
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2018 – 2022

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

At a meeting of the House of Assembly at the Worthing Corporate Centre on Tuesday the 22nd Day of September, 2020, at 10 a.m. pursuant to the Adjournment.

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.

Hon. R. St.C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of International Business and Industry)

Hon. Miss MIA 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.), L.E.C. (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of Energy, Small Business and Entrepreneurship)

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.

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.B.A. (Dist.), (Minister of Youth, Sports and Community Development)

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training)

Bishop the Hon. 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., M. Min. (Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance)

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Home Affairs, Information and Public Affairs)

Hon. Ms. C. S. V. HUSBANDS, B.A. (Hons.), (Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Hon. I.A. WEIR, M.B.A. (Minister of Agriculture and Food Security)

Hon. A. R. FORDE, RPh. (Minister of the Environment and National Beautification)

Hon. C. McD. GRIFFITH (Minister in the Ministry of Water Resources)

Hon. P. R. PHILLIPS (Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security)

Hon. J. A. KING, BSS. (Minister in the Prime Minister's Office with responsibility for Culture and the National Development Commission)

Hon. C. E. JORDAN, B.Sc. (Hons.), (Minister of Labour and Social Partnership Relations)

Dr. S. E. BROWNE, M.B.B.S. (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.P.A., (Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy)

Hon. 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 and Investment)

Mr. N. G. H. ROWE, J.P.

Mr. R. A. THORNE, Q.C., LL.B., L.E.C., Dip. Theology

Mr. G. P. I. GOODING-EDGHILL) Minister of Transport, Works and Water Resources)

Prayers were taken by the Reverend Mark Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is in Session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of the Meetings held on Tuesday, August 4, 2020; Friday, August 7, 2020, and Tuesday, September 15, 2020, to be confirmed. Honourable Leader of Government Business.

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the aforementioned Minutes be confirmed.

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

The question that the aforementioned Minutes be confirmed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am in receipt of the Annual Reports of the Ombudsman of Barbados for the Years 2007 to 2019.

MESSAGES FROM HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER: I am also in receipt of a message from Her Excellency the Governor General:

“By Her Excellency Dame Sandra Prunella Mason, Dame Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Dame of St. Andrew, Queen’s Counsel, Governor General of Barbados. A PROCLAMATION

“WHEREAS it is provided by Section 60(1) of the Constitution that each Session of Parliament shall be held at such place and commence at such time as the Governor General may appoint:

AND WHEREAS by Proclamation dated the 7th Day of September, 2020, the Governor General appointed the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre, Two-Mile Hill, St. Michael, as the place at which a Session of Parliament shall commence at 10:00 hours in the morning:

AND WHEREAS it is expedient to continue the Session of Parliament at the Worthing Corporate Centre, Worthing, Christ Church, with effect from the 22nd Day of September, 2020:

NOW THEREFORE by virtue and in exercise of the power and authority in me vested, I, Dame Sandra Prunella Mason, Dame Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Dame of St. Andrew, Queen’s Counsel, Governor General of Barbados DO HEREBY APPOINT the Worthing Corporate Centre,

Worthing, Christ Church as the place at which the Session of Parliament shall continue to be held at 10:00 hours in the morning as the time at which the said Session shall commence.

Given under my hand the Public Seal of Barbados this 7th Day of September, 2020, and in the 69th Year of Her Majesty’s reign.”

PAPERS

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

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

1. The Securities Republic Wealth Management Limited (Exemption) Order, 2020
2. The Securities Maurice and Laygon (Exemption) Order, 2020.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Annual Report of the National Council on Substance Abuse for the Year 2019.

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are not many moments in the life of a Parliament that you really do not look forward to. This morning is one such occasion. It is incumbent upon this Honourable Parliament to lift our voices in unison to pay respects to one who sat among us for a long period of time -- 34 years to be precise -- from 1984 to 2018, and one who more importantly for most Barbadians served as the longest serving Prime Minister of this country since Independence. I speak, of course, of the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur, and to even call his name in this Chamber seems anathema, because the Rules of this Chamber require of us a solemn commitment not to name persons. The fact that I can call his name without your reprimand, Sir, reminds us that he is no longer not only a Member of this Chamber but that today we gather to pay respects to his extraordinary record of achievement as a parliamentarian, as a Prime Minister, for the benefit of the people of this nation.

