contract whether or not it is a month or 90 days and renew contracts for multiple years. They do not understand the reference of coming to equity with clean hands when a Government can engage in this kind of action. The people of St. Peter and the people of Speightstown in particular do not understand the reference of coming to equity with clean hands when just before a General Election a Government can engage in what they refer to as gymnastics and transfer Crown lands to the National Housing Corporation apparently with the intention of selling it to one of their friends and trying to do it all before the elections without allowing others to have a real opportunity to bid for that parcel of land, the people do not understand the reference and so the people are saying to this Government that we must put system in place to ensure that the infelicitities... The Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East said she could not use the word ‘thieving’ and I cannot use it either because as I have said I do not have any evidence but the people of Barbados and the people of St. Peter believe that is what it is. I have said the Honourable Member for St. Michael South that I do not know if ‘thieving’ is good parliamentary language so I am not going to use it but they believe that the bad behaviour of the “lost decade” must be remedied and so having a piece of legislation like Integrity in Public Life Bill soon to be an Act, is something they support wholeheartedly.

Mr. Speaker, there is another cost to the lack of integrity in public life, to bad behaviour in public life. When a potential investor can approach Government wanting to do a development in the north of the country and be told by the Government that in order to come back to see me... I really need to be careful when I say Government because I work with a very good team of public servants because I want to be clear because includes not just those of us who sit here or those who are in Cabinet, Government also includes the public servants of this country and I am saying and maybe I am saying it

parenthetically here, many public servants some of whom the Prime Minister would have referred to this morning who may have felt compelled to engage in bad behaviour, I am not referring to them but I am referring to those policymakers who would have engaged with those who wanted to invest in the country and said to them, in order for me to see you a second time, you must have as your advisor one of my friend. The cost to the country is that an investor like that who has scruples, as we would say, would refuse to engage in the process and so there is construction that could have happened that did not. There are persons from St. Peter and I am sure from St. Andrew and St. Lucy who could have been employed in a project who were not. There is the situation where taxes could have been paid to the Government, a Government that did not have any money but taxes that were not paid because decent investors refused to engage with indecent Ministers and so that kind of cost is a cost that the people of St. Peter and the people of Barbados were no longer prepared to pay. Therefore they have said to us that we fully support a piece of legislation that will bring back to public life integrity; good behaviour on the part of those who have been elected to serve this country. Mr. Speaker, they see this in the context of a Government that laid in this Chamber a Bill to get rid of the Public Accounts Committee. They see it in the context of a Government whose leader because he did not get his way, decided on his own that he wanted to pull out of the Caribbean Court of Justice. They see it within the context of a Government that was running wild, drunk on its perception of being in charge and in power, a Government that had gone wild. This Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Government - and I want to use a reference from a document that I know has already been laid and is already a document of this Honourable House and a document that I know the Leader of the Opposition subscribes fully to -- in this document, the "Covenant of Hope" a document that this party placed in the public's domain and continues to refer to because what we put in this document is what we intend to live by and we have said in this document, Mr. Speaker, that all Barbadians must hold their leaders accountable. We in this Honourable Chamber are prepared to held accountable by the people who have sent us here. I have placed in a sealed envelope about 40 sheets of paper, a lot of sheets of paper, paper that does reflect my assets but you had to answer a lot of questions and you know you answer two lines on one page and a few lines on another page, maybe some of my colleagues would have filled out some of those sheets of paper. I did not have to fill out many of those sheets of paper but I have placed my information and I have placed my wife's information and my children's information in a sealed envelope because I am prepared, like the rest of my colleagues, to be held accountable by the people of Barbados.

Applause.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: We have said in this document that we will have a Government that is rooted in integrity. We have made a commitment to the country and we have said that we are prepared to live by this covenant that we have made. We have called it a covenant because for us it is a serious document and we are prepared to live by it because the people of Barbados have said to us they, like us, are no longer prepared to live in a Barbados where leaders run amok, where leaders get on as though the funds and the resources that are accountable are their personal resources, they are no longer prepared to accept it. I want to say as the Minister responsible for social partnership relations that all of the social partners must participate in this project of open transparent Government based on integrity and I want to, in some ways, repeat a statement that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East made. It takes two hands to clap and so I am appealing to the business partner in the tripartite arrangement to stop offering inducements to ministers, to Members of Parliament, to senior public servants, to Chairpersons of Boards, in this country because if nothing is offered there is a reduced likelihood of something being taken. I have already spoken about the takers and as far as I am concerned -- and I am just reflecting -- I am a Member of Parliament, I am a representative for over 8 000 people in St. Peter and when I come here I come to speak on their behalf and they say that people who take should be locked up. That is what they are saying to me, but I am saying to those who give, refrain from doing it. Refrain from offering inducements. As a matter of fact, I want to go further. We talked about whistleblower legislation. I would walk them to put in the public domain every situation where they have been asked for some kind of bribe or whatever you call it, some kind of token to get their approval for some project of the sort. I want them to recognise that in this governance project, they are partners.

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

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: My religious orientation tells me that legislation will not necessarily change personalities. The law does not necessarily change personalities but law and legislation says to all of us, this is acceptable, this is not acceptable. I am of the view that legislation is important not necessarily to make unethical people ethical but to regulate behaviour in a society. We must have legislation like this one, Integrity in Public Life so that all participants, Barbadians of all persuasions, leaders in Government, leaders in business, leaders in civil society, must understand that there must be a standard that has been set that says this kind of behaviour is acceptable and this kind of behaviour is not acceptable.

We, as a Government, accept the responsibility of the people who have sent us here. I want to say very quickly this legislation, in my view, has the potential to be

a very good piece of legislation. There is provision for ensuring that frivolity does not take place and at Section 59 there is provision for dealing with those persons who wilfully or maliciously make false accusations. I say that to say to those of us in public life including those who would be having second thoughts about serving at the level of the Chairperson of Boards, there is a heavy penalty for those who make scurrilous claims, claims without foundation. I am saying that because the legislation, balance as it is, seeks to create a situation where those of called to serve at this level behave properly but we are also protected against people who would just want to sully your character from coming forward and making some spurious accusation. It also includes at Section 61 a duty to report and I like that section because I think it is time that we Barbadians who usually like to talk about not taking bread out of people's mouths but we have to recognise, as Barbadians, that when we allow bad behaviour to continue and to corrupt and organisation and a country there is a cost to all of us. All of us will have bread taken out of our mouths and so the inclusion of a section to compel or to encourage persons to report, I think, is a good inclusion in this Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: Could the Honourable Member please wind up.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: Yes, the Honourable Member will and he will by saying to this Honourable Chamber that this piece of legislation is one that I commend to this House, it is one that the people of this country want, it is one that we as a Government and as a Parliament have committed ourselves to living by and I look forward to the day when our standing as political leaders in the country and when our standing as a country within the family of nations is restored to the place where we once stood where people looked up to us, where they trusted us and where they understood that we were leaders and we were from a country that stood on high principles and encouraged integrity in public life. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. today.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

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

Members, prior to the Suspension, the Business of this Honourable House was the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018, and to this we now revert. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to indicate at the outset my keen interest in this Bill that is before this Honourable Chamber and of course to declare at the outset my joy, the happiness that has been brought to my heart as a result of the Barbados Labour Party under the astute leadership of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East in fulfilling pledges that were made before, during and we will continue to do that after the general election, to ensure that the people of Barbados enjoy the best quality of life that is available to them. So I would wish to indicate my support for this legislation that is before us that is associated with integrity and how we must uphold ourselves in every aspect of life, whether in the community where we live, in the place where we work or wherever we go, that we will continue to uphold those tenets for good living, for good discipline, for good governance, integrity, accountability and everything else that goes with it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have the opportunity to refer to our "Covenant of Hope" at page 17 which speaks to 10 basic principles, they speak to what we stand for in the Barbados Labour Party. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that it is not only in the Barbados Labour Party but that there are thousands of Barbadians who stand for Principles No. 3 and No. 9 because for me these are more relevant to the discussion and to this Bill that we are here debating today. Mr. Speaker, Sir, at No. 3 it says:

"The Barbados Labour Party stands for good and transparent governance...."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Barbados Labour Party has started the work and the business of the people of Barbados hitting the ground early and ensuring that communication was fed to the people of Barbados about the affairs, whether financial or affairs that are associated with their own living to do with health, education and other social services. Mr. Speaker, Sir, Goal No. 9 which says:

"The Barbados Labour Party stands for fostering civility, inclusiveness and respect for diversity amongst our citizens...."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in a document I read it speaks to corruption, it says:

"Government corruption has been defined as the abuse of public power for private gains...."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, such abuse has a long history, for it started in the Bible. We know, Sir, that the Bible reminds

us in Exodus chapter 3 verse 8 and beyond of laws prohibiting bribery in judicial cases, as we know over 3500 years ago. We read in the Bible about persons who were weighing items. We know that 16 ounces makes one pound and that some people were setting the scale where it would say either 15½ or 13½. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we had some vendors in Bridgetown who used to do it when you go to buy certain things from them because they were cutting back that little bit and that is still wrong. The point is that it is wrong because you are cheating from the person who is paying you for the service that is being offered. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that this kind of corruption, bribery and wrongdoing would not stop and cannot stop but that it can be controlled by laws, it can be controlled by rules and regulations.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in that document it goes on to talk about corrupt public officials who sometimes appropriate goods, take advantage of services to which they are not entitled, or even steal funds outright. We know of some of that, not only in the international world but here in the Caribbean, including Barbados. They may also use their position to favor friends and relatives unfairly and we have witnessed that, Sir. I am an old girl on the 'block', I have been here for a long time, I keep my mouth shut sometimes but when I see injustice I speak out, whether I am loved for it or not.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the 2013 Global Corruption Barometer published by Transparency International, it reported, and I quote:

"People worldwide have the perception that five of the most corrupt institutions in the world are political parties, the police, public officials, the Legislature and the Judiciary."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Barbados must not be overlooked, although we are not able sometimes to be able to make certain determinations and we will continue to be ruled by the law. Mr. Speaker, Sir, over the past 10 years we have seen what can be lumped together in a cohort that we can identify where we believe a lot of that has been happening and that there is always evidence to be shown: there are documents, there are houses, there are pieces of land. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when somebody can purchase a spot of land in St. James near the area of Apes Hill and Deane's Town and then gets land for free as though it is Kirpalani's or Five-and-Ten then something is wrong with my country. Sir, I want those ministers who are responsible and those civil servants who I know with whom these are charged, if they do not follow the rules and regulations and give a blind eye to corruption and it is found to be corrupt whether in a commission or whatever investigation happens, it is wrong and it is disgraceful when the people of Barbados, especially our youth look up to us Members of Parliament and other people in high places who we

expect to know better but who keep telling us to do as they say but indeed they mean not to do as they do. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is wrong and whatever is wrong cannot be made right because when you start wrong cannot be made right because when you start wrong you end up wrong.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, any kind of form of corruption for me or for this Barbados Labour Party and for thousands of Barbadians must be abhorred and stamped out with haste. Our youth caught with a 'spliff' and are caught they are hauled before the court, some will pay a fine, some will be cautioned, some given a chance, but ever so often many of them repeat and go back to court and go back to place called Dodds Prison, previous to that they went to a place called Glendairy Prison. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is hurtful that sometimes there are others who seem to be staring the law in the face, who may be found as a part of a container full of drugs coming into Barbados, some containers containing 200 pounds of marijuana, cocaine and so on coming into Barbados, and you would hear nothing more about the cases, and some of the cases are not called because I know that the judicial system has that clog but some of them seem to go into oblivion. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would hear that so-and-so son sent up for a 'spliff' because he is a little fellow from off the 'blocks' or from one of those depressed areas and they have to face the court, their parents have to be running around getting the money to pay for lawyers to be able to get representation; some of whom have no lawyers and therefore the State will give them that kind of representation, but it is still wrong whether it is the 'spliff' or you take up two tins of sardines, a tin of milk or something else for your young baby or for your family because you have nothing to eat and you are caught shoplifting there is a penalty for that person. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it should be the same thing for those who get involved in thievery at the highest level to the tune of millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I abhor what is happening and so I want justice not just to be done but to be seem to be done, justice must not only be done but that it must be seen to be done at all levels of our people.

Mr. Speaker, I took the bold initiative to declare my assets as well, and any assets which I have acquired or accumulated have been acquired through just means, Sir. The life insurance I believe I will only get when I die or if I cash it in. From the way things were going in the last five to ten years, I nearly had to cash in mine, because I was living in a situation that caused my heart to bleed when I saw people unemployed because an unreasonable, unfair and clueless Government would have sent them home, and they were treated unfairly in some ways. Even I could not make ends meet, but my assets have been declared, Sir. It is nothing thick, and even if it were thick, I am the kind of honest individual who would have worked and earned what

I have. I do not even buy a Bingo card. It is not Bingo anymore, is it?

Asides.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: Whatever you call the gambling game, I do not believe in it, and I do not have any luck, except for bad luck.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, do you mean the lottery?

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: It is the lottery. Due to my age, Sir, and I look after the elderly, you must forgive me, but every minute of the day I am in the face of the elderly. However, I am also in the face of the youth, Sir, like these Honourable Members on this side; all these young gentlemen and young ladies who are here representing the interests of the people of Barbados and shall conform. I believe they will, and that is why we were so heavily voted for in this last Election; 30 not out, and it is because of the policies and the programmes which we have put to the people.

I declared my assets and I have them sealed and put away as well where the others would have theirs, and I have been able to manage my salary from January 1970 in the Government Service, \$130 a month. Sir, I survived on that. Why can I not now survive on what I am now receiving, instead of going cap-in-hand or agreeing with persons who want to get contracts to be bribed to give something for something? I know how we look at the “something for something” in a different way, but when a person approaches any of us and says, “I want to get that contract, \$10 000 is yours,” something is definitely wrong with the mentality of that individual or those individuals who will receive it. At the end of the day, who are we fleecing? It is the Government’s purse; that is all of us here who are paying our taxes and are trying to fulfil our needs by conforming with the law in this land, Sir.

Sir, I also want to refer to this copied page of the Constitution of Barbados, the Constitution Review of 1998, where at Chapter 13 it refers to finance. It talks about the Constitution, and at Chapter 13.3 it talks about existing arrangements in Barbados which had not been achieved at the same level of Independence. It also talks about accountability as is evident in the United Kingdom. However, it also says, “A large degree of transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs is assured in at least three ways.” Those three ways are to do with the funds deposited in the Consolidated Fund and the Annual Estimates and so on, Sir. Then there is the Office of the Auditor General, which has been recognised by provisions in the Constitution, and “the Auditor General is not subject to the control of any person while exercising his functions in his capacity of work”. The third one is, “There

is a provision outside of the Constitution for a House of Assembly Committee in the Public Accounts Committee, which is headed ex-officio by the Leader of the Opposition”, and so on, and the majority of the members of that committee are selected from among Members of Parliament who do not hold ministerial office.

Finally, it goes on to say, “These three provisions have partially achieved their objective. There are, however, well recognised deficiencies which must be corrected.” Sir, now that I have said that, I will go to the next phase to say that most of us in here in this Honourable Chamber and most of those who preceded us are persons who came in with good character, I believe. Our parents and our foreparents espoused good virtues. There are certain basic tenets and mores in our society that our foreparents and our teachers and guardians and neighbours who looked after us ensured that we conformed to. They taught us the value of good character and good reputation. The Bible tells you that, “A good name is rather to be chosen than riches or gold”. I would rather my name, which my mother blessed me with after her, be carried with the reputation and the character that are necessary to climb to the highest heights or to remain at the lowest low, because when you have your character and your integrity intact nobody can say or do anything with you because you know you can stand up to the scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, I always say my life is an open book. Open any page, and you can see from my size that I have many pages. Open any page, read and inwardly digest. Therefore, I came into this Honourable Chamber in 2001 with my character intact, and I will leave with my character intact, Sir. I advise my Honourable Members and colleagues to do so. Sir, we had a time in our history where a testimonial from some role model or someone you knew in the community was so critical. We have changed whatever was good about that, and now a testimonial is generally determined in relation to which degree you have and in what area and which person is your referee and so on. We do not look into people and the character and the interests which they have so that we can determine the importance of the suitability they should bring to the job or to the project they are doing. I think we must get back to those testimonials where people in the neighbouring know you. If you want to become a police officer or a member of the Barbados Defence Force, they send out their folk into the villages and so on, and ask questions of the lowest of the low and the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich. They ask, “Do you know Cynthia Forde? Do you know so and so” in order for them to do that critiquing and in order for them to put you in a place of confidence and responsibility. I believe our society needs to get back to that.