Sir, let me say at the outset that it is still not easy to speak about it and it is because it brings back so many different memories that really and truly chronicle the socio-political and economic history of this country over the

period of time of just under 40 years. Owen Arthur was a distinguished Member first and foremost for the people of St. Peter. He had a simple philosophy that while he had a responsibility as Prime Minister to treat to the needs of the general upliftment of the people of this country and to the distinction that was necessary to be brought to the international reputation of this nation, his first and foremost duty was to the people whom he had the responsibility to represent, the people of St. Peter. One only needs to drive around St. Peter to know the difference that Owen Arthur's representation made to the lives of the people of St. Peter. For those of us who are old enough and remember, we can all see and I have every confidence that the Honourable Member for St. Peter will appropriately chronicle some of those major achievements that Mr. Arthur left for the benefit of those people of the parish that raised him.

Indeed, it was only a few Fridays ago when I went down to Speightstown to see the damage that was done to the buildings that burnt regrettably from Archer's Hall, Juma's Restaurant, and I think 111 East Beach Bar. I looked behind me at Arlington House and I knew the pride with which Owen Arthur treated to the restoration of Arlington House. It hit me even more because the last time that I have walked on that part of the street, was when we were accompanying his body to the state funeral. I reflected on how easy it would have been for the wind to come off the oceans and to literally catch that wooden building. I personally feel that it was a reflection of the powers of the atmosphere and his lordship, the real Lord that protected that building from going where given the flames and the fire that was taking place on that Thursday night that could so easily have taken the wooden structure of Arlington House.

I start there because my concept of representation and the concept of representation to those of us who came to public life post 1990 is largely shaped by Owen Arthur. The detail with which he treated, the preparation of a campaign, the extent to which he recognised that like I say up to recently, support is not votes, that you cannot take for granted especially after his first outing, where one single vote made the difference to his not being able to walk the steps of Parliament. He understood that every vote mattered and that this was not just a sale but that one's preparation and one's servicing of one's constituency needed to reflect that meticulous nature that would guarantee success.

One only needs to look at the work in which his majority moved over the years to see that while that was his strategy, the people of St. Peter obviously found favour with his modality of operations.

To that extent, Mr. Speaker I believe all of us then started to learn and benefit. He credit some of it to his own involvement in the Jamaica at the political level, where the

politics of course was far more robust, aggressive and meticulous in some respects, largely even because of the numbers on the scale with which he was dealing. He therefore brought that to his craft as a representative in this nation.

I say so because it became evident to me the difference in his approach to representation. As I worked closely with him as General Secretary of the Barbados Labour Party for a period of eight years. As I took the responsibility of managing four campaigns with him, starting with the by-election in 1996 in St. Michael North West. Moving then to the General Election of 1999, which became the absolute first performance of a Government to claim that level of popular support and seats in this country. It is true that it has since been better, but at that time, in those circumstances, coming from the 24 to three that he was forced to face with dignity of as a new MP, his ability to be able to return the favour 26 to two was something that I know pleased his heart good and gave him great comfort that he had, one, the support of Barbados, and in those days everyone was, "Going with Owen".

I say that conscious that I also went on to manage the by-election for the Honourable for St. Thomas who has just gloriously celebrated this week, 19 years as a representative for the people of St. Thomas. That by-election was one that gave us great joy in terms of how it was conducted and how we want it. I will not say too much about it for fear that persons may be revealed who do not want to be revealed at this stage for actions that may better remain unspoken of in the Parliament of a nation.

Suffice to say that it was a fine time and now of course the 2003 General Election. I got to understand the difference, because prior to Owen Arthur there really was a more hands off style of representation of constituents of this country. It was almost at a helicopter level. Not that people did not get involve with constituents, but the intensity of engagement and the willingness to change the parameters of what people expected and what we will deliver, really found a sea change with the advent of Owen Arthur's representation as a young man in the politics of Barbados. I can speak to that.

One might say that in that sea change, it became easier to defeat older Members of Parliament on both side, because he helped shaped the expectations of an electorate to want to have different things from the Member of Parliament in that which they would have been accustomed to. They are some who would say that that perhaps was responsible for the defeat of the Late Branford Taitt by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, because what you have in context of Branford, was a political titan of decades coming up against a young and handsome member who had six weeks on the ground to be able to defeat a political titan of the Democratic Labour Party and defeat him he did

with the support of course and leadership of Owen Seymour Arthur.

The truth is, that the dissection of Branford's representation, was to send the signals to the rest of us who were being elected as Members of Parliament as to what would be expected of us and what would not be tolerated by the electorate from us. I have seen over the course here of my political life that entire relationships between Member of Parliament and constituent change. I say today in large measure in modern Barbados, Owen Arthur was responsible for changing the manner in which we delivered services unrelated to our constituents.

However, it was not only as an MP for St. Peter that he would distinguished himself. His commitment to being able to master the politics of politics made him one of the strongest leaders in the Caribbean at his times. Owen took nothing for granted. He gave no quarter and he asked for no quarter. Indeed, the bottom line is that he was clinical in his dissecting of the political scenario. He was not prepared to allow emotions or other things to cloud his vision as to what was his strategic obligation to country, party and constituency. It therefore meant that he would find himself with some very difficult and muscular language sometimes for people as he would say, but inevitably, what saved the day was that he was always prepared to engage irrespective of that nature of the previous engagement with parties.

I find that an important characteristic because malice does nothing but to corrode the spirit of persons. As I said in the tribute that I paid to him in the church, that that commitment to policy, country and politics is perhaps the bridge on which we would meet over and over, irrespective of whatever disagreements with might have had. I say me but I can change it to O'Brien Trotman. O'Brien Trotman was the person who was not supportive of Owen Arthur's nomination as a candidate in the parish of St. Peter because O'Brien Trotman supported himself.

Owen would tell us of the stories of what it took to get that nomination and of the contributions of people like Alma Parris who the school was named after, and of her very quaint and demure way of looking at Dr. Waldo Waldron-Ramsay. She would ask, "Dr. Ramsay, you look as though you want to tell us something in here. Are you interested in running for something?" It was his way of telling you how his people in St. Peter protected him and literally fought off all comments from Dr. Waldo Waldron-Ramsay, O'Brien Trotman and others to ensure that he would be the candidate for the BLP.

Indeed, that did not stop him from ensuring that O'Brien Trotman would be commandeered to lead the Urban Development Commission (UDC) at the very time when we were starting a new initiative and needed someone with excellent administrative skills to unfold a

programme that in his words was "designed to stop poor people from being poor"; the UDC and the Rural Development Commission (RDC). This is why that even as others reflected on whether we dismantle it completely, my Government has determined that the most we will do is to bring them together as one because they are common services of administration, finance and Information Technology (IT) that we can benefit from the amalgamation of the two. However, they are very much needed still with respect to an Urban Development directorate and Rural Development directorate to deal with the peculiar issues of urban and rural Barbados.

I know that ability to see pass personal differences is also what led to the politics of inclusion. Therefore, it was an easy framework for me to work with him as General Secretary when he was political leader by recognizing that there were too many talented people across this country who ought not to be excluded from public life, simply because at the time of an election we served in different political parties or wanted to represent a different political party. Barbados is too small and we reflected many times on the reality that we only do our best as a nation when we can literally bring people from different backgrounds, ages, spaces and classes together because in that we would literally be creating the platform for the achievement of a common mission.

We reflected on that approach by Sir Grantley Adams. It was the same approach taken by Errol Barrow. It was the same approach taken by "Tom" Adams and he was adamant that would be his approach, but that he would be even more liberal in seeking to reach across the aisle in order to pull the talent largely because by the time he became Prime Minister of Barbados, we were dealing with a politics that was more full of oxygen than from decades before where people, perhaps, were a little more tribal and definite in their likes and dislikes at the political level.

It would not necessarily be prone to seeing pass it even though there were aspects of the political engagement that were perhaps more civil than you may have found in later years. I want to speak very briefly. Mr. Speaker, I will ask that the tribute I delivered at his funeral be made a document of this House forever more because apart from the fact that it was one of the few speeches I have ever read in my life, I believe that it captures the essence of the man and in a way tries to reflect the perspective of those of us who watched on as he strode and bestrode country as a colossus for the decades that he led the BLP.

As a Prime Minister, we thank him for his legacy, commitment to detail, obsession with policy, fastidious nature, and passion for getting it right, tidiness, punctuality, strategic thought and action. There are very few people that I know in this world who could dissect the most complex issues and make them palatable or capable of being

understood by the ordinary man and woman in a shop, market, offices, law courts to those who happened to be flying in and out as visitors. Owen Arthur had a special talent for breaking down things in fine, fine detail to allow people to understand the essence of what he was speaking about.