Sir, the free education, the great health services and so on have positioned us to climb this social ladder. This

upward social mobility has helped many of us, and my colleagues in here would have come through what I call the “horn pipe”; stark poverty but pride of parents, particularly our mothers, grandmothers and the womenfolk who remained in the home and instilled in us the Aesop Fables and the Bajan sayings such as “who help yuh buy a big belly cow ain’t gine help yuh feed it”. It looks to me as though as though the big belly cow was given away for free and we do not know who is feeding it now. It is wrong, and we have learnt so much. “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” and so on and so forth we have learnt. I am not seeing much of that coming through. From slavery our forefathers built this foundation, and our foremothers -- if that is a word -- and they made sure that we instilled in ourselves those good virtues of hard work, dedication, honesty, building of good integrity, living up to the standards, not doing a half-day’s work and expecting to get a full-day’s pay. They taught us all of those things, such as being regular and punctual for work. Now it seems as though many of those have been forgotten. We were raised in a Christian environment, Mr. Speaker, where those principles of integrity, fairness, accountability, hard work, equity, pride, industry and justice, all of them were instilled in us, and the school and the church helped to be one of those pillars that have placed us in this good stead.

Mr. Speaker, there is no justification, none at all, for any man, woman, child, priest, teacher, police, lawyer, servant, doctor, politician or whatever profession there is, to be out there breaching the laws by getting involved in corrupt activity. Mr. Speaker, no-one is above the law, and I know you have very good, strong legal training. Sir, you are one of the best lawyers I know in this country, and I hope that you will continue to fulfil the law, because there are some lawyers who are just as crooked as the shoemaker who held your shoe, took your money and never made the shoe better for you to get it back to wear. Therefore, Sir, I want to say that we cannot in Barbados have rules for the Medes and different ones for the Persians. We must conform with rules and regulations, Sir, and ensure that every citizen, despite his colour, class, creed, political persuasion or employment, conforms with the law. When the law is breached, then they must be confronted, and whatever investigations reveal, go up the road if that is what it should be. Glendairy Prison served its purpose. Dodds Prison is an expensive prison, it is one of the best in this hemisphere, and it has to carry out its duties where those workers are concerned, so that we make examples of some and across the Caribbean you are hearing about a Minister that would have breached the law by doing whatever, overruling somebody else and so on and so forth and it has to stop. I am growing tired of it, I am too old to be hearing these things that as a young girl growing up and a beautiful damsel, I have never heard of politicians being engaged in such behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, we have had Commissions before and those Commissions cause the Barbadian public and the taxpayers millions of dollars and I have not heard a thing come out of any of them, recommendations yes, about the way going forward but not a fellow as far as I am aware got locked up, Sir. You are a lawyer so you might be able to correct me quietly otherwise.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you can also speak to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, he can enlighten you also.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South and he is smiling too but he if he either misses and rob any old man or old woman of their benefits, Sir, I would not even want to see him. I would not want to smell him and I know that he would not come near me but I know that he is an Honourable gentleman and he has been out there establishing himself and he too would have been born in a large family where parents cared for him and ensured that he upheld the law in every respect and no wonder he is where he is today, good parents and teachers and guardians.

Mr. Speaker, today not a fellow has been charged for the mismanagement of the affairs of Ministries, boards or businesses, none have gone to Glendairy then or to Dodds now. Daily we witnessed the conflict of interest in this place where persons would have been given a contract for \$100 000 and we have documents, Mr. Speaker, and we are told that either the Minister, or the parliamentary secretary or somebody else in the political Party or in the family said that if it is \$100 000, make it \$150 000 and we will split the \$50 000, you can take \$25 000 and I will take \$25 000 and then we are complaining about how our children got the way they are. We, the adults have started to set that kind of example and the children are copying us because they are like little sponges drinking in the good and the bad and they do not know when to decipher what is and what is not but want they are getting gain, that is the problem. Sir, we have documents, we have photographs, we have messages and those who served before that were in authority seem to think they are untouchable but God is not asleep.

Mr. Speaker, I have a document in my hand, it might have been made a document of this House before because we are aware of the numerous aspects of mismanagement that took place in the last Administration, the previous Administration of 2008 to 2018, and at the highest level in this Chamber. There is a document of a senior citizen in his wheelchair waiting for his money to be able to carry out his duties and maintain himself and that poor old man had to go to a high court to get the judgement for him to be able to get back nearly a quarter of a million dollars and then we hear the Right Honourable Prime Minister then say to go and get a good lawyer and they dismissed the no-confidence motion. Sir, I have been walking with this book

for years. It is called “Empowering People With Disabilities Against Abuse”, if that is not emotional abuse of the highest order to a disabled man in his wheelchair, tell me what else it could be, to destroy that human fabric that was waiting patiently for the funding to be able to look after his family or to clear his debt. Sir, there are so many of them, and there are lawyers who are fleecing poor people and I want more of them to be put before the Barr Association and I want some of them to get locked up. There are some teachers who are not doing it right either. There are some police officers, there are some entertainers and there are some priests and all, whom we would expect to know better, who are fleecing others, some poor and some not so poor and if it is wrong, Mr. Speaker, it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you of \$40 000 and of \$30 000 that was paid into the Magistrate’s Court at St. Matthias and the \$30 000 was down at District D, that vanished in thin air, and child maintenance would have been included in it, fines that people had to pay and to this day, Mr. Speaker, they cannot be found. Sir, \$1 million was taken from Central Bank of Barbados and to this day that person has not been brought before a court of law. Sir, that \$1 million is the funds of poor people in Barbados who honestly go and pay their fees and they pay their National Insurance Scheme and they do they PAYE, they pay Value Added Tax (VAT) and everything else and \$1 million is missing from the Central Bank and nobody can say anything about it in small Barbados. Sir, something is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I can go to the diesel at the Barbados Transport Board that was being sold illegally, there was no legislation to allow it but it was helping out the ZR people, the minibus and so to be able to go forward. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, that another \$40 00 went missing one night and to this day, it has not been found. I do not know if it went into the gas tanks and got destroyed or whatever but that has never been found. Sir, a tractor and a bobcat at National Conservation Commission in a container rusting, ordered from overseas and the invoices at Customs Department not matching what was delivered to National Conservation Commission. I believe that now that tractor is corroded because you are talking eight or nine years ago, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Attorney-General Report about the Barbados Water Authority where an amount of just over BDS\$200 000 was to be paid to the Barbados Water Authority to bring in pipes, or pipe cocks or faucets if you call them by the good name but whatever it is was necessary. The money was paid out, two hundred and something U.S. dollars but not a nail, not a screw, a pipe cock, a pipe, nothing. Where is the accountability and when the Attorney-General made his query in his 2016 Report nothing a response yet, Mr. Speaker. Sir, something is

wrong in Barbados. A bobcat was stolen of all days on Easter Sunday, 2015....

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Sir, I will wrap-up. Sir, on Easter Sunday and to this day, the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW) has not found back that bobcat. Who has it? In small Barbados, where is it, in the sea.

Mr. Speaker, the issuance of ZR permits, minibus permits, ZM permits and so on for \$3 000, \$5,000 and \$10, 000 each and I do not think there is any registration up to now at Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW). Where has that money gone?

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that it is about time that our people in Barbados.... I have 15 of them, Sir, and I cannot give you all 15 but you will get them again on another occasion. This book was given out by the Democratic Labour Party and they were so ashamed when they did the meeting at Welchman Hall at the Post Office, they left it and every one last of these projects, Mr. Speaker, “Steel in Dey”. Sir, Serenader sang that song.

Mr. Speaker, the police station at St. Thomas is not finished yet, the down bottom part is not touch. You heard of Cahill and you heard of the Barbados Water Authority building, steel in there. Sir, almost every project in this book, I can make it a document of the House, Sir, because they left a whole pack. They were not interested in them anymore.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I strongly support this effort that would have been a political promise, a Manifesto promise and I want to say to my leader and my colleagues to straighten up and fly right if at any time you are indicating that you want to do wrong because I shall be one of the first to be in the court to say I have the document Your Honour, treat to it because Barbadians must continue to live with pride. Barbadians must continue to respect and honour the role models we call Members of Parliament, and I thank the people of St. Thomas, Mr. Speaker for giving me the privilege to be in this Honourable Chamber for if I had had a bad reputation five thousand hundred and something votes is no easy amount to be able to knock off in anytime because they believe that I have integrity, will represent their interest, and I will continue on that mantra that you must stamp out wrong doing and always stick to the right because when you start wrong you end wrong. The good book says “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. Love your brother and sister as you would love yourself and once you give the glory to the Lord and once you do what is correct God would give you and shower you the blessings as he have the thirty of us in here including the Honourable Member for St. Michael

West who is a Godly man, an Honourable Bishop and I believe it is because of his good living that he has been able to be elevated to this. I admonish all of my Honourable Members here, Sir, and these young people and others in the gallery. Stick to what is right because when the corruption hits your face and you adhere to it, the disgrace you bring on your family, your neighbours, your constituents and all others and then you will hear: "I tell wunna so, all of them is big thieves. All of them is criminals and they gone to get rich."

Sir, I am obliged to you. Thank you sincerely for your patience.

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

Hon. A. R. FORDE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say, first of all I also want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the older of the Fordes, for her contribution.

I want to say that I rise to give my unequivocal support to the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Attorney-General. I want to say that I do not only want to support him, but I want to thank him for bring legislation to this House, Mr. Speaker. It is not by happenstance, Mr. Speaker, it is not something that dropped out the sky and it certainly is not a kindergarten episode. Mr. Speaker, it was a promise made and a promise delivered. It was a promise made by this party on the campaign trail and a promise delivered. In the words of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East: "Give me the vote and watch muh." I say today, this is evidence that we are in the business of keeping our promises to the people, we are in the business of making sure that good governance is the order of the day. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that when you talk about integrity you are talking about honesty. You are speaking about strong moral principles, about virtue, about decency, fairness, trustworthiness and sincerity, those things that were sadly lacking for the last 10 years. My good friend, the Honourable Member for St. Peter said, the last 10 years. I am saying it is important because when you stop doing the wrong things it gives the right things the opportunity to catch up. I am saying today, this is evident that the right things are starting to catch up on Barbados and on Barbadians because in a matter of six weeks, Barbados has seen a transformational change as it relates to governance. They have seen what it is to have good governance in this country. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill not only seeks to ensure that Barbadians have a chance to be the best that they can be in a fair and just country but it seeks also, Mr. Speaker, to allow us to once again dream that special dream and Barbadians have been living the last 10 years in nightmares under a Government who cares absolutely nothing about integrity or accountability.

As I traverse the length and breadth of Christ Church West Central there has been one constant refrain. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, the narrative is: what are you going to do about integrity legislation? What is the Government going to do about the fact that there is corruption across the length and breadth of this country? We made a promise and today, Mr. Speaker, the promise has been put before the House where it will become legislation and, Mr. Speaker, accountability in this Government will be the order of the day.

People in Christ Church West Central and across Barbados want to know about contracts and they want to have a microscopic eye as it relates to our engagement in contracts as a Government. They want to know that if a contract is worth \$5 that it is not inflated where the bogeyman gets a percentage and that somebody's hand went into the cookie jar. They do not want to know, Mr. Speaker, that the money that is meant for certain projects ... Mr. Speaker, I can speak about projects in the tune of \$600 000 that was supposed to be exposed to the scrutiny of the public and it was supposed to go to public tender because anything over \$200 000 is supposed to go to public tender and what has happened in the past is that persons were allowed to cut that \$600 000 in quarters where they were being paid \$150 000 and that money was drawn down as a way the "mamaguy" the public. Instead of three persons tendering for contracts over \$200 000 we had situations where there was one person and that person was a constant throughout the ministry. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, these things have to come to an end. The millions of dollars that has been pilfered, plundered, that has vanished, sometimes I refer to it as looting of the highest order, that has been despoiled, those millions of dollars could have been put towards the road works project that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West speaks so lucidly about. We can imagine how many potholes could have been filled across Barbados with the millions of dollars that has been accountable for. Can you imagine -- and I have to thank the Honourable Member for Christ Church East for the job that he has done in the south coast. Could you imagine if some of that money that has vanished had went to the south coast because effluence has been removed, the south coast has returned to affluence and this has happened because the Honourable Member for Christ Church East understands what it takes to be involved in good governance. He understands the importance of making sure that the mission critical of this Government are realised. If, Mr. Speaker, the \$400 million and more of funds that are accountable for, if that money was there, Mr. Speaker, could you imagine how it allow the albatross to be removed from the necks of Barbadians so that we could have an economic breathing space. Mr. Speaker, do you know how much of that money would be able to go to small businesses, like the Honourable Member for St. George South would tell you, the money that is needed so that we can realise our promise when it comes to the trust loans. Mr. Speaker, in

my ministry the millions of dollars that were despoiled could have been used with what I am going to bring on stream in the next couple of weeks, something called the “building block project” a project that is going to give the youngsters who are right now taking up the tools of destruction, we are going to give them the tools of empowerment and we know the millions of dollars could be put towards empowering young people across Barbados providing the wherewithal so that they can realise their dreams and so that they can become self-sufficient. That is what the millions of dollars that have been pilfered could have done. Mr. Speaker, when you talk about the building blocks, this is a project that is going to transform the lives of young people across the length and breadth of this country and there is also a plan in place for a driving work programme where young people in this country would be given the opportunity to learn to drive. As I speak, Mr. Speaker, and you look into the paper today, under the classified section one thing that you may see and you will see guaranteed is that drivers are wanted in this country. Once you have a heavy duty licence you are guaranteed to get a job.

Mr. Speaker, these are practical things. When I talk about building blocks, I talk about it in literal and figurative terms because Barbados must by using the creative imagination allow young people to create their own destiny. We are going to use that creative imagination and that creative drive to push Barbados, and catapult us. It is the only thing that will work if we have all the tentacles of the young people working together to achieve a single goal, that is, not only to propel Barbados, but to ensure they become global citizens and that there is a level of self-sufficiency.

To this end, the millions of dollars that have been squandered with good governance, Barbados would not be in the position that it is in today. We would not be at the bottom of the chasm.

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying today is that we have to do better. This is why the Attorney General, the Honorable Member of Parliament for St. Joseph, has moved with haste to ensure this legislation comes to the fore. I am happy today to be part of a Government that understands there is one Barbados, and that Barbados is one where there must be economic fairness. There must be a just society where every single person despite of their demographics, social upbringing, race or religion, that every single person must have equal opportunities, and that is what this Government is going to do.

A pinch of that money, just a little, could have done wonders to the households in Barbados. Those that cannot meet their basic needs, suffering, indigent people, and the Member for St. Thomas spoke about that earlier. We

have to give Barbadians the opportunity and the only way that it can happen is if we have good governance. Today, I am saying I am happy and proud this Government has made the initial step to ensure that Barbadians have the opportunity to be part of good governance, there is level of openness and everything is done above board and that persons in this hallow Chamber are exposed to public scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, I have no problem declaring my assets. As the Member for St. Michael South said, “He does not have much to declare, therefore he can declare three times and still would have nothing to declare.” If you come in with five cents, and over the years you gather ten cents, simple maths would calculate to that your final total would be fifteen cents. On the other hand, I do not know what would happen in the lost ten years. Persons came in with five cents and finished with millions of dollars. This is what we are trying to avoid

because at the end of the day, the money belongs to the people of this country.

Sir, the public coffers are exactly what it is called, the public coffers. It does not belong to any Member of Parliament, so there is no reason why there has to be a Houdini who causes money to vanish. Someone calls it political obeah. We have to be serious about good governance and accountability. We have to understand the meaning of integrity and that if we do not get it right in this country, Barbados will be Barbados no more. It has to start from in this Chamber, and that is why we have put out reputations on the line. We have put our families’ reputation on the line. We have open up all the avenues so that Barbadians can judge us fairly for what we bring to the table.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a member of a Government that understands that the people’s purse must be protected, there must be a level of accountability for expenditure, and that the only way we can bring back

trust and confidence in this country is if the country has the confidence in us as a good Government. The only way this can happen is if this Bill is passed in this Honourable House. To that end, I support the Bill. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you. I thank you.

Lt. Col. the Hon. J. D. BOSTIC: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend my voice to this most important debate of the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018. I consider it a very important debate because the legislation itself is far-reaching, important, and it is right for Barbados at this point in time. There are several things that I can say about the Bill that would be positive, but I think beyond anything else that I can say I would wish to make the point that although this is the fulfillment of a promise we made

during the last general election that we would bring this Bill, I think it goes far beyond that.

It goes far beyond that because it goes back to the “covenant of hope” that we made with the people of Barbados. A “covenant of hope” that says who we are as a party, what we stand for, what we will fight for and how we will conduct the affairs of this country once we were given the mandate by the people of Barbados. This is the most important part of this for me. I would like to place my comments within the general framework of what Barbados stands for as a country as it relates to corruption. This goes back to March, 1996 when the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption was adopted in Caracas, Venezuela. It came into force March, 1997 and Barbados became a signatory in 2001. This Convention was ratified in this country only in January, 2018 and it is important to start with this Convention because we were very much committed as a country to this.

One of the goals of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption is to promote, facilitate and regulate cooperation among the State-Parties as it relates to,

among other things, the punishing and eradication of corruption. I would also like to refer to the fact Barbados is also a signatory to United Nations Convention Against Corruption, although this Convention is yet to be ratified by us as a country. We have some international obligations concerning the fight against corruption, obligations that we as a responsible sovereign country must uphold. Obligations which guide us as a nation and which informs how we treat with corruption not only locally, but regionally and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to argue that we cannot walk with confidence along the halls of justice in the international community, we cannot speak with conviction in terms of anti-corruption legislation if we do not take care of some domestic or local issues ourselves, and this is what we are seeking to do today as we bring this Integrity in Public Life Bill to this Honourable Chamber. Sir, in this regard, I would like to compliment the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Attorney-General, and his staff and those persons from the wider Barbadian society who would have contributed in any way towards this Bill as we made the decision to put this Bill on Facebook and to invite the public for comments, and some comments were received.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote the Honourable Attorney-General while he was speaking to the draft legislation in his capacity as the Shadow Attorney-General of this country, and I quote: “Corruption is not something to be whispered in dark corridors, it must be rooted out of society. It not only affects our way of life and our moral underpinning but it also costs the Barbadian economy

untold millions in inflated contract costs every year and it also affects our country’s competitiveness and our reputation.” Mr. Speaker, I find those words to be very, very significant and when you look at the actual legislation and when you understand what it is that we are seeking to do here today I believe that you would agree with me in terms of what the Attorney-General stated back then.

Mr. Speaker, the enactment of the legislation is only the beginning. The legislation itself provides the legal framework, the legal mechanism, the vehicle that would take us forward in terms of reaching the anti-corruption destination that Barbados wants to reach and that Barbados as a country would like to become. I wish to say here that the legislation itself is not intended and cannot change any one of us in this Chamber not on its own, that is something that has to come from within but the legislation itself serves to remind us as to why the people of Barbados elected us to be here. The legislation reminds us that we are here to serve the people of this country, that we are not here to be self-serving. It reminds us that we have the moral responsibility and must have the moral and intestinal fortitude to say to each one of us in here if we are going down the wrong path that we are doing something that is wrong, that is what it says to me.

Mr. Speaker, there are aspects of the legislation that I believe will address a number of issues that I have observed over the last few years. During the last two or three years of the last Parliament it became very, very obvious to me that Barbadians, I am using my constituency as a microcosm of the wider society, were beginning to lose confidence in politicians. The level of apathy that existed during the political campaign was an eye-opener for me and even though we won all of the seats it would be interesting to do a comparison of the actual voter turnout in this country during the last campaign. Although I myself got the largest number of votes that a candidate has received in the City and that I whipped my opponent 3-1 by the grace of God and the will of the people the turnout in the City of Bridgetown was still very low and I believe to a large extent it was due to the same apathy that I spoke to just now, that people were not confident in us as politicians and when one politician or one group of politicians do things that are not in the interest of the people, then all of us are painted with the same brush. This legislation being introduced by this Government seeks to change that way of thinking so that Barbadians can once again believe that there are good politicians in this country, that there is a good Government in the Barbados Labour Party, that governance is intact, that our international reputation can and will be restored and that those who follow us would understand that they are coming into this Chamber to serve the people and not to serve themselves.

The major part of the legislation, however for me, is the establishment of the Integrity Commission because the

legislation by itself will not do what is required if the Commission, according to Ken Gordon, is a Commission that is like a tiger without teeth. The Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Integrity Commission said that because when that Commission was first established that Commission was powerless to do what was required in order to enforce the law that was passed, but this Commission within this Bill, soon to be Act, has the right to investigate on its own initiative once it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for so doing. It is not subject to the directions or control of any person or authority. The Governor-General may in writing request the Commission to investigate any matter falling within the functions of the Commission and the part of it that I like most of all is the fact that the Commission will be treated as a law enforcement agency for the purpose of receiving disclosures of information which are relevant to its functions from any law enforcement agency including a foreign law enforcement agency. Mr. Speaker, for the first time since I have been a Member of this Honourable Chamber I see a Commission that will not be at the dictates of the Minister who is establishing the Commission. This is a Commission that will have the autonomy to do that which is in the interest of the country without fear or fervour, affection or ill-will, and that is for me the greatest part of this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to each and every one of us in here that let us not depend on the legislation to tell us how it is that we are expected to operate as Ministers of the Crown and in the interest of the people of Barbados but let it come from within the bowels and the bosom of each of every one of us to do that which is right, that which is just, that which is righteous and that which the people of Barbados in giving us a mandate of all 30 seats, unprecedented in the history of this country, have sent us here to do because they were fed up with the governance of the last Administration.

Mr. Speaker, I also urge all of my colleagues to look at Mark Twain's quote which is loyalty to country always, loyalty to Government when it deserves it. Mr. Speaker, I am confident that this Barbados Labour Party Government on the current trajectory and with the level of leadership that it has will be in a position where this Government will always deserve the loyalty of all of us.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say that I support the Bill as it is being tabled here today. I think it is extremely good for Barbados, I think a wonderful job has been done and I know the people of Bridgetown who have sent me here and the people of this country who have sent us all here would be very, very pleased at the end day when this Bill becomes law, when it is proclaimed and then I urge us all and I urge the Government to take the next step to ensure that the United Nations Convention Against Corruption is ratified.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in closing I want to leave a quote from a great man for us all to ponder upon, the late, great Mahatma Gandhi and I think it is most appropriate for the debate that we are undertaking here today. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I quote:

“There are seven things that will destroy us:

1. Wealth without work;
2. Pleasure without conscience;
3. Knowledge without character;
4. Religion without sacrifice;
5. Politics without principle;
6. Science without humanity; and
7. Business without ethics.”

Mr. Speaker, if those are the seven sins of the political class, if there is such a thing, then I want to say in the name of Jesus and on behalf of this Barbados Labour Party that I rebuke them here today. Let us as a Government demonstrate that Barbados stands for something, that Barbados will once again rise in this regional and international community, and that we will do what is right for our country, for our citizens and for all those persons who have the pleasure of calling Barbados their home. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

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

Hon. E. G. HINKSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an extremely proud member of the Parliamentary Team of the Barbados Labour Party, to be the first Government of this country to bring integrity legislation before this Parliament. Mr. Speaker, promises to do so have been made in the past and were never kept by the previous Government to do so. In fact, the genesis of what we are doing here today and started last week goes back to about 1984, as was mentioned earlier in the debate when the now Sir Henry Forde and former Attorney-General of Barbados would have tabled legislation in this Parliament on the issue of integrity. Mr. Speaker, the dissolution of Parliament in 1986 would have meant that that Bill would have died. Subsequent to that, the last Barbados Labour Party Administration would have empowered another former Attorney-General and distinguished Member of Parliament for the constituency of St. George South, Sir Louis Tull, to look into the bringing in of anticorruption legislation in Barbados as part of a CARICOM effort at the CARICOM level but that did not come to fruition either before the Barbados Labour Party was voted out of office at the will of the people in 1994.

Mr. Speaker, the reality of the situation is that the last Democratic Labour Party Government said - and many

would say that they came to office largely because of their promises made in the 2008 General Election - that they would pass integrity legislation and prevention of corruption legislation within the first 90 days of them being in office. Of course, Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware, they were in office for more than 3 700 days and did not find it fit to establish such legislation. Mr. Speaker, the result of that was that Barbados declined, for example, from No. 15 in the world in terms of being rated by Transparency International, in terms of prevention of corruption, out of 182 countries with a score of 61, in fact, to 31 out of 176, declining by points in terms of 15 percentage points.

Mr. Speaker, as has been said by some of my colleagues previously, corruption costs a country in terms of its socioeconomic development; in fact, it is estimated that the Gross National Product of a country declines by about 4 per cent on average because of corrupt practices by those especially in high places but not only those in high places but at all levels in society. Mr. Speaker, Barbados then became the laughing stock, not only of the Caribbean but of the whole world because of the whole treatment of governance by the previous Government. Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said earlier today, the mandate of the people of Barbados in the election two months ago was not only a vote against an incompetent and callous set of people, but that it was also a vote against corrupt practices of the highest order, it was a vote against spiritual wickedness in high places, that the laws of the bible condemn to the highest degree.

Mr. Speaker, we had a tremendous reluctance by the last Government to fulfil that manifesto promise of theirs in 2008 to bring in legislation to prevent corruption by their own people in this country and to bring in integrity legislation. You have the then Honourable Attorney-General - gladly the Honourable Member for St. Philip South has got rid of him hopefully from the political landscape for the rest of eternity -- he said that people who were talking about integrity legislation were making stupid and silly noises and that that Honourable Member could not find money to establish the Anticorruption Commission, after they had gone through all aspects of debate in this Parliament, both in Lower House and Upper House and passed a Prevention of Corruption Act as one of their last acts of Parliament in their first term of office, but that Honourable Member could not find money to establish a commission. The Honourable Member said that he had to do more significant things in his ministry, yet they could find money to appoint 450 people to Constituency Councils, to give largesse to their people.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there was also again an Honourable Prime Minister - who thankfully again because of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South we will never see, and I state confidently, any political office in

Barbados - saying that a 1929 Act, Mr. Speaker, Sir, as you know based on an 1817 Colonial United Kingdom Act, which is over 100 years old, that that was adequate enough to serve Barbados right now. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that was an Act that was passed in an age where no one even contemplated that they would have one computer in the world or that social media would be any concept that could be envisaged as we know it now, but that Honourable Member said that that Act was adequate. That Honourable Member said that only last year, October/November. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is the same person, the former Honourable Prime Minister who up to 2012 was saying that the only reason the Democratic Labour Party was not bringing in integrity legislation was that it conflicted with the Prevention of Corruption Act, which was not the Laws of Barbados, so this kind of fooling people by fraud was something that the people of Barbados voted 30-0 in a massive, massive way last Election, and each and every person who offered himself and herself for public or political office going forward has to understand that. We on this Side, we in this Parliament certainly understand.

Asides.

Hon. E.G. HINKSON: Mr. Speaker, we had a situation where, as the Honourable Prime Minister and Attorney-General have both said, contracts were given out in breach of financial and audit rules which we as Members of Parliament and Members of Cabinet understand, in a forum and as we knew before, have to be observed. They have to be if you want to maintain the integrity and transparency and accountability of a system for the good of everyone who lives in this country. Yet, as has also been said during this debate, we had at least two Government Ministers from the former Cabinet driving about with impunity two luxury vehicles given to them by contractors doing business in departments in statutory boards which fell under their ministerial mandate. We told them, from that side in the last Parliament, that was wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, you either learned right or wrong when you are a young person, as you know, Mr. Speaker. You are trained in criminal law and sociology, and you understand life. You do not become someone who has integrity because you are now a Member of Parliament or a Cabinet Minister. You learn this when you are young, and if you do not know right or wrong, as those two former Cabinet Ministers obviously did not know, you would never learn. One stood -- again, thankfully the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has ensured that he will never see the light of political day again -- in this Parliament and said that nobody could tell him what car he could drive. He felt free to drive a car given to him as a gift, as a bribe, by a company which he or his Ministry, obviously with his influence, awarded millions and millions of dollars; whether it was through Cahill or other aspects of the

Barbadian economy. It was all to the detriment of the Barbados taxpayer. Then we wonder how Barbados has reached here? We wonder how Barbados in the May 24 Election was at the bottom of the pole, and in social and economic turmoil for the first time in its history since the Abolition of Slavery? That was where we found ourselves. Never before, since the Right Excellent Sir Grantley Herbert Adams took the reins of this country and brought up the vast majority of people from where we were before, did we get a group of people given power with that kind of attitude and absolute disdain, believing that the taxpayers' purse and the coffers of the Barbados Government belonged to them and that no-one could tell them what they could do, how they must live, whether they could put money in a deceased relative's bank account away from their siblings, whether they could have overseas bank accounts with vast sums of money, or whether they could have yachts all about the place.

Asides.

Hon. E.G. HINKSON: Whether they could have big houses that you see on social media, and whether they could have six luxury vehicles and be boasting that they have \$15 million in an overseas bank account like one of them. That is what Barbados came to, Sir. That is what the people have put us here to guard against. This is why this debate is an extremely important debate, because rumours abound, and in the absence of integrity legislation -- this type of legislation -- rumours would spread, Sir. This is Barbados, a small country that thrives on rumours. The Honourable Attorney General said that he had people come to him, and I have people coming to me too, Sir, so I know what he was saying is true about them having to pay \$10 000 for ZR licences. These are the kinds of people, those individuals, whom this legislation seeks to protect now by the whistle-blower legislation, which we will have an opportunity to strengthen even more when it goes to Select Committee. The whistle-blower legislation will now allow someone, who was told they had to pay \$10 000 for a ZR licence, to come and say who told them that and where the money went. That cannot be right. We are not accustomed to that. It should never have been that way.

Sir, then you had Ministers as well summoned before the Public Accounts Committee; an important committee if not the most important committee of this Parliament, constitutionally enshrined. They were summoned before that Committee on matters of housing and infelicities in the Ministry of Housing, and telling you straight that they were not coming. The Honourable Attorney-General spoke to that too, because he was a member of the Public Accounts Committee. Lawyers were writing the Public Accounts Committee to say that these Ministers, two former Ministers of Housing, for instance, were not coming to appear before a constitutionally enshrined Committee of this Parliament. Lawyers who are

beneficiaries of these corrupt practices were charging \$5 million for Cahill work, as we have heard in this Parliament, and were awarded Queen's Counsel status recently, and another one \$1.4 million; all incestuous, all the same people involved in this nonsense and corrupt practices. They are the lawyers who wrote but could charge \$1.4 million and be paid by the Barbados Water Authority, such Water Authority as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East will tell you about. This is all part of the corruption that pervaded Barbados over the last ten years, and which has to be and will be brought to a stop.

Sir, the people of Barbados tell us every day -- at least ten people tell me every day -- that a politician has to get locked up, has to face the arms of the criminal justice system of this country, Sir, and I give 100 per cent support to the Attorney General on that. He has my full backing, Sir. I praise him for bringing this Bill before Parliament. I praise the Honourable Prime Minister for insisting that it be brought, as she said it would have been. At our conference in October last year, she said that it would be brought on the first day of Parliament. It was not brought on the first Sitting of Parliament, but it was laid on the second Sitting day of this Parliament, and we are here debating it today. Even though we have economic issues to deal with, along with debt and everything, we believe that it is significant enough to be brought before you, before your Honourable House today, Sir. That is how serious we feel. The Democratic Labour Party fooled around with this issue. As I said, they passed it through this Parliament as one of its last Acts of Parliament in December 2012 just so that they could say in their Manifesto 2008-2012 of the Democratic Labour Party's Performance, which is a Document of the House, that they enacted legislation, but never had any intention whatsoever of establishing the Commission to deal with it.

One Cabinet Minister in that time in fact told me they were not bringing any legislation to lock up their own. That was their attitude. You have heard others of my colleagues speak towards how you come into politics to do good and to serve people and not for your selfish needs, and you can judge on that score, Sir. The previous Government failed to enact procurement legislation. I think they brought that too, or they laid that in Parliament just before they allowed Parliament to dissolve itself, because they wanted to have the authority to give contracts to their friends and their fatted-calf colleagues. All of this has repercussions on campaign financing. Sir, you are a man of the world. I know that and you know that those who were beneficiaries of these contracts did not keep all for themselves. They went back into other people's pockets. That is how that Democratic Labour Party operates. They failed to pass freedom of information legislation which we again are committed to bring because all of this has to be a group of legislation that comes in, in terms of integrity and keeping the people informed. Again, I praise the

Honourable Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East has in 50 days given more Press Conferences and been more accessible to the public than the two Prime Ministers together that the DEMS had in the 3 700 days together, and that it is what about, so freedom of information legislation will come too, Sir, because the public has to have access. Sir, contractor general legislation which has been spoken about in this Parliament as well has to come into effect that you have an individual or a Commission that can oversee who contracts are given to. Sir, all of that is part of the good governance of a society that is so important if Barbados is, and we will, Sir, move it again to the leading small developing country in the world, where we had already planned to put it on the cusp of developed country status. The Jamaican Government, in fact, has now integrated contractor general legislation very recently into anti-corruption legislation so that it all is one. The failure of the Democratic Labour Party, the last Government to pass any kind of this legislation is even more appalling in the light of the fact that Antigua has this legislation, St. Vincent has it, Trinidad has it, St. Kitts has it, St. Lucia has it but the Democratic Labour Party felt that Barbados should not have it because of their own purposes. Sir, it has already been done and I join those who give Barbados praise on this issue. Sir, it is appalling because I believe that they are having an annual conference in a couple of weeks but not one of them have any credibility.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Prime Minister brings a Budget before this House seventeen days after our victory and four massively defeated candidates on social media talking about the Budget when they should be talking about where all the money gone, that we left for them in 2008, that is what they should be talking about, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill has played walked a fine line because as has been said earlier today, you cannot make the criteria so strenuous that.... In fact, the Honourable Prime Minister said that you cannot make the criteria so strenuous that persons with a worthy contribution to make to national development say that they are not going to serve on a Board because they have to declare their assets, their liabilities and everything else. So in fact whereas the Prevention of Corruption Bill that the Democratic Labour Party spoke to people in public life who would have to declare their assets and liabilities bringing down to all members of statutory boards and, in fact, when that Bill went to Select Committee, I was not in Parliament, that was in their first term of office. I wrote a Memorandum to the Select Committee saying that they had gone too far and wide, that you cannot include every board member, that an ordinary member of a statutory board would not have that influence, leave it to Chair persons of the boards. If you want to go to Deputy Chair persons probably go down to them and this Bill brought here today by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph does exactly that because it speaks to Chairman of Boards and Commission and that kind of

thing, to Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments within the Public Service, persons of corporations that have Government control and Chief Executive Officers. Sir, in other words, the top people, so this Bill solves that problem but, on the other hand, Parliament also needs to ensure that certain categories of persons holding public office are brought within the ambit of the law, and that has to be so. It specifies in the Second Schedule, the persons in public life to whom it will apply and again, when we go to Select Committee, there will be a chance to review that because it speaks to Magistrates but not judges but that is why we were sending it to fine-tune that. The Honourable Attorney-General has promised to have it back it after we come back from summer recess probably two months from now.