He had a perspective that was really more similar to Sir Harold St. John than most because Sir Harold saw the big picture and focused in on the strategic issue. Even in his pleadings as a lawyer, others would tell you that Sir Harold never pleaded everything but would focus on the one or two issues that he believed to be germane to the case and go for them. Anybody who ever spent time in Owen Arthur's company either for fun or during the course of work would have at some time or another been the victim of his dissecting an argument and picking a single issue in that argument to frame it to deliver his 'cuckoo punch' or the victory that he wanted with respect to making his point with that argument.

Even if you had other things to say that were valid, Owen would dismiss them and focus on that one issue that he knew would give him a victory "hook, line and sinker" against you. This was the nature of the man and very often Cabinet became a session for testing of minds and wills. I see nothing wrong with that approach to the conduct of a Cabinet because I hope that it brings out the best in us with respect to ensuring that we can most rigorously and vigorously defend what we have to in order to advance the work of the people of this nation. His love of public policy reminded me of those who went before. I would not have served with "Tom" Adams but I see the evidence of "Tom's" commitment to passion and public policy.

I knew him as a man. When reading the documents and files, and understanding the progress of the party clearly the BLP in 1976 when the great combination came to Parliament with a passion for policy and to perform in the interest of people. Owen Arthur had that same passion. Indeed, on many occasions he would talk about the influence of Sir Harold St. John on him and "Tom" to a lesser extent, although the time with "Tom" was obviously much less because of his untimely passing in 1985; less than one year after Owen became a Member of Parliament.

However, he would have been in a Senator before at the instance of Mr. Adams' appointment of him when he returned from Jamaica. The love of policy which I want to focus on for a second is the most important legacy that any of us in this Parliament can give to those who come after us. It is that love of policy that stops us from stepping outside of the parameters of what is appropriate. It is that love of policy that drives us to be creative when all else before us seems to be gloomy and incapable of resolving difficult social and economic problems. It is that love of policy that causes us to deconstruct and reconstruct and ask

ourselves: what is the public purpose? What is the public mischief? How can we deliver this better using the technology that is available to us and how can we, in doing this, ensure that we can empower a class of Barbadians not yet empowered, not yet given the opportunity to serve, and at the same time, are we going to remove discriminations against a group of persons in the country for which this policy or this legislation acted as literally a rock on their backs from which they could not extricate themselves? These are the kinds of things that ought to consume those who come to public life because representation, yes, is first about caring but caring without actions, caring without acts to support persons, will be like faith without works. I know that both of us felt strongly that if you are going to represent the people of this nation, it was not simply enough to be able to say that you care but that your actions also mattered in terms of delivering the difference in their quality of life. For me, one of the greatest legacies that he had was, in fact, extending the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act to Urban tenancies and allowing persons in non-plantation tenancies and urban Barbados and the Honourable Member for St. George North, I am sure, will be able to speak to this because it was a tenancy in his constituency and my constituency, a tenancy in Lower Estate and the tenancy of Alleyne's Land in Bush Hall, that led to us, even before we became the Government, making a determination that we needed to be able to put a subsidised framework in place for urban tenancies and non-plantation tenancies recognising that their inherent value would be greater than the plantation tenancy therefore the 10 cents a square foot would not be appropriate, but secondly, that the landownership was also different because in the case of plantation tenancies the plantation owned the lands and invariably the persons had lived on the land for generations. In the case of urban Barbados the land was owned by multiple small landowners and to that extent, therefore, you could not ask those small landowners to carry the subsidy for the persons who were to benefit because in many instances people came from the country. A lot of people in St. Andrew went and settled in Jackson. A lot of people in St. Joseph went and settled in Skeetes Road, Jackmans and Hothersal Turning. Do not ask me why, but the patterns were clear.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Well, these are now bus routes but what they were before was people coming down and saying look, Mr. So-and-So, Mr. Dash say he has an extra piece of land here and if you want to come down, come down and I will talk to Mr. Dash for you so you can build a house there so that families literally brought their people down but they were capable of doing so only because small landowners, invariably small black landowners, agree to lend them the land or to lease the land, I should say, in some instances. In some instances it was lending in truth though because they say you could

hold it there until you find somewhere else and some people never left. Some people also never paid and that is where the laws of adverse possession then created havoc too. We understood, and Mr. Speaker, you would also have appreciated it, perhaps not as much nowadays but in the days when I was first called to the Bar the amount of land disputes, water going over the line, this tree over the fence, sometime with the galvanised not properly placed, all of these things led to the disputes that would sometimes, regrettably end up with wounding or aggravated assaults or other types of actions and we understood that if we were going to reduce the heat in communities then we also needed to deal in an orderly manner with the titling and ownership of land.