Sir, myself, I regret that such legislation did not come in before I came into this Parliament. I have nothing to hide whatsoever. Sir, virtually all of us have filed declaration of assets and liabilities in a sealed envelope that are being kept under lock and key in a safe vault. We have done that there is no such legislation. We had no legislative requirement to do that but even before the passage of this Act, we have done that because we have nothing to hide. I, myself, resigned from a company that is controlled by my wife. In fact, the day after the elections, she wrote the letter to the corporate registrar removing my name from the Board of Directors. She did not have to wait because it is something we had discussed because I am going to be in no conflict of interest position and my colleagues are the same way, Sir. We are devoting our minds fully to trying to restore this country and to bring it back to the preeminence that it used to have before this Act. This Bill speaks towards a code of conduct and in fact gives penalties for breaches under that code of conduct. Again, that was something that the late Prime Minister, the first one elected when the Democratic Labour Party won in 2008 said was going to happen, that his Ministers would have had to sign a code of conduct. I do not know what kind of code of conduct they signed, the kind of behaviour that permeated right down and you had, Sir, a Prime Minister.... Sir, the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto of 2013 said that the Democratic Labour Party had a leader with the highest ethical standards. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South is laughing. I do not know what ethical standards you could have when you proudly lead an Administration of that kind of ilk that was led by the last Administration and the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto of 2013 went on to say that his Administration would establish an Integrity Commission to facilitate the implementation of the Act. Sir, in the last Sitting of Parliament I almost tore up this but I refrained from tearing it up because I am going to refer to it and there are going to be opportunities to refer to it again to show the breaches of promises and the extend of fraud committed by that Party and by that Government on the good people of Barbados and on our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the 1929 legislation which the then Prime Minister said was adequate for Barbados. Sir, you know about it but for the sake of the public let us talk about it. It had 10 sections, Sir. It speaks to being guilty of misdemeanor, not even crime, Mr. Speaker, but you would know that better than me because you are one of the top criminal lawyers in Barbados. The maximum fine was \$2 400 and that is when we had pounds, shillings and pence. The Director of Public Prosecution is who used to institute the proceedings and only had six months to institute the proceedings so in other words if somebody knew about an alleged piece of corruption, you had to get the evidence within six months if not it become statute barred. Sir, you understand what I am saying but the then Prime Minister said that was adequate for Barbados so now we have a situation where we have a Commission given the powers of a judge, in other words, real force and investigative powers, where officers have investigative powers and can obviously liaise and collaborate with the police on this issue but this 1929 Act, 100 years old based on a 1917 United Kingdom Act that the Prime Minister said was adequate, have you ever heard about anybody investigated or arrested or prosecuted under it, Sir? That, in itself, would tell you that it was not adequate. It was not like Trinidad, Sir, where a former Prime Minister spent a few days in jail. It cannot be right that people from the lower income districts of all our constituencies arrested for take two tins of sardines - and I do not condone that, Sir -- but it cannot be right. Life has to be fair. You cannot be in jail on remand and you do not get bail for a couple weeks for stealing two tins of sardines and men steal millions of dollars and gone clear because as Edmund Burke said: "among a people generally corrupt liberty cannot exist." People cannot be free where there is corruption prevailing society, condoned by those in high places, elected officials. As the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown who spoke just before me said: "Barbados is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Prevention of Corruption 2003." Before that you had the InterAmerican Convention Against Corruption adopted in Caracas, Venezuela in 1996. We cannot be signatories to these conventions and in other words, at international levels we have commitments to other countries but you do not enact it to be a part of the law of your land. It does not go that way in international law and multinational corporations, Sir, I used to enjoy before I was in Parliament going to the International Bar Association Conferences. I was heavily involved in that Association and time and time again I would attend discussions on corruption in third world countries especially and the unwillingness of multinational corporations to deal with countries which did not have any prevention of corruption or integrity legislation. These things cost Barbados at many levels not only taxpayers in terms of thievery and bribery because then when a company gives two ministers \$400 000 luxury cars to drive, they will get that back some way. They will charge \$1 million, for instance, on a contract that only worth half of a million dollars. It cost the taxpayers but it

also cost at international level because multinational corporations do not want to do business with you because when they come, Sir, and somebody in a high place tells them that they have to give them 10 per cent of 15 per cent, Sir, but these are serious people they are not able with any banana republic and ministers that feel they must get their hands on everything. That is now how the world operates these days. You have to have this type of legislation on your statute books, Sir.

This Barbados Labour Party (BLP) today has fulfilled yet another campaign promise. We, as has been said, published a draft of this Bill for public comment, it was on the website since November or so last year. The public has commented and we praise those who commented and put input in this. Going before the Select Committee gives an opportunity to firm up in terms of the quantum of fines, for instance, the penalties but the Bill, Sir, speak toward addressing many of the issues of today. It speaks towards anti-money laundering which we know is a major issue. It speaks towards transnational bribery, bribery across nations. It speaks towards blind trust and obviously as we said, Sir, you have to make declarations of your assets and liabilities every two years. It speaks towards conflict of interest situations. It speaks towards tracing, freezing, seizing and confiscating assets therefore those politicians who feel they could have put back accounts in New Jersey, in America and United Kingdom must know that this Government, as the Attorney General said, will come after them. In Section 55 it speaks towards a presumption of corruption. In other words, the corruptors have to prove their innocence, Sir. Where in any proceedings for an offense it is proved that in seeking to obtain a contract from Government a person received or gave money or gift or other benefits, the money or gift or benefits shall be presumed to have been given or received as an inducement or a reward unless on the balance of probability the country's proved fantastic section, Sir. Putting the burden on the corruptors and the corruptees to prove their innocence. It defines corruption with wide ranging definition in Section 51 covering everything, Sir. I am, as I said, proud of my colleagues and proud to be given the opportunity to be a part of this team. Those who worked on it, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East who is the Attorney General, those lawyers in private practice, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East gave me a little credit, Sir, which I am thankful for, to being part of the drafting of this too.

Mr. SPEAKER: Can the Honourable Member wind up, please.

Hon. E. G. HINKSON: Yes, Sir. We will get this done. This has to be a part of the framework of us going forward to now make this country better and we will get this right and we will do good by the people. I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. I. A. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to participate in this Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018 and giving my full support to the Honourable Attorney-General and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. Speaker, when I look back at the last 10 years of the last Administration that occupied this Honourable Chamber I think the common sentiment amongst all Barbadians can be summed up in one word and that is lugubrious. It was, in fact, a lustrum a time when a lot was expected but nothing happened. Mr. Speaker, I think it would be remiss of me if I did not use this opportunity to address this Chamber feeling convince and convicted in my soul that this is the right call for Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I do so being fully cognizant of the fact that this Chamber in which I stand, I stand only because of the will of the people of St. Philip South. Mr. Speaker, I tried on occasion and occasion after occasion to seek to find that quote that would most aptly describe governance in Barbados over the last 10 years. Though I am not too familiar with the author, a Leo Tolstoy, Mr. Speaker, I quote from Tolstoy because I think this is perhaps the most apt way to describe the behaviour of the last Administration and indeed to describe governance in Barbados over the last decade. "I sit on a man's back, choking him, making him carry me and yet assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him, and wish to ease his lot by all means possible except by getting off his back."

Mr. Speaker, you would have heard the voice of the last Prime Minister who gave the impression to all Barbadians that they are the most vilified set of politicians according to an Opposition party that occupied this Chamber, and that they were being treated to criticism simply because of who they are complexion as if we were not of the same complexion. They gave Barbadians the impression that your school was a badge of honour that they could not carry, yet many of them

entered the same schools of all the Honourable Members in this Parliament.

When you hear that contrite nonsense coming from the mouth of a Prime Minister and his team, then you start to understand where deception lies. You start to understand why it is important that if the people cannot stand up for themselves, the reason why they put us here is because we must stand up for them. This is why we have 30 seats in this Honourable Chamber under the Barbados Labour Party except for when the Honourable Member for St. Michael West decided that he would join us through lending his voice in the Opposition. I am confident that he too will support this Bill before the Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I was raised in St. Philip and there is one person who knows St. Philip, and this is no discredit to the Honourable Members for St. Philip North or St. Philip West, I know St. Philip very well as a boy growing up in Church Village. What is symbolic about Church Village, the first thing that jumps out of me is the word church. Indeed, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West can support me on this, Church Village has more churches than any other community in Barbados. Therefore, if I have any grounding at all, my grounding is in Christianity and high morals. So, I can do nothing other than support that which protects the people of Barbados, and which comes to this Honourable Chamber for all of us to agree the time has come when we must do better as people in public life. We must demonstrate to the country that since they have reposed their confidence in us to come here to look after their best interest, then we must be on all-fours when it comes to legislation like this.

Mr. Speaker, let me take you back to 2008 election campaign when the Barbados Labour party held office for 14 sterling years. The then Leader of the Opposition had to find something to discredit a Barbados Labour party administration of 14 sterling years. It certainly could not have been on performance. They chose to come with the issue of integrity in public life and to suggest to all Barbadians we were living in the most corrupt country in the Caribbean. I remember clearly I saw when the then Leader got on a platform in Haggatt Hall and chose to display cheques that were cashed by perhaps one of the Caribbean's best Prime Ministers ever, to suggest the then Honourable Member for St. Peter was so corrupt that he can present a cheque to show that as Prime Minister he took money from someone for his own personal gain.

Sir, they went on to produce a manifesto that stated the Democratic Labour Party will not cheat, steal or lie. If my memory serves me correctly, it was published on page 14 of the manifesto. They have all lied to this Parliament repeatedly. They have lied about what they owned, lied to their constituents and their Permanent Secretaries. They have lied across Barbados, summed up only as liars. If Barbados should ever find itself in such a dubious position again then I think all of us in public life should bury our heads in shame. The people of Barbados have said clearly that they are relying on all of us in this Honourable Chamber, including the

Member for St. Michael West, to ensure we do well for Barbados.

This is what the election result on May 24 said. If you were to take what happened to Barbados in the 2013 General Election, certainly I was the most vilified candidate ever to run in St. Philip North. In my opinion, it was not because I lacked the ability since the candidate I ran against does not come halfway in comparison. There

was one common thing that separated me from the then Honourable Member and that was my hair. So that, all of Barbados had to be told that I am not a Barbadian and that my DNA when it was not in Trinidad, it was in Guyana and when not in Guyana it was in India. I grew up in Church Village, worked hard to achieve all that I have achieved in life.

Mr. Speaker, I can say to this Honourable Chamber, if in private life you have seen a few dollars get into politics and see it disappear. This is all I have done to serve the people of this country, St. Philip North at

the time and St. Philip South to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for giving me a chance to show them what a politician look like. We cannot pretend that it can be business as usual. This morning you heard the passion of the Honourable Prime Minister, Member for St. Michael North East and the muscular exchange between herself and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, was only to show Barbadians if nothing else it cannot be business as usual in this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, in the 2013 General Election that I referenced earlier, I was privileged to be driving a BMW X5. It did not cost me a lot because I was fortunate to get it at a time when a company went into receivership. The message of the campaign was the curly-haired fellow who is not a Barbadian, who may be a Trinidadian or a Guyanese, as if there is a crime to being a Trinidadian or Guyanese while the Honourable Member for St. John who is from St. Lucia is sitting in this Chamber, to own a BMW X5 was a crime. To own a BMW X5 and want to get into public life was wrong. To drive a BMW X5 across St. Philip was offensive, that was the message from the Democratic Labour Party's platform and would you believe that immediately after winning that election the former Honourable Member for St. Philip North who lives a gap away from me showed up with XA 826 a BMW exactly like the one I drove, and the only thing I could do was to turn to my daughters and say you ever see envy, look outside because that is what envy looks like also. Mr. Speaker, I got mine by dint of hard work and the sweat of my brow. The way he achieved his, the way he took his or the way he deprived the Barbadian taxpayers to get his was certainly completely different from the route I took. If that was not bad enough, Mr. Speaker, the licence plates on that BMW X5 were changed to PA 826 because the amount of criticism that took place then, and he knew it was wrong, he opted to change the licence plates but that did not change the methodology. Mr. Speaker, if we had this type of legislation proclaimed in Barbados then we know for sure such conduct would have perhaps pre-empted that person from participating in the last election. Mr. Speaker, if PA 826 was not enough, I was able to see the same former Member because I know that he no longer hold relevance and I believe the current Honourable Member for

St. Philip North would make sure that he never sees these Honourable Chambers again, it changed to MM 96 and this time a Range Rover and if you were to check back the ownership, they all lead to one place.

Mr. Speaker, I never learnt how to fix transmissions and I certainly am not a technician but I know there is a place in Barbados called TransTech. Mr. Speaker, if it is that anyone had any doubts about what was taking place they only had to drive through the yard and see the number of Barbados Transport Board buses that were up there awaiting repairs and maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, we have really to address integrity in public life not just from the point of view of us being politicians because for me I believe that integrity in public life must transcend to all those who are responsible for spending the taxpayers' money. I call seriously, Sir, to the awarding of contracts not just by Boards, not just by Ministers, well a Minister should not award a contract, not just through ministries, but that every last person that is spending the taxpayers' money in the public service must understand that he or she should stand responsible and recognise that if you ease in a friend to do some work on behalf of a ministry or board you have committed equally the same offence and that if we were to bring Barbados to the stage where everyone understands the responsibility that he or she holds when it comes to spending the taxpayers' money then we would get better returns for Government's investments and we certainly would get a more equitable spread across Barbados.

Sir, I am one that is completely sold on the empowerment of Barbadians, and when I speak to the empowerment of Barbadians I do not speak to colour or to hair type, I speak to a Barbadian who deserves just as much as the other person and if that is the case then I speak to the empowerment of any Barbadian that has the will to do and that everyone should recognise that all Barbadians have a right to participate and share in the economic distribution of wealth in Barbados. I am dead tired, Mr. Speaker, seeing only wealth concentrated in certain areas in Barbados while others are forced to beg for a job or come to a politician to say get me something because the children cannot eat. Mr. Speaker, those days should have been long behind us and our role in this Honourable Chamber should be to deliver for Barbadians proper infrastructure, healthcare and education. I have always argued that there are three fundamental pillars on which Barbadians should stand in this country: That we should first make sure that we have a secure Barbados, that we should never ever turn our backs on educating our population and that we should also make sure that we offer healthcare. Those are the three fundamental pillars on which a Barbados of this 21st Century should stand, but if you want to get involved in corruption, Mr. Speaker, then something has to give, so does it come as any surprise that tertiary education at the

University of the West Indies had to give. It had to because the money was going elsewhere and so when you listen to the platform by the Democratic Labour Party saying to Barbadians how the Barbados Labour Party would get these things done when there is no money, it was indeed a confession that they have squandered the money and that corruption was the main thief.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at education, I see education in a holistic manner and therefore when we take our young children, what I refer to as our future minds, and you have to give them corned beef under a school feeding programme and the meals were not healthy and that what we fed our children in the name of not having money because corruption was the main thief, then Mr. Speaker, you start to understand how inhumane and how callous a group of people who have had the confidence of the majority of Barbadians treated to our people.

Mr. Speaker, I just attended a meeting in Guatemala held by the Food and Agriculture Organisation a body under the United Nations, the Spanish refer to them as FAOO, we call them FAO, and the whole objective and mission of that meeting was to make sure that malnutrition is eradicated and that all school feeding programmes should buy into the concept of making sure that our children are given the best meals and that education, health and agriculture must form a synergy to make sure that the country rids itself of starvation and malnutrition and that the hashtag that will come out shortly is 'zero' hunger. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have committed myself and my ministry to making sure that this Honourable Chamber would have what is called a Parliamentary front against hunger. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am confident that it will be done because there will be no corruption on this Side, so we will find the will and the means to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, why is it that healthcare had to suffer, that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital had to be in the state in which it was, even to deliver minor services to people who are not well? Why is it that a whole country must be told that our Police Force was not big enough to fight crime in Barbados and that we had to move to legislation that empowered them to shut down and call curfews? Mr. Speaker, Sir, those things are from the genesis of corruption, that when you have spent all the money that a country could ever muster, then you have to go to alternate means, however draconian, however strict, and the fact that we have so much crime in Barbados is simply because people cannot find ways to survive and so (1), they become violent and angry and (2), they find ways to survive if it means having to rob a brother. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is not coming from me, this is my experience on the ground where I am being told upfront: "Boss, if you cannot help, other means will because I have to survive." Mr. Speaker, Sir, some have gone as far as to say that up at Dodds they do not have this problem. Mr. Speaker, Sir, so

that you understand what stands before us when I speak in support of this Bill simply because Barbados cannot afford this, Barbados cannot afford corruption to the extent that the people have become sacrificed to certain people's wealth. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I quote from perhaps one of the best books I have ever read, a motivational piece by an American motivational speaker called William Jolley, the title of the book in itself is inspiration enough so that you perhaps did not have to go past the cover. The title: "A Set Back is a Setup for a Comeback." Mr. Speaker, Sir, Barbados would have had its setback but the people of Barbados have given Barbados a setup for a comeback and that setup for a comeback took place on May 24 in this country when the people went out and said to all the Members of the last Administration, goodbye, we no longer have any confidence and trust in you.

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

Hon. I.A. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have started a series of consultations and strategic planning meetings with my ministry and some of the things that I am able to come across through consultation boggles the mind. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I recall the late David Thompson posing in the newspaper with a fork breaking ground at Pickerings. Mr. Speaker, Sir, a deposit was paid for Pickerings, the money never made its way to Barbados Agriculture Credit Trust Limited (BACT) which falls under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, the money remained within the law firm and never came to the account of the Barbados Agriculture Credit Trust Limited (BACT). Since then things have changed, new arrangements are in place for new buyers/investors but that money was never accounted for. Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bushy Park, through an arrangement under one company taking Government land but then subletting to the company Bushy Park and so when they came for the extension through the Barbados Agriculture Credit Trust Limited (BACT) to acquire lands at Vineyard, it then had to be made clear that the Barbados Agriculture Credit Trust Limited (BACT) needed to find out who really was the person leasing the land.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we can conjure up all we want simply from that but if there is one common trend running right across what took place in Barbados over the last 10 years, Sir, the common trend is that things were not right, too much was hidden, too much wealth was concentrated in one place and Barbadians were being asked to carry the burden of taxation and making all the sacrifices in this country, while we watch others flourish and become wealthier and wealthier.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not wish for any of us to have to endure ever again the suffering that took place in Barbados over the last 10 years. I certainly do not wish it for the people of St. Philip South and so when I quote from

that book, "A Setback is a Setup for a Comeback" I say to this Honourable Chamber in support of this Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018, that even though there may be a bend in the road, you have to take the corner to continue the journey. I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. I. G. P. GOODING-EDGHILL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, like my colleague and all those who have spoken in the debate, I rise to support the legislation before this Honourable Chamber. I want to say that I wish to congratulate the Honourable Attorney-General and his team for the alacrity with which they have brought the legislation to this Honourable Chamber, indeed, it was a lot of work. I also want to thank those who would have contributed, when we were an Opposition, in many respects to the development of what is now before us as a Bill. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Bill is long overdue. I say that against the background that there were several attempts in Barbados to address the issue of integrity in public life. Mr. Speaker, Sir, not that it is long overdue on the part of the Barbados Labour Party in bringing the legislation to Parliament but it is long overdue in the sense that for a number of years we have had a lot of allegations in the public domain. We have also had issues of concerns that we would have raised when we were in Opposition. Indeed, I would have raised some when I would have been in the political trenches going back and leading up to the 2013 general election. Mr. Speaker, Sir, even though the last Administration would have attempted to bring legislation, and they brought the legislation to Parliament, they passed the Bill, I believe the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2012/31 and even though they brought that legislation to the Parliament and debated it, it was never proclaimed and it never became the law of the land. You had a party which, leading up to the 2008 General Election, would have accused the Barbados Labour Party of acts of corruption, and a lot of very innocent people paid the political price because of a lot of defamation. These were people who believed that it was politically expedient for them to get up and malign people's character in an attempt to win an election campaign. Mr. Speaker, they won the Election back then, they promised integrity legislation, the Code of Conduct and the like, but when they had the opportunity to get the legislation proclaimed, and early in the day of the first term of the last Administration, one would have thought that they too would have moved with alacrity to ensure that you had an Integrity in Public Life Act or a Prevention of Corruption Act in Barbados.

Sir, I also say to you that this is dear to my heart as well, and I will address that point shortly. The people of St. Michael West Central may have had me as their Member of Parliament back in 2013 had certain things not have been allowed to go on. Perhaps if there had been a law in place

and proclaimed, we both would have been here in 2013. For me, it is with a sense of great joy that we now have this legislation in this very great Place. I want to make the point, and I join with the people in St. Michael West Central who sent me here to represent and serve their interests, to say to them that I am going to support this Bill in their name and I will do everything possible to ensure that this great political party of which I am a member continues to do good things and good deeds on behalf of the people. Mr. Speaker, this legislation is one of the most significant pieces of legislation that a Barbados Labour Party Administration, that a Barbados Labour Party as a Party, will become known for as we have been known for many other pieces of legislation. It is that significant.

I know that the people of St. Michael West Central will want to see a high standard of representation and would wish to know that the Government, in the first case the Member of Parliament they voted for and in the second case the Government that formed through the support of the Barbados Labour Party candidate, is indeed working to serve their very best interests. I want to make the point that a lot of the constituents feel, and they do believe, that if you come to public office, it is a public trust, and that if you betray the public's trust, then you should never hold public office in Barbados. I agree with that. It is too important and we know, as do all politicians, that sometimes you are maligned for multiple reasons, but when you come to public office you must so exercise and ensure that your conduct is always in the best interest of those who sent you here and the political party whose name you represent as well.

Sir, I also believe that there are certain situations which we will have to monitor, and I am confident that the Bill will allow those situations to be monitored. Mr. Speaker, I also say that in order to maintain the public's trust, it may be absolutely necessary for us to go a step further and perhaps even consider amending the Companies Act to ensure that those persons who have a fiduciary responsibility to act in the best interest of the shareholders -- in this case, the Government of Barbados or any other interest which we have -- so that they who breach that trust should also be removed from directorships in this company or any company owned by the Government of Barbados. I say to you that because of the many alleged infractions that took place, it is absolutely necessary that action be taken. Mr. Speaker, I look forward because the constituents of St. Michael West Central also look forward to action being taken. We cannot have a people in hardship for years and then there are others who are seemingly enjoying the fatted calf and, of course, they are not seeing any action being taken.

I think it is important that we allow the forensic and other work to be completed, and I look forward to the results because action must be taken, Mr. Speaker. For me

personally, Sir, I am used to following governance structures like most persons in this Chamber. I served in a private sector organisation and I served as a director of several companies. You also have to conduct yourself in a manner benefiting the office which you hold. I have had the good privilege, along with one of my former colleagues in this Chamber, to have worked for a public company, and then another very good privilege to work with the second public company which is not listed in Barbados but is a company listed on the "A" list of the London Stock Market. I know what it is like to have to conform. I know what it is like to have to warrant, and I know what it is like to be in a governance arrangement. The Integrity in Public Life Bill seeks to promote a new governance arrangement, and this new governance relationship must ensure that we engage in a practice which is highly transparent and that we are involved in transparency at the highest level. It is absolutely necessary, if we are going to represent the people and manage the people's funds, that we be very transparent.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the new governance arrangements, there are several companies which come to Barbados -- not public companies necessarily but there are public companies too -- and they have certain procedures which their executives must follow. Their executives cannot get involved in corruption and bribery and the like. There are some companies, public companies included and those who are associated, whether that company is an agent for an external company, because of the new governance arrangements worldwide, who would have to conform to certain high ethical standards. I take the point even to campaign funding, because there are some public companies which will not, by virtue of their attendant arrangements, ever be able to contribute to a political campaign. I believe that that point was made in here about campaign finance by members of this side and indeed the Leader of the Opposition and in some things somehow we will have to come to at a later stage because as these new governance arrangements come into place, it is going to be very difficult even for campaign financing to be sourced. Also, I want to make a further point too and it has to do with foundations and again, Mr. Speaker, I have been a victim too leading up in the 2013 campaign to people who had a lot of money and they used maybe a foundation to expedite their political path to ensure that persons like myself would not enter this Honourable Chamber but that is now behind us. The issue is that we have to find a mechanism to ensure that such things do not happen again. Sir, I also want to make another point and that point is that not one of us is above the law and we, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if this could be controversial but, Mr. Speaker, I believe that that not one of us, no one, not only in here, nor in the private sector, the judiciary, the security forces, the public sector, no one should be above the law. I believe that the time has come in this part of the region for us to even consider an overarching body, something to the

equivalent of an FBI where you can have the powers -- I know that it is going to cost us some money but we have to get it right and maybe the time is not now but I believe that we ought to start thinking very seriously how we police everybody because often times the political cast can be a victim of rumour and innuendo. Mr. Speaker, I am not casting aspersions on anybody but perhaps, they may be others out there who perhaps benefit and we do not know but all I am saying is that if you have a body adequately staffed with the powers to address these concerns I believe that it will help this part of the region. I know that it is new thinking, that it will cost money but, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely necessary.

Mr. Speaker, all of us now, as we enter this Parliament and elsewhere will become subject to what they refer to as PEPs, politically exposed persons, so we are exposed. We are politically exposed persons and when you are politically exposed persons, Mr. Speaker, and if you have a bank account, you have to disclose a lot of stuff, you are flagged. Mr. Speaker, if you sign on company accounts, you are flagged. Mr. Speaker, if you want to transfer any funds outside of Barbados sometimes you are faced with a little delay because of the procedures that you have to follow so we are under some strictures as well and our lives sometimes I must submit, or the life of a politician is altered in most respects because of the politically exposed person arrangement, so there is still that opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this Bill is designed to ensure that we strengthen our institutions, that we strengthen democracy in the country and that we ensure that whatever we do, we do it in the best interest of the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to go into the new thinking as well and I want to make the point. When we were in Opposition, we experience a lot of delay through the Public Accounts Committee, we experienced a lot of delay tactics for multiple reasons but I really believe that the time has come when all statutory corporations, or anybody corporate funded by the taxpayers of Barbados should have an internal auditor. It cannot be that you can have statutory corporations that have to get transfers upward of maybe ten, fifteen, twenty even forty or sixty million dollars being transferred to an institution by way of a supplementary in this very Parliament and that corporations do not have an internal auditor. It is wrong and I believe that it is something that we should address our minds to and that you should have an internal auditor in all of those statutory corporations but they should report, and especially now we have the Integrity in Public Life Bill, that they too should report to the Audit Committee of statutory corporations and every statutory corporation should have an Audit Committee. If we want to strengthen the institutions we may just have to take an additional step, some would obviously argue that it might cost you a couple of thousand

dollars but we do not know the cost of corruption until the cost of corruption is presented soon but I am sure the cost of corruption would far exceed the cost of an auditor and I believe the time has come.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe and judging from our experience in Opposition that it would help a Public Accounts Committee and the executions of duties of a Public Accounts Committee because there must never be, Mr. Speaker, a situation whereby what went on at the National Housing Corporation could be allowed to go on and that a Public Accounts Committee that tried its best to ensure that it got information had to struggle to get information even though there is a Public Accounts Committee. I think that these matters must be dealt with and that if you had a forensic auditor or if you had an internal auditor it would help the work of the Public Accounts Committee to ensure that we help to continue to strengthen democracy in the country.

Mr. Speaker, when this Bill goes to Committee and I applaud the move on the part of the Government to ensure that this Bill goes to Select Committee because I am a firm believer and it is part of what we campaigned on during the last election campaign, it is part of our participatory democracy, as a mature political Party, that we would wish to have public comment and in having public comment, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely important that the ordinary man be given an opportunity to comment on this Bill and I am happy that decision was taken. I would hope when we go to Committee that there are some other areas that we look at because there are some areas that we need to tighten and I am sure that the public would also give us some other suggestions to help to tighten the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the other point has to do with the issue of the disclosure of information to third parties and often times chair persons of Board their assets and so on. However, often times you have a situation where there may be members of a tender's Committee or any other Committee who could potentially influence a decision but that information perhaps is disclosed by any other person and unknown to the Chair of that Committee you might find yourself in situation where decisions are being made. I also think that we have to look at a mechanism, at some way of ensuring that this business, if you were dealing with on the Stock Market, they might refer to it as insider trading but we are not dealing with Stock Market, we are dealing with statutory corporations and other entities, so there must be a way in addressing this business of the disclosure of confidential and other information to third parties. Mr. Speaker, conflicts of interest as well. I know it is a norm that if you are serving on a Board and you have an interest in any matter that comes before you should recuse yourself but sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if a lot of people know this but I believe somewhere and I believe we should have some mechanism again, written

into the law which makes it very clear that if you have an interest in anything that comes before a Board or anybody corporate you should recuse yourself or it should be disclosed somehow because that would have to protect the institutions that the taxpayers helped to fund in this country. The matter of training I think and I will probably leave it to those in authority to look at the whole issue of training because I believe this Administration and this Government, we have started, and I believe there have been meetings with key persons and there will be meetings with Chairpersons of Boards, et cetera, but I think a key element, as we go forward when this Bill becomes an Act and then it is proclaimed as a law, I think it will be very necessary for us to commence training especially in those entities connected with the Government of Barbados. I think that would go a long way in ensuring that clarity is brought to a lot of the issues and that nobody can say I did not know. There would be no ignorance or excuses there.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to even suggest and perhaps this could be done in Committee. There are some things, not all because I know it will be difficult but there are some things that perhaps, we can look at the United Kingdom Bribery Act of 2010 and see if perhaps we could pull anything from that Act because I know in that Act it talks about active bribery and passive bribery. We have the point about forms of bribery but I think in reviewing that, I would leave it to the lawyers and the Attorney-General but it is only suggestion that perhaps we could look at that Act and see if there is anything that we can pull out because in that Act you will find there are unlimited fines and I know there was a discussion about fines and so on but that the Attorney General made the point that the fines would revert to where they were. I also think that we have to look at the individual and we also have to look at companies because there are some people who will give the incentive to perform the act and then there will be a taker but I think, Mr. Speaker, that we could look at the individuals and we could also look at companies. For example, you might want to even consider a provision which states that maybe the Bar, entities or certain persons from tendering, if it is proven that person was involved in bribery or some corrupt practice as identified in the Integrity in Public Life Act.

Those are just some suggestions that we could take with us. It is new thinking, Mr. Speaker, I applaud, like I said, the work of the Attorney-General, the team and all those who have been involved in it but I also make the point that this is a step in the right direction. It is a step in the right direction because we have to protect the public's purse. It is a step in the right direction because this Barbados Labour Party (BLP), a mature party we are, have found it absolutely necessary that one of the priorities in this mission critical period would be to ensure that we enact integrity in public life legislation. I want to say to all of us in closing, Mr. Speaker, that in protecting the public's purse we have a duty to ensure that we maintain that very

stable and sound foundation. I also make the point, Sir, that we have had, and certainly part of the last 10 years, a solid reputation in Barbados for doing business. People from The City, and I refer to London and elsewhere, when they come to Barbados. It was never a situation, Mr. Speaker, where anybody asked you how much you had to deposit in a lawyer's account. They never asked you how much you had to deposit in the Harbour Road account. Not referring to you, Mr. Speaker, never, never ever, Sir, so that the practice of where you had to pay to participate became the norm in the last 10 years, Mr. Speaker, must no longer have any place in this post period of a Barbados Labour Party (BLP). Even though there are allegations of several wrongs based on all that we have heard and I say allegations until we prove them but, Mr. Speaker, to the naked eye the people in St. Michael West Central have seen for themselves, the people of Barbados have looked and they have seen. Mr. Speaker, I often wonder how could it be that I would struggle with a Christmas programme but then I would see in the newspaper a Christmas programme to the value of more than the annual salary of a then minister of a former administration and it would always bother me.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have one more minute, Honourable Member.