Do you know what struck me, Mr. Speaker? When President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil was about to leave office, maybe a year or 18 months before, and I regret that he did not do it before, they asked us to share our experiences on the whole issue of land reformation starting first with the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act under Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams and coming forward to the Urban Tenancies Programme under The Right Honourable Owen Arthur which was literally to be able to allow people in urban Barbados to own the land. They felt that they had a duty to be able to deal with the children of ex-slaves in Brazil. I make this point because sometimes we are harsh on ourselves in the country with the level of innovation and the level of progressive actions that we have taken the behalf of our people. Short of Cuba, I make bold to say that there is no other country and certainly no vibrant democracy in the hemisphere that has undertaken more land reform and land redistribution than the Barbados Government under the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) starting with Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams and finishing with The Right Honourable Owen Arthur. There is still unfinished work in both the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act 40 years later almost. There are still tenants who are yet to have their tenancies spots conveyed to them. There is unfinished work across urban Barbados. My greatest regret in urban Barbados and with the Urban Development Commission under the last Government is that they effectively stopped the programme of the transfer of urban lands to people knowing full well that transfer, Mr. Speaker, to your constituents and the my constituents inevitably would have meant as much as \$12.50 per square foot subsidy on 5 000 square feet of land because the rules are that so long as the price is \$15 or less the Government would pay the difference between \$2.50 and \$15 and the tenant would pay \$2.50 per square foot. What does that mean to people in Johnson Land in Green Hill or Alleyne's Land in Bush Hall or Lower Estate or wherever that effectively, you have 5 000 square feet of land and instead of you pay the owner of the land the \$75 000 you pay as the tenant, \$12 500, the Government pays \$62 500 and the land owner receives the full amount unlike the plantation tenancies who would be fully subsidising the cost of the

land at 10 cents a square foot and therefore shouldering the difference between the 10 cents a square foot and the commercial market value of that particular land. What did it mean, then under Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams and under The Right Honourable Owen Arthur? Instead of people having to find money to go and put the majority of the money in land, they could go and put in the money in house improvement from day one and who was not building wall in front was building wall behind and building wall all around because it meant that they could put the money down to be able to improve their circumstances.

His record in housing was not one of only National Housing Corporation construction. In fact, the real record was in being able to lift the quality of life of Barbadians by the provision of jobs and by the provision of opportunities for mortgages. We introduced 100 per cent mortgages in those days and provided the counterpart funding. We went, and ironically, this for him was particular because a particular matter of which he was proud because in his early days as a public servant many people did not know that he along with Allan Jones and Ronald Fitt would have established the Housing Credit Fund in this country at a time when in the early 19980s, Barbadians could not go to the bank and get mortgages. Barbadians used to borrow money from solicitors in order to buy land. They were the banking institution of the day for decades, therefore, the establishment of the Housing Credit Fund which allowed then banks to start to move into that part of the financial services sector in order to give Barbadians mortgages was a substantial change in the landscape for him. As I said, it therefore meant that he had a finer appreciation than most that housing solutions are not just driven by Government constructing housing units or houses but that Government could play a facilitating role through its regulatory regime and its ability to unlock capital to be able to spur the housing market. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, that is what we are hoping to do as we go forward with the projects and the use of the Housing Credit Fund, and we have in fact amended it to allow us to be able to use it to be able to unlock further subsidies and development of lots for persons because we too believe that that class of person in this country earning \$4 000 and under, deserve to be able to afford land.