Hon. I. A. WEIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know how it was funded but, Mr. Speaker, that puts a lot of pressure because the people of St. Michael West Central would say well, next door to you they had this and they had that. I would struggle out of my pocket, Sir, because I did not have any access to anything. I want to make the point that this legislation is good for the country. I endorse it, I agree with the move to take it to a Select Committee to have further discussions at Select Committee so that when it leaves there, I believe, we would have a water type piece of legislation but legislation that would act in the very best interest of the taxpayers of Barbados. On that point, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon T. A. PRESCODD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I am wrestling in my conscience with this passive term called integrity. I believe that integrity in itself seem to place before me a psychological encumbrance. The nature of the act of those so-called perpetrators of crime is severe enough to really deserve a stronger term that will drive some fear in the hearts of all those with negative intentions especially persons who set about the rape the public's purse. I was here concentrating for a considerable time that a young man who goes to one of the Massy Stores and steal a tin of mackerel can be charged before the courts, courts that are described as the Lower Courts, which is the Magistrate's Courts and be sent to prison for a criminal act and serve even 21 days sometimes in the

prison coming from a poor family and sometimes cannot even raise enough money beyond the price of the tin of mackerel to pay an Attorney-at-Law in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we have legislation before us today where men are stealing millions of dollars. The terms derived from the boroughs of the aristocracy are applied to one of the most vicious felonious acts where men steal taxpayers' money, moving from rags to riches in a hurry. I have been told that some of these men could not pay their utility bills, some could not pay Courts, yet these men end up owning three-storey buildings and having large estates across Barbados. I began that way because I am cognisant that legislation do not come from above, it is the social dynamics of the time that drives the lawmakers to respond to the environment in which they live at the

specific historic period. This term was mentioned about 2008, we heard it before but it had no great impact on Members of Parliament. When the society begin to call all Parliamentarians thieves and say all of us are the same, there was a push and pull factor that drove politicians to say they have to defend their integrity.

The push factor was that the society was making the call and every small man in the street, as soon as you do not respond to him favourably, you are considered a trickster. We are referred to as "poli-tricksters", criminals, and some of us who knew they were guilty and another factor that influenced the outcome of the fashioning of the kind of legislation because it is the psychology of conscience. Some of them knew they were stealing. Some felt that some were stealing more than them. Some felt they were not so privileged to be close to the cookie jar to put in their hands too, and the word integrity came up.

Mr. Speaker, men committed felonies that go straight to the Supreme Court, not the Magistrate Court. This legislation speaks to integrity. A man that steals mackerel has to go in the Lower Court and be sentenced to prison. This is what the Honourable member who spoke before me, although he was not explicit, blatantly it existed in his conscience that he was in his community offering his services with a clean character, other men appeared to be so famous from ill-gotten gains, from statutory rape of the State itself by their actions over the years. Here you are in a constituency offering yourself with goodwill, wanting to the help the people from whom you sprung and demonstrate to them every day the goodwill they so desire in order to be successful to become a Member of Parliament.

People are involved in not only bribery, this is two-fold. Politicians also get engaged in extortions because of the nature of the power which they have to make major decisions on who can get and who cannot, sometimes drives fear in the hearts. I am not just putting any case

towards Corporate Barbados. I am saying that sometimes Corporate Barbados is forced to respond because if you want to get into the market in order to exploit and abuse the market itself, you first sometimes might have to respond to the needs of the politician. (34)

This brings me back to the view that power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. It is not just poetry, not a vague maxim, but it is a reality. I have seen in the newspapers in this country, businessmen say they are not returning to invest, that no politician can tell them who to enter into a contract with, what must be done with their money in order to become a citizen and invest in this country, therefore men flee as a consequence of people of that criminal nature. All of this occurred in the faces of the men of integrity at all different levels, including the men of cloth. Some men of the cloth also joined hand in hand with politicians, held massive meetings and supported the very criminal elements that corrupted the society.

Mr. Speaker, all of them victims of a phobia of an abstraction called a political party. They said they loved the party so badly and was part of the party as far back of the 1950s, as though parties and personalities are fixed to eternity. This is not so. A political party could be good in the morning and be wicked in the evening. The Democratic Labour Party, if I could so mention their name, produced the best of its kind at a time in history, but recently it is not the same Democratic Labour Party we saw in the 1960s. I am not saying they were flawless but I am simply trying to cite an example that people change. Sometimes a fusion occurs when people of like minds come together. Sometimes you may have a person that would keep a check on another person, but when you get people of like minds, all of a criminal nature coming together the only consensus that exists is one of crime.

This what we have witnessed over the last few years in this country. I believe there is one person who got trapped while becoming a Member of the former Government

in these Chambers. He became powerless and probably fell victim to some of the practices that existed. I am not sure about that, but I have good grounds to identify individuals as suspects. The Integrity legislation as called a passive term for militant and aggressive criminal acts, which I believe was the first misrepresentation. My experience with the masses is they say politicians steal and are criminal. I have never heard a grassroots man say that he has no integrity. As soon as I hear a man speaking in such a term I know he is phoney. Politicians are seen as corrupt. We are forced, like in some criminal cases, to prove that we are not guilty, you got to prove your innocence. Mr. Speaker, this here seems to suggest that this crime is or the intention is that the penalties might be almost friendly. I have seen contracts being flaunted

around and men driving and still drinking the best alcoholic beverages in this country and socialising in the most sophisticated environs in this country as though there is nothing to fear.

We can pass legislation and I hope that I would see a different mind-set and I have my confidence in the Attorney-General... The society is calling for blood. We are not vindictive but if we do not set examples then you can talk until the cows come home you cannot resolve a problem in the ghetto in the neighbourhoods across Barbados because the conversation under the trees and in the trenches is about the corruption of politicians.

I found myself Sir, before the Magistrate's Court, I know what I am talking about, standing in a box holding a small book in my hand swearing that I must tell the truth, and the criminals were responsible for me being in the box as though I committed a crime. I know that I innocently went to the Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs on that day and spoke to the Permanent Secretary who said that the summer camp for the institution for which I was a director was approved, they visited it and the Permanent Secretary approved it but the Minister of Education at the time from the constituency of St. George South said that I must not have a camp, it would have to be over her dead body. She was supported by the then parliamentary representative from St. Michael North West and they made a television appearance and they said all kinds of pejorative things about me and the institution to which I belong, and that institution was formed in their time when I was a member of that same political party. They said that I had millions of dollars. They had police harassing me day in and day out. One Friday evening they wanted to make sure that I was in prison for the weekend so they sent three policemen, well-rehearsed, and when they got by my place they dragged the notebooks from the top pockets almost in a regimental form, all the hands came up together with the same colour notebooks and the pencil came out, and they began to ask me questions and I told them well you know I do not go for all of these optics that you are involved in you know, you could only ask me a few questions, any other questions the magistrate would ask me. I went in the Saturday because I refused to talk. All they could ask me is where I live and who I name and that was it, no other answers and I went down to Central Police Station and they held me in Central Police Station for about three hours asking me questions and one or two of the policemen came and told me you know "Pressie" we did not want to get involved in this you know but the instructions came from on high. These are criminals playing a central role in not only policymakers but also reaching out into the Police Force and I have no doubt sometimes they also tamper within the judiciary because I know that they have politics in the judiciary too. If you are going to talk seriously about a piece of legislation despite the nature of its name we got to face the reality in this country because some of these

men would get charged and they know who to go to to put forward technical arguments and get the case delayed for ten years and then all of a sudden the memory of it dissipates, and nobody remembers that there was a case. If I cite them for you, you would pretend that you are shocked but I know a lot of characters in this country that have been involved in all kinds of criminal acts. Sometimes when it starts at the Magistrate's Court the magistrate does not hear the prima facie case until about half-past-two to 3 o'clock in the evening because all the rest of people who stole mackerel and break the major stops must be out of the court first and then they come in after 1 o'clock and then they begin to hear who went to school with whom, whose school tie got the same colour and who went up at Lodge School and who went up at Harrison College and say we cannot lock up he yeah, he comes from a respectable family in this country.

I know that all of us are conscious that prior to the 2008 Election these people were responsible for the destruction of CLICO. You saw all of this money going around. Men who said they would never be candidates under the leadership of the then leader - and I believe Sir, that I could call his name, I might not be able to call the name of living entities but if so once deceased I should be able to make it a historic record, they are a fossil now - but that individual who was responsible for legal matters within that institution told me I have so much, he said "Pressie" I want you make a decision now because you have nothing to worry about, I am walking on water. I am not a biblical man but I would assume that the Leader of the Opposition, the Reverend, might be able to bring some interpretation to that. He said I was walking on water. I do not know what manner of man normally walks on water but he was able to walk on water and I am assuming that he is a man.

In that election we saw how that money was circulating. Bad habits emerged from 2008 where politicians were bribing the electorate in order to secure victory so nobody cannot tell me that they do not understand what bribery is all about because I saw bribing in all of the elections since 2008 you know, do not mind the former Prime Minister in here said I am going to investigate the matter. Now, all of this nonsense in Barbados we accept and we do not see anything wrong with that.

We also saw one of the members of the management of CLICO International Life Limited who wrote a cheque for \$3.3 million, then forwarded it to Thompson Associates - everybody in Barbados heard about it - and wrote a note indicating that it was for legal fees. Now, the cheque ultimately was paid back to the very person who was responsible for the management of the institution from which the cheque came. Do you not understand that is criminality? Do you not understand that that is a crime? Do

you really believe that that was the first time that something like this has occurred? Mr. Speaker, Sir, that culture runs through the veins of almost everybody who was part and parcel of that institution and we may not get them before a law court but they went before the court of the people of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, nobody so far has given me a sensible or scientific explanation for Barbadians to recognise the importance of totally purging these halls of such sinister beings in this country. How can you explain it and it relates to all of this because the people know; all the filibustering inside the courts of Barbados about forming new companies and taking Thompson Associates out of the litigation and all of that, that people died in the last few years leaving money in the same company. Ordinary people in order to remain valid in the institution have to pay monthly premiums in order to survive and for the policy to remain a valid policy, and you tell me that you do not understand the distinction between manmade description of what is a crime and what is a breach of integrity, about what is morality, what is ethics and all of that. There is a universal law that talks about justice, no one man did not make that law, no 30 members in Parliament makes that law, wherever you go in the world people understand what justice is. When the South African people were talking about an apartheid system and saying that it is the law, Nelson Mandela and many activists over the years understood that it was the law but that it was unjust, and that inspired men to fight and to fight to change things.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have seen even in contemporary times extraordinary fees being charged for pursuing or flipping pages or making adjustments to lots of documents that sometimes Attorneys only take up the documents and put in six words -- some specimen sent down to you and you change one word from McDonald and put in Kentucky Fried Chicken and a man sent that back. Mr. Speaker, Sir, do you know that a lawyer charged \$ 5 800 000 for a document? Can you work for \$5 800 000 in one week? He went through a document that was not as big as this exercise book and charged \$5 800 000.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not know if this legislation, I have not read it, because I am not schooled in certain things, but this should be retroactive because I would not like to know that these people accumulate this kind of wealth and when, Sir, you come here and work hard for a few dollars, while there are ordinary people out there who sometimes are not getting so much money, while a lawyer could sign his name at the bottom of the document.... He probably did not even change the word but instead gave it to his secretary who he probably pays \$300 a week. If you talk about integrity, well, there should be a punishment because that is a breach of integrity too.

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

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have some serious problems. I recently came across a document for half million dollars. The one I talked about at first ahead of this point was Attorney-at-Law, Michael Yearwood. I am not hiding anything, he inherited everything, and Barbadians do not fully understand the nature of the crisis. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a crisis of crime too, not only in the economy, we have never seen crime of this magnitude in our entire lives and I sympathise with the Members of Parliament who along with the Honourable Prime Minister will now have to go through all the documents as the various Members in the different ministries produce documents to show you documents that deserves to be totally examined to determine if enough muck is in it that should land.... Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hope that we are not wasting time expressing ourselves in here, sweating and getting agitated over these issues and then somebody is going to seek to caress criminals. I would expect that if they can get me thieving anything that I will get the front page a Friday evening or a Sunday in this country. I have seen it already, I do not put up any case for anybody but I was once in the Ministry of Social Transformation and a man cut down an ackee tree and got \$11 000 and the whole of Barbados condemned that man. Even the man who cut down the ackee tree condemned that man because he said that he deserved \$8 000 more. Do you understand the party then in Opposition, they were known culprits that were critical of the form of action and then eventually those men used money to make sure that the same man whom they considered not to be worthy of being in here because the act which he perpetuated was not that wholesome, that man then ended up being part and parcel with the same criminals.

Asides.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have to be serious.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member wind up, please?

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we need to take serious action. I really want to tell you because you believe that only the two vehicles that came from Trans-Tech are the only two vehicles, but I can tell you about another case at another time where I will make mention of that because that is a special narrative, where a man ends up with a car and a Government vehicle. I had problems in trying to understand what was the job description, where the man asked for half million for the job overseeing a project. Doing what?

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I know that you are energetic and you have zest, zeal and enthusiasm but please wind up.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I really believe that... I know I started off probably on a point which most people might believe to be one of trivia and that is questioning the nature of the term that we apply, the term called integrity. I, at least, was one step forward in the circumstances, and I am actually proud to see that I am part of an Administration which considers this matter so important, even if it means that as a result of having a Treasury that is broken, we are forced to think in terms of integrity. If these men had integrity, then we would have money in the Treasury. Now, as a result, we are faced with all of the struggles of Barbadians being unemployed, a number of projects which we would like introduced unable to be introduced.

Mr. SPEAKER: I thank you, Honourable Member.

Hon. T.A. PRESCOD: Sir, I thank you very much for your indulgence.

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

His Honour G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend my voice to this important debate. I have seen it over and over again, over the past 20 years or so, that we put a system or systems in place and then another party comes into power and these whole Acts we put into place are eroded. I believe today marks a new shift where this Government is putting in place integrity legislation in order to ensure that any future Government must abide by these principles and by the law. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I know that the Barbados Labour Party, between 1976 and 1986, had a Code of Conduct which, even though the law was not in place, Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, Permanent Secretaries and Board Members had to follow. I also recall in 1994 when we became the Government that the then Prime Minister put a Code in place. In fact, the Cabinet Secretary gave us a Code which spelt out these things you should do and things you should not do. Then we had experienced Cabinet Ministers like the former representative for the City, the former representative for Christ Church South, Sir Harold Bernard St. John, and we had persons who had served in Cabinet, who sat with young Ministers and young parliamentarians to advise them.

I think it is very important for us when we come to public life to bring a certain code of ethics or understanding. I believe that in the last Administration we saw a situation where the advice was not present and persons were allowed to do as they liked. I believe that the last Administration suffered from that type of experience which we had, and persons were allowed to do almost anything. Of course, as Members of the Government and the Attorney-General has said, the public has spoken and we saw a situation in the last General Election where the

public wanted vengeance and they took their vengeance out on a system whereby the Democratic Labour Party did not retain a seat. Of course, we saw what happened; that most Members won by a margin of 2 000 votes. It meant that the public went ahead and did their own thing and, despite the Government not perhaps wanting to take vengeance -- I understand that we do not want to peep under anybody and do things -- the public has spoken. They have said they want this Government to do something about corruption. We cannot in one breath say that there is corruption and point fingers at persons but yet we are not taking it a step further. We need to look at what happens in advanced societies like the United States and Canada where, when corruption is proved, persons have to face the law courts.

We need to put a legal system in place, because our legal system needs to be revised. Our legal system needs to be structured so that you have justice and not justice being delayed. We need to have a system where it can work year-round. We need to have our legal system to ensure that these matters are brought and brought swiftly. I believe that the Government, having found matters which are impeding justice, must set up -- if the Government does not want to set up a Commission -- forms of investigation. How do you ask the same people to investigate themselves? I am aware that in the last ten years the last Administration would have put a number of persons in office: Permanent Secretaries, Chairmen of Boards, Deputy Permanent Secretaries, and persons who came up through the system. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that over the last ten years a number of persons were elevated in status. Mr. Speaker, a number of persons bypassed persons in authority; that is, persons stepped from being clerical officers to become SAOs (Senior Administrative Officers), Deputy Permanent Secretaries and Permanent Secretaries. You have a number of persons in place, and the public has spoken.

Mr. Speaker, in our system of democracy only those persons who are elected are changed. Sir, we are here temporarily. We are here for a time. Mr. Speaker, I have heard in my time many Permanent Secretaries and many persons in the Civil Service who would tell you, "You are a Minister and you are only here for a certain time. You are here only for two or three years." In fact, I recall in 2008 when we left Cabinet Office on that day that some civil servants were saying to us, "Bye bye", and those of us who had any inclination recognised that our time was up. I could not see it, because in St. George sometimes we do not see that change because St. George people are not privy to those sorts of things. We were doing well and we did not see the change in St. George, but the change was imminent. The point I am making is, how do we accept a system that says certain people must go but those who are permanent and who are in authority must remain to investigate those who have gone? Therefore, I have seen a situation within a certain Ministry where you will never know the truth. The true picture of what the Government has found will never

be told, because those people who are investigated will never tell you what the true picture is. Ministers will say, "Tell me how many contracts are in a particular Ministry or how many contracts are in a particular Board," but they will never know the full truth unless an investigative procedure is put in place.

I recall that in our time a Permanent Secretary was held responsible because he or she was the accounting officer within the Ministry. Your Permanent Secretary is the accounting officer within the Ministry. If there are any investigative matters to be carried out, I believe that the Government needs to set up some form of system to investigate what has happened over the past ten or 20 years or whatever the period you want because the public has spoken and the public has spoken in loud, clear terms. This Government cannot back-peddle now. I heard the Honourable Prime Minister said today that vengeance is the Lord, which is true. I have heard members say that we will go so far, that we will not go beyond but the public wants us to put a system in place that they know for sure that something is being done.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. James North spoke today and he made the point that Barbados has been relegated a position where we are looked upon as a corrupt society, corruption from the bottom right to the top and we are doing the right thing to set the motion in place to ensure that we at least do something from the top but what about the bottom, what about those persons at the bottom, what happens. There is the Custom department, the police department, what happens to the boards, what happens to the various persons in the society that ask poor people to give them something. What happens from the Welfare Department where poor people cannot get welfare unless they know someone? There are people who say to me daily that they see persons getting vouchers and they cannot and they have children to support. There are poor people who cannot get anything because they do not know anybody so we have to put a system in place to ensure that those persons who want the service most get the service, that those persons who want jobs get jobs. We have said even before 2000 that we did not want to see a situation where at least one person in every household should be working. There are lots of persons who are not working in our system and the poor feels it most. We have a situation where in the last election bore that out and many politicians were able to give, from the other side, a lot of things. I marvelled, Mr. Speaker, at how politicians were able to give iPads and television sets and I was in Parliament for over 20 years and could not even give nothing. I cannot believe how a politician can give out iPads, flat screen TVs, washing machines, hams and all kinds of things. I never had to do this in St. George but I marveled at it and people ask me if I cannot even give one and people are giving out a whole set of TVs.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the constituents of St. Michael North West constituency. I am happy with those constituents of St. John, who said that enough is enough and they took their money and voted against them. I believe that the public must put an end to this, giving money, giving goodies and those things and then expect this from an educated public. We are an educated people and people know what they went through for the last ten years, 'sufferation', but now you come to give us some money at the election time and ask us to support you and the people across Barbados sent the message that they want something done and, Sir, we have to do it.

Mr. Speaker, I leave this up to the Government but the Government has to set this in motion that the future for Members of Parliament must look good, that when you come to public life you are not expected to earn more than your pay. Of course, this brings me to the other matter too, that Members of Parliament should be paid properly. I have said this before and I will say it again that Members of Parliament should be paid properly. The Backbencher here is paid like a normal Clerk of Parliament.

Asides.

His Honour Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am not talking out your business but the truth of the matter is that you cannot expect the Executive to supervise an economy and then pay the Members of Parliament because Ministers are not paid as Members of Parliament, Ministers are paid like Ministers yes, but the salary is linked to the Civil Service and there is nothing wrong with that. However, I am saying to you that you need to pay persons at the ministerial level and at all levels better because you do not want persons to accept these things. I am saying to you that despite the fact that we have integrity legislation and despite the fact that we have these types of codes of conduct across the system every year Members of Parliament must give to their constituents and the temptation is there because I saw it with my own clear eyes that in the last administration you could give out all these things, you could come to the public with all types of money. I heard people talking about Members of Parliament driving about cars and it is because of what has happened in the society and the society expects these things to happen and therefore a Member of Parliament, a person who does not have that type of training and upbringing may very well fall for foolishness and we need to set it right. If a Member of Parliament is paid correctly, if a Member of Parliament has that type of code of conduct and then he does what he is not supposed to do, then he should pay and the full weight of the court should be put on that person. Sir, that is my view.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we need to put these things right up front, that we have to put in place a system not only for Members of Parliament but for top civil servants and for people at the Board level. We need to send

a signal across society that we are here to protect the poor and to protect the Treasury.

Sir, the whole question too is how do you award contracts? I have seen in some Ministries that contractors are awarded not by the Minister, not by the Chairman of the Board but at certain levels and a system must be put in place. I know that some time ago we were looking at a Contractor General, how do you award contracts. Do you award contracts necessarily to the highest bidder or to the lowest bidder? What do you do in awarding contracts? So that a mix must be given so that within the Ministry and within the Boards the way how contracts are awarded needs to be examined. I believe that we have talked about forming a Committee and we have talked about putting professionals in some places where they can look at the various contracts to say, well, this contract is worth X amount, or worth X plus Y, and what do you do but we have in a small society, Mr. Speaker, a system where persons sometimes will tell other persons outside what the contract is worth and you have to watch this, so that those persons who know how to wheel and deal because that is what it is, and you know what they say about power. Power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely and we have to be able to put a system in place at this juncture. I think, Mr. Speaker, the time is right for us as the Government at the start of this term to put the system in place.

In 1994, when we came to office the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) had cut the salaries of Civil Servants, I know that and a then Government, this Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Government put on the Statute books that the salaries of civil servants should not be cut as of that date to the disadvantage of them. We need to put a system in place now that any future Administration from the top right down to the bottom because I do not think we should stop at only Board Chairman. I think we need to go right down through. Corruption is corruption and it must go right down through to society, we must send a signal. As someone said, when poor people thief they get locked up. We need to send the signal through the society that it is wrong and that bribery, whether it is in the church, whether it is in the unions, whether it is in Government all through, because I am saying to you, if I cannot pay the bank my house would be taken from me. If a poor man cannot pay his rent, he is put out and we have a lot of them knocking at National Housing Corporation doors. A lot of people cannot pay their rent, not because they are thieves, not because they are villains but because they are not working and I am saying to the Government you have to look at those persons who are not working.

There are lots of people who came to me recently. One woman came to me in my constituency and said: "I have four children. I went to Welfare and I can't get help. The father isn't supporting the children but I have to leave

the house.” I should not have to be going to Welfare or calling the Minister and saying I want help because that is bribery too. I should not be asking the Minister. A system should be put in place and the Welfare Department could go and investigate all of those people out there. I am saying to the Minister, put a system in place to ensure that poor people get what they deserve.

Let me say this to you. I live in a society -- and if we want to be first world we have to be first world. You cannot have a system in place where I am poor, People should get certain things based on their needs, Mr. Speaker. If I am not working we have a right to a house. In fact, we need to put a system in this Government that there is right to housing. Every child and every human being in Barbados should have a right to shelter and a right to food. I have spoken to the Minister of Agriculture. There must be food securing in this country. No boy or girl should be going home hungry or going to sleep hungry at night, not in a wealthy society like this. We need the right to food and the right to shelter therefore the Welfare Department or a system must be put in Government to ensure that we do not have to go and beg for a house. That breeds corruption when you have to go and beg the manager of the Welfare Department or the manager of the National Housing Corporation for housing. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker? I want to see a system in place where persons are treated fairly and equally. I have a need, let the officer go and investigate.

Right now we have a system at the Ministry of Health as well. A number of older persons living on their own without any help and you have to go and line up at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) or the Geriatric Hospital for a place. Now tell me, that is corruption. The moment that you have to go and beg and bow down, you will get no help. You have to call the Minister, call the CPO or whatever. In a poor society, this is what breeds corruption. When people feel that they have the power over others and that is why they talk about power and absolute power. There are people down the line who have power to say look, I would recommend this senior citizen for a place at the Geriatric Hospital or I represent that person, only because they know somebody else. All of this is corruption so we want to send a signal across society that persons must get service based on needs. Persons must get contracts based on their ability to do the job. There are many persons who get contracts but cannot do the job and some of them sub-contract. Many persons who cannot do the work but get the information so we have to be able to do much more and the society wants to change. This society at this juncture, Mr. Speaker, wants change. Thirty-love is not any mean sport. People want us because they saw the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) as the Government to make change. If the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) is not prepared to make change then the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) should just vacate the scene but the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) in

this five years must make change of this society and bring a society because we were on the coals. I see people go to work and do not drive a stroke. I told the last Government, can you imagine you going to work and is not driving a stroke. That is corruption too. People go to the doctor and the doctor writes up sick leave for people who are not sick. These are things that we must speak out against if we are supposed to make change. I have said that this whole thing of permanency that you can do as you like because you are permanent is wrong. You can do whatever you like or because I am in office, it is wrong. I said so to the last Government that the time will come when the people will speak. The time will come for all of us. We have to do right.

Now I have been in office for all of these years and whatever I had had to divide among the poor people because sometimes you have to help people. You have to pull weight. That is what we do as a caring Administration. I am saying to us that we have to continue the struggle to ensure that we bring this society.... We will not be able to free it 100 per cent from corruption because you see what happens under the black market situation. This a black market situation that we will not be able to get rid of in a hurry but we must send a signal and we must try our very best to ensure that we stamp out corruption at the top, the middle and then we move to the end because they emulate us. As someone said today in this Honourable Chamber that people look to the politicians, they look to us and once we send a signal that we are prepared to go the level and we are prepared to work with a decent remuneration then the public will do the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, I believe and I want to conclude by saying that we need to set a deliberate system where we have responsibility and accountability at all levels. It is very important that we do so. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too wish to lend my voice to this debate and in support of the Integrity in Public Life Bill.

I want to start at the outset by thanking all Honourable Members who have spoken and who have supported by offering their signatures certainly to our Manifesto in support of all of the principles that have been espoused by the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) in relation to integrity in public life. I want to also thank our leader, the leader of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), the Honourable Prime Minister for blazing the trail and ensuring that this piece of legislation was first priority of a Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Administration on coming to office. It was one of the promises that were made prior to

the election. It was one of the promises that were made prior to the election. It is one of many of the promises that have been kept, but this one in particular I believe has blessed the hearts of many Barbadians, both here and also abroad. It has certainly found favour with the business community which has been calling for a new way of doing business in public life. It augurs well for future generations and certainly persons who endeavor to come to public life in the future.

Mr. Speaker, when I was growing up I aspired to be a politician. I recall looking up to persons back then on both sides of the political divide who represented for me persons who were of good character and integrity. They stood for something, they did not fall for everything.

They were able to articulate a position and a vision for this country, and while they may have been differences across the political divide, their integrity for the most part was often not called into question. Those were the people I looked up to who I understood had the best interest of this country at heart, and they through the decades were able to chart a course in Barbadian life to which many people looked up to in our society.

Mr. Speaker, in the last decade it has certainly almost brought tears to my eyes at some time when I sat in the other Chambers and on the other side of this floor, and watched in amazement how Members of the last administration would twist the facts in relation to issues which many of us who have done politics in government understand our principles of individual or collective responsibility under a Westminster system. Principles because we are of a Westminster system, these are things that many of us hold dear in relation to a Prime Minister may take a position that if anyone in his

Cabinet step out of line they would be corrected and disciplined. It is a principle that if persons come together in a Cabinet and agree on certain things which will affect the nation, they will come into a Chamber such as this and they will hold to the principles upon which they have agreed.

We saw in the last few years an administration that not only lost its integrity, but it certainly lost its credibility. Members of the last administration would agree one thing in Cabinet, speak to the media, then suddenly their morning words and their evening words could not be trusted by the people of this country. We got a resounding victory in the last election, and we got it not only because we were led by a remarkable leader, but we got a victory because we did not just talk the talk, but we walked the walk. Now that we have become the Government of the day, we have been able to deliver to the people of this country what we said we would do.

Mr. Speaker, I recall in 2008, the former Member for St. John now deceased, the late Honourable David Thompson, coming to the electorate of this country and speaking about corruption in high places. He indicated an Administration he would lead if elected, would ensure there was transparency, accountability in public life and certainly Integrity legislation that would be brought to the fore once he led the next Administration. He also spoke about a Freedom of Information Act which was high on the agenda for the Democratic Labour Party. He told the public there would be instituted a ministerial code of conduct by members of that administration, which they would sign. This would be a document that governed the way in which they were able to manage the affairs of this country.

The year 2008 came and it is passed. Every successive year that followed, whether it was after the late Prime Minister's death or the new Prime Minister, the last Administration refused to uphold the principles that brought them to office in 2008. I believe it is for these reasons that the public of Barbados got frustrated not just with the Democratic Labour Party Administration, but with politicians saying that they would do something but did something differently. In everything that we saw over the course of the last decade, I too believe that we have lost a decade in terms of our transformation as a country and in our governance also. On many occasions I have said in this Chamber that we cannot put ourselves in a position where the people on either side of the floor look like us, but then we do things that do not represent who we are and the education that we have now come to hold dear.

Therefore, there is an onus that once we hold these offices, we will do things not just to enrich the people of this country but certainly to empower the people in a way that has never been done before. This particular piece of legislation is long overdue. It is something which I hope that future generations will marvel that the Barbados Labour Party administration was able to bring

this piece of legislation to fruition, but I am also mindful that it simply does not end by us passing this legislation. I am mindful that it is what we do after we pass this legislation that is going to matter to the people of this country and to the rest of the world. Therefore, it is important that in this particular piece of legislation, an offence has been created for Member who fail to register their interests.

Sir, this is important because the legislation does not simply anticipate that an act will be committed or an act of corruption will be committed alone. It anticipates that Members will be found guilty of an offence should they fail to also register and record their interest with the Integrity Commission. I believe this is very significant. It is not a case where the public can say the politicians will protect

their own because the mere act of failing to register creates in and of itself a message to the people of this country

that we are serious about ensuring Integrity legislation is put in place, but that it is also upheld.

Many of you would have indicated and registered their Declaration of Assets even before this legislation would come to fruition. It is a process that is being done to register our belief in what it is that we are here today to do. I want the public to understand that while this Bill will go to Select Committee, it is not to further delay the process of holding Members accountable. Unlike the last administration where only the leader of the Barbados Labour Party, the now Prime Minister, and the former leader of the Barbados Labour Party were the only two individuals of this House to have ever laid their assets in Parliament. All of Members have indicated they

will provide the Cabinet Office with a declaration of their interests and assets even before this legislation is passed.

Mr. Speaker, this speaks to the seriousness with which the members of the Barbados Labour Party have

treated this issue of integrity in public life. I could speak to the fact that the last administration, particularly through the former Prime Minister, wanted us to believe that 1929 legislation could bind and be upheld in any way in the event that there were any acts of corruption under the previous administration. I could say that he insulted the intelligence of all Barbadians, knowing full well that a six-page document of 1929 could not possibly govern the way of life and particularly in public life of the people in this country today. I could say that but I believe the people of this country pronounced on that disrespect for them in the last election.

I could also say that the fact that the Barbados Labour Party has been prepared to increase the fines in relation to this piece of legislation and certainly go beyond what the early 1929 legislation, which only allowed for \$2 400 to be the fine should any persons have been found guilty of corruption under the Act, that that again is a testimony to the fact and the seriousness with which the Barbados Labour Party holds this particular piece of legislation and this particular action at this juncture of our public life.

Sir, I believe that to the credit of the Barbados Labour Party we have done and surpassed what others have only spoken about, but again I want to urge Honourable Members to bear in mind that the cost of corruption over the last decade has now led all of us to a position where it has made it even more difficult for us to govern in our respective ministries. The cost of corruption has meant that

coming to office it is more difficult to be able to have the leverage and the financial sums of money to be able to assist persons who needed to get their conveyances in relation to housing units in the housing areas across the country. It means that people cannot get their roofs fixed as they would have liked. It means that the cost overruns that we saw under the last Administration and the corruption that took place under the last Administration has costs us an unkempt Barbados in which we now have to find the resources with which to put things right. It means that the cost overruns that we saw an Administration preside over in relation to projects like Valery and The Grotto speak to the cost of corruption, and all of us must do everything within our power to ensure that it never ever happens again. Those are the costs of corruption to Barbadians.

The Democratic Labour Party Administration has costs us the inability for the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to be able to ensure that people who have fallen below the poverty line, that after the last election, that she can ensure that those persons are lifted up on a quick and timely manner, that is what the cost of corruption has led to. It has costs us the inability to get roads fixed across this country and that we have had to go cap in hand to international institutions to enter into arrangements which a couple years ago Barbados would never have entered into because we now can do no better. That is what the cost of corruption has meant to us. It has meant the difficulty in being able to get our recreational facilities across this country to be of international standards so that our young people can have playing fields and have lights facilitated on those playing fields across the country. It has costs us the inability to expand community centres in the way that we would have liked coming to office. That is what the last decade has costs us as a result of corruption so when we come with the Integrity in Public Life Bill it is not because the Barbados Labour Party is on some witch-hunt against the Democratic Labour Party. It is because we have a shared vision in the Barbados Labour Party and one that wants to see the people of this country do better but we have a responsibility that if we are going to call on the people of this country to pull their weight and to help us to carry the load that we also have to lead by example and if we are going to call on you to put your affairs in order to make sure that your taxes are paid and that you do what is right according to the law of this country that we too as the lawmakers must also put our house in order to ensure that not only do we stamp out corruption but that we send a message to those who may want to corrupt the very same politicians within our Administration that this will not be tolerated. That is what this piece of legislation is about, Sir.

Sir, you know there are the critics who say we brought the legislation and it is going to have no teeth and it is like the legal profession or the medical profession investigating in their own affairs, well I want the public to understand that the Integrity Commission that will be

established is not going to look like the Members in this room, it is going to be an independent Commission to be able to look into allegations in respect of bribery and that is what is important. The leader of the Barbados Labour Party has indicated to you time and time again that we have taken the last couple weeks within the respective ministries not to simply start the ball rolling in respective ministries to get things done and to make it seem as though we are ticking off things that we promised in Manifestos but we have had to start an exercise which examines the contracts that were signed by a Democratic Labour Party Administration in most cases on the eve of an election, extending the life of contracts knowing full well that they could very well not be the next Administration of Government.

We have had to spend the last couple of weeks not just articulating our vision for this country because the people of this country know what our vision is but we have had to take the time to expose the wrongdoings to be able to figure out where the moneys are that we can now spend on the people of this country, and that is what we have been doing, Sir, and we have had to do it because of the cost of corruption that has been created by the former Administration.

Sir, when I can hear stories from my colleagues about contracts that did not even expire but that the last Administration created a new contract and extended the life of the next contract for five and six years something is wrong. It speaks to the nature of the individuals who led this last Administration. It speaks to the fact that an Integrity in Public Life Bill is a necessity because as the leader and the Prime Minister always says to us there has come a time now where we cannot leave anything or take anything for granted, we must reduce everything to writing. There was a time when those things did not have to happen because good men and women existed in our society who understood right and wrong but now we have had to read into the laws of Barbados consequences for the actions which many seem to believe had no consequences. My brother from St. Michael East spoke to it earlier, that you almost have created two Barbadoses where there is integrity at one level and no integrity at the other, that you can find situations where people have called into question the seriousness with which law and order is administered in this country and that there is one rule for some and one rule for others. There was a time when you never could have had in this country Ministers driving vehicles belonging to entities to which they were giving contracts to in their own ministries. Not only would they know it was wrong, Sir, but the Prime Minister of the day would never have allowed or facilitated the wrongdoing.

Sir, what has corruption costs us. Corruption in this country in the last decade has also costs us free education at the tertiary level. It meant that moneys that would once have been applied to allow average Barbadians to be able

to get a tertiary education that the last Administration decided how much they were going to pay, when they were going to pay it and were even so deceitful that they would go to the extent of changing the underlying philosophy of the Democratic Labour Party to accommodate what they felt at the time was the right thing to do. To say that the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow never intended education to be free forever again is an insult to the intelligence of the people of this country, so that when we speak about integrity it is not about how much money has been taken away out of the public purse, it is also about the way in which Members of Parliament carry themselves and about how ministers of Government also articulate policy, and that we do not simply come to Parliament to make pronouncements but that we actually do what we say we are going to do. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is also the integrity that must also be read into an understanding of this legislation as well; it is about holding each other to account, pulling back others when we think that they are going wrong, being able to call a spade a spade but also understanding the doctrines upon which we have been founded, that we accept responsibility in our ministries as well when things go wrong, and that collectively as a Cabinet we are bound together by the collective decisions that are made, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, those principles must be restored to Barbadian politics and governance, it is a necessity if we are going to move forward as a country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that again one of the things that perhaps has impressed the International Monetary Fund in the negotiations that the Leader has had over the course of the last few weeks and other members of the Cabinet is the fact that Barbados is prepared to pass such legislation at this particular point in time, because we all know that when resources are limited that human nature is such that people try to find and to carve out a niche for themselves and so more than ever this legislation comes at a time and at a juncture in our history which is now needed more than ever.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to remind Barbadians of the cost of corruption of the overruns that have taken place over the last couple of years because like I said before, those are the things that have crippled the ability of this Administration to be able to rise from the ashes, Sir, but it has not crippled our intelligence, it has not crippled our ability to have a clear vision as to where we want to go. They may have thrown us off track because what we thought was left, we came to find that it was something else. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not think that many of us could have ever appreciated the level of corruption which took place under the last Administration, that men and women would stand across on the Floor of us, Sir, and create an impression that the Barbados Labour Party in its bosom was so corrupt that it should never be returned to office in this country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I grew up hearing that he who is without sin should cast the first stone. I also grew up hearing that people in glass houses should not throw stones and I live true to those principles because I sat on the Other Side and remarked on several occasions that it is going to be interesting when the Barbados Labour Party becomes the next Administration what we are going to uncover, what we are going to unveil to the public of this country in relation to the things that took place. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want the people of this country to understand that all the smokes and mirrors that the last Administration created in the atmosphere were only to throw the public off track in relation to the wrongdoings that were taking place in respective ministries, because you cannot tell me, Sir, that on the eve of an election that Cabinet meetings are held, that contracts are signed. I believe that had to have been the longest Cabinet meeting in the history of this country because across every single ministry you will find that on that last Thursday before election that ministers rushed to Cabinet with all kinds of Cabinet Papers to sign off contracts for consultants, allocated lands in this country, gave Town and Country Planning Department permission for all kinds of things.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is hurtful because I have people who want to expand their businesses in my community, they have to go through the channels to apply for proper planning permission but then you can discover after coming to office that there are people who did not go through the channels but that a piece of paper gets pulled out of a bag and a revelation is made that you can touch no one in high places because for some reason they were able to obtain the planning documents that none of our constituents could have obtained prior to the election.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, those are the things that we must stamp out, those are the things that we must speak out against. I believe that as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and Honourable Attorney-General had indicated, this is not the last that will be heard of integrity in this country because I agree with the Honourable Member, we must leave no stone unturned until we unveil all of the wrongdoings that were done by a Democratic Labour Party that has cost us the position in which we now find ourselves, Sir. We must leave no stone unturned.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have had people in my ministry who have been engaged on contracts of \$7 000 per month, individuals who ran against members on our side, to advise the minister on deviance in the schools, Sir, without any consultation with members or the officers in the Ministry of the Education, but who has drawn a salary of \$7 000 per month. Do you know how many students at the University of the West Indies that could have paid for from 2012? That is what corruption has cost us in this country and those are the reasons that together we have to support this legislation and we have to see it through, and we have to

make sure that when we are hiring people that we hire the best people for the job. That is what Barbadians now come to expect.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, yes, people want work but the tone that must be set by each and every one of us must be a tone where people understand that they must be given the opportunities to be able to apply for jobs for which they fit the description and that we cannot continue to perpetuate a situation in this country where we put square pegs into round holes and that we create positions to be able to feather the nests of supporters, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, those are the things that the people of this country voted the Democratic Labour Party out on and those are the things that every day must remind us when we go to our respective ministries and we go about doing the people business as to why we got here and why we must stay here.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand that temptations will come because the characters have not changed. I understand that, but I believe that we have set the tone as an Administration as to what we will stand for and what we will fight for. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I therefore support this legislation. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I remember the last Administration talked about buying votes, that they were going to investigate the vote-buying because that was also a reflection on a lack of integrity. I heard about the flat-screen televisions that were given out, I heard about the hampers. Sir, this legislation is necessary because it has to start somewhere. Those things will come, in terms of reforms in relation to elections and that aspect of campaigning but we have to start with the very people who create the laws and we have to make sure that the people who come to public life and who consider themselves worthy of holding these positions that these persons understand that this is no joke, that they actually have a responsibility to the people of this country, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in my closing I want to also remind this Honourable Chamber that while we go to Select Committee, and I will move the motion shortly, it is incumbent on each and every one of us to echo the sentiments of our Leader in relation to turning this country around and transforming this economy and a large part of what we must do is to transform the governance structure within this House of Parliament as well. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is important that when we have a Select Committee that we do so in a way which allows the public of this country to be able to participate. Sir, integrity in this country also means that when people participate, other people must be able to see that they are participating as well. We must now find other means to be able to engage the public. The Barbados Labour Party did not get here by chance. Every opportunity we had through our 'Rubbing Shoulders' programme across the length and breadth of this country, we used social media to ensure that we included people, not just here but across the world. People have now

become accustomed to that standard, Sir. We have taken a decision that in relation to the Select Committee, we will also televise and ensure that through social media the widest possible viewing which can take place will take place, and will start by this Barbados Labour Party Administration so doing. The days of having a full house in the Public Gallery are no more. People will listen to the debates, Sir, yes, but people also now must be engaged in social media in a way that the rest of the world has also engaged their people to participate in their democracy.

Sir, we believe that we have to start the ball rolling with this particular Select Committee, because it is not enough just to simply view Parliament online or view these debates. We must also seek to improve the ability of people to see all of the machinery of Government working. It was something I was critical about of the last Administration. We had committees that never functioned. There were several occasions where the current Prime Minister called on the former Administration to create Joint Select Committees to allow consultation with people on the outside who may have been able to add value to the discussion, because there has always been a belief that all the bright minds will not be found in one place and all the ideas will not come from one political party. Sir, we will not from Opposition say one thing and then do something else in Government, because I do not believe that we have come here to simply rubber-stamp and to just follow through in a process and behave as though it is business as usual.

I want to move at this stage that further consideration of the Bill, the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018, be referred to a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament, comprising 11 Members; seven Members from the House and four from the Senate. The Members I propose, Sir, are:

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East

The Honourable Member for St. Peter

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas

The Honourable Member for St. John

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South,
and

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West and
Leader of the Opposition.

The Terms of Reference for the Select Committee of both Houses to look into the Integrity in Public Life Act, 2018, shall be as follows, Sir:

- To inquire into and determine whether the Bill is drafted effectively, fulfils the express objects of promoting and maintaining the integrity of persons in public life and the prevention, detection and prosecution of acts of corruption.

- To examine whether the Bill as drafted will, upon effective implementation, contribute to an ethos of fair dealings and compliance with the Financial Rules in Government affairs, thereby combating corruption in public life.

- To examine and analyse whether the provisions of the Bill which relate to financial disclosure will so deter citizens from offering themselves for public duty and service as to have a negative impact on the functioning of Government.

- To consider whether the Bill as drafted will be an effective and strong deterrent to corruption in public life in Barbados, and

- To make recommended changes if deemed necessary to the Bill as drafted for further consideration by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

Hon. W.A. ABRAHAMS: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the aforementioned Bill be sent to a Joint Select Committee was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

RECOMMITTAL OF GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give Notice of the Resolution to suspend Standing Order 61 of the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly for the duration of the Joint Select Committee's consideration of the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: I beg to second that, Sir.

RECOMMITTAL OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 2

To move the passing of a Resolution that Standing Order 61 of the Standing Orders of the Honourable the House of Assembly be suspended for the duration of the Joint Select Committee's consideration of the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018.

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: I beg to move that the Standing Order be suspended.

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

The question that the aforementioned Standing Order be suspended was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

RECOMMITTAL OF ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS
HONOUR
THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: Message from the Honourable the House of Assembly to the Honourable the Senate:

“The Honourable the House of Assembly has the honour to inform the Honourable the Senate that on the 17th day of July, 2018, the Honourable the House of Assembly committed the following Bill, Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018, to a Joint Select Committee of the two Houses comprising several Members of the Honourable the House of Assembly and four Members of the Honourable the Senate, and has approved the following Terms of Reference for the Committee:

1. To inquire into and determine whether the Bill is drafted effectively, fulfils the express objects of promoting and maintaining the integrity of persons in public life and the prevention, detection and prosecution of acts of corruption.
2. To examine whether the Bill as drafted will, upon effective implementation, contribute to an ethos of fair dealings and compliance with the Financial Rules in Government affairs, thereby combating corruption in public life.
3. To examine and analyse whether the provisions of the Bill which relate to financial disclosure will so deter citizens from offering themselves for public duty and service as to have a negative impact on the functioning of Government.
4. To consider whether the Bill as drafted will be an effective and strong deterrent to corruption in public life in Barbados, and
5. To make recommended changes if deemed necessary to the Bill as drafted for further consideration by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

The House of Assembly has appointed the following Members to the Joint Select Committee: The Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs The Honourable Minister of Energy and Water Resources The Honourable Minister of Labour and Social Partnership Relations The Honourable Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs The Honourable Minister in the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development The Honourable Member for Christ Church South, and The Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The House of Assembly has the honour to invite the Honourable the

Senate to appoint four Members to the Joint Select Committee. Dated the 17th Day of July, 2018.”

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss Santia J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, with that we have come to the end of Government Business for today. I beg that the Sitting be adjourned until Tuesday, July 24, 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

I wish on speaking on the adjournment to just remind Honourable Members and certainly the proceedings the Select Committee will take place in the Senate Chamber in the Parliament Buildings and will be conducted in public. The proceedings will be streamed live on social media and broadcast on the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) wherever possible. Notice of the dates when the Select Committee will sit will be published in the news and print media and the Select Committee will receive contributions in writing and orally, Sir.

The question that this Honourable House be adjourned until Tuesday, July 24, 2018 at 10 a.m. in the forenoon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House accordingly.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Order No. 1, Mr. I. G. P. Gooding-Edghill's speech. After Mr. Speaker says 'You have one more minute, Honourable Member', the closing passage of the speech by the Member for St. Michael West Central ('the people of St. Michael West Central would say...') carries the label 'Hon. I. A. WEIR', who had spoken earlier. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Order No. 1, Member for St. Michael East. The speech label first reads 'Hon T. A. PRESCODD' and afterwards 'Hon. T. A. PRESCOD'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 1, Terms of Reference. As moved by Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, the Terms of Reference refer to 'the Integrity in Public Life Act, 2018'; the Bill before the House and the Message to the Senate give 'Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018'. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 17th July, 2018, Mr. Speaker in the Chair, and prayers were taken by Father Reverend Mark Harewood. The Minutes of Tuesday, 10th July, 2018 were confirmed on the motion of Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, seconded by Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, and Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 were suspended for the Sitting. The House then continued the debate on Order No. 1, the Integrity in Public Life Bill, 2018.

The Prime Minister, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, said the Bill was critical to the tone of her Government and to the integrity of the country, and called on the Leader of the Opposition to ensure that his two Senators gave the constitutional majority needed in the Senate. She said some prospective Board chairmen were hesitant because of how they held assets jointly, and argued that contracts such as Parliament's should be rotated among three or four suppliers. She said one contractor had received \$28 million over ten years from the Barbados Transport Board, \$15 million to \$16 million of it still outstanding, and \$1 million from the Sanitation Service Authority, and that he owned

the two BMWs driven by two former Ministers. The Leader of the Opposition, Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, rose on points of order that she was misleading the House by suggesting people were whispering in his ear; she withdrew the insinuation and offered him a briefing.

Hon. R. R. Straughn supported the Bill 100 per cent, recalling the pension reform of some 15 years earlier. Mr. R. A. Thorne, Member for Christ Church South, congratulated the Attorney-General and Member for St. Joseph, and said the election result reflected public revulsion at what he called the stench of corruption, while stating that he brought no evidence himself. Hon. C. E. Jordan, Member for St. Peter, said leadership must be founded in integrity, and the Sitting was suspended until 2.15 p.m.

After the suspension, Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde, Member for St. Thomas, referred to the principles in the Barbados Labour Party's 'Covenant of Hope'. Hon. A. R. Forde, Member for Christ Church West Central, called the Bill a promise made and delivered, and Lt. Col. the Hon. J. D. Bostic also spoke of the 'covenant of hope'. Hon. E. G. Hinkson, Member for St. James North, traced the idea back to about 1984 and said the previous Government had promised integrity legislation within 90 days but had been in office more than 3 700 days without passing it. Hon. I. A. Weir, Member for St. Philip South, spoke next. Mr. I. G. P. Gooding-Edghill, Member for St. Michael West Central, suggested that the Committee look at the United Kingdom Bribery Act of 2010. Hon. T. A. Prescod, Member for St. Michael East, said the term 'integrity' was too passive for the offences involved, and His Honour G. A. Clarke, Member for St. George North, said earlier systems had been eroded by later Governments.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, Member for St. Michael South East, recalled the late Hon. David Thompson's 2008 promises on integrity and freedom of information legislation, and moved that the Bill be referred to a Joint Select Committee of 11 Members, seven from the House and four from the Senate. She named the Members for St. Joseph, Christ Church East, St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. John and Christ Church South and the Leader of the Opposition, and gave five Terms of Reference, among them whether the financial disclosure provisions would deter citizens from public service. Hon. W. A. Abrahams seconded, and the motion was agreed to without division.

On notice given by Miss Bradshaw, the House then passed a Resolution, seconded by Hon. D. D. Marshall, suspending Standing Order 61 for the Committee's consideration of the Bill, and Mr. Speaker read the Message informing the Senate of the committal and

inviting it to appoint four Members. Miss Bradshaw said the Committee would sit in public in the Senate Chamber, with proceedings streamed and broadcast where possible,

and the House was adjourned until Tuesday, July 24, 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

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