Mr. Speaker, prices of land in this country from as far back as 2010 started to go into \$20 and \$25 a square foot and people earning \$2 500, \$2 700, \$2 800 and \$3 000 a month cannot afford to buy land at that price and then to build appropriate housing for them and their families to live in and that is what this Government is now fighting to be able to reverse by ensuring that we can cap the cost of the sale of land in those developments at no more than \$12 a square foot so that we can give the person buying the land the benefit of the value between \$12 and the commercial market value, whether that is \$20, \$22 or \$25, the values would determine that but what it does is to give the

applicant equity to be able to access the mortgage in a way that is easier than them being able to access it purely on the basis of their earnings profile because of how high and expensive the cost of the housing and land is and how low the wages are. So, we believe that the principle of subsidising the cost of land found in the Urban Development Commission and the non-plantation Tenancies is one that we can replicate in developments obviously in a higher price point but still at a substantial subsidy of almost 50 per cent of the land value per for persons going forward. That has its genesis in the kind of policy creativity but yet disciplined the approach to policy that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur imbued in all of us who served with him as Members of his Cabinet.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to recognise his regional leadership as the lead Prime Minister for CARICOM Single Market and Economy. There is no one in the Caribbean who would speak of the CSME, the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, without speaking of the Right Honourable Owen Arthurs' leadership with respect to this matter. He took it up in 1994, a few years after the Grand Anse Declaration was completed and it was largely left to his leadership to help craft out in real terms what and how the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas would seek to reflect the framework for the establishment of a CARICOM single market and ultimately a single economy. He always knew that the single economy was going to be a difficult destination largely because of the differences in interest rates and the inability to have a common macroeconomic policy across the region but he was comfortable with the aggressive pursuit of a single market in his time.

I was privileged to be at his side as Attorney-General in February 2006 in Jamaica when we signed the documents giving expression to the creation of the single market having been satisfied that the obstacles and the discriminatory acts that would have existed prior to the establishment of the single market and prior to the settlement of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas were removed.

Indeed, in those early days he relied on Mr. Nigel Barrow as Barbados' chief negotiator with respect to settling the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas as we now know it, and the Right Honourable Owen Arthur paid clear attention and detail to the drafting arrangements of that revised Treaty. He knew instinctively that in a single market there would be winners and there would be losers and to that extent the sustainability of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy depended on Chapter 7 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. For those of you who do not know what Chapter 7 is, and Article, I think, 164, you need to go and read it because it was to be the levelling instrument, that thing which would guarantee that there could be some form of special treatment and concessional resources ultimately through the CARICOM Development

Fund for disadvantaged sectors, disadvantaged reasons and disadvantaged countries. The genius of the formulation is that rather than being stuck between the dichotomy of more developed countries and less developed countries which was essentially what we inherited from the foundations of the days of CARIFTA that we would now have the opportunity to see that you could have a disadvantaged sector in a more developed country and that they too would have access potentially to the same benefits as a disadvantaged country or a disadvantaged region. Mr. Speaker, that in my view still represents the core of why we can make the single market work in this region. What it does need is for a far assiduous effort to be made towards the replenishment of the CARICOM Development Fund and for us to establish a growth and resilience fund or a growth, resilience and recovery fund, whatever you want to call it.

The Caribbean needs access to concessional resources because the complexity of governments have changed and these are the kinds of discussions that we would have throughout the years. If you really look at it, all of the things that we have had to do in the last 30 to 40 years have been driven by an international agenda that very often excluded us from the participation of the rules and the circumstances for that agenda, so you have a World Trade Organisation that was founded and indeed in 1994 Barbados became a signatory to the WTO, the World Trade Organisation, without much discussion and without preparing the domestic industries that hitherto were benefitting from a protected market and from non-tariff barriers from being able to continue in that vein. It meant that by 1999/2000 the Right Honourable Owen Arthur had to start to dismantle the regime that hitherto would have protected the manufacturing sector because the truth is that the last major dismantling took place under the Honourable Member for St. Michael North in 2018 with the repealed of the Fiscal Incentives Act which was a piece of legislation that guided Barbados' development in the shadow of the Lewis Model of Industrialisation by Invitation for the last 40-something years before so that we understood that there were a number of things that would increase the complexity of Government and hence the cost of Government but equally there were things that would reduce the revenue because if you were now putting a lash in your domestic manufacturing sector you would effectively not be able to get the returns from it as you were before in terms of revenue and jobs and general economic activity.

We looked at the environmental treaties all across the world today. It was not until the end of J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams' tenure that even had a Ministry of Environment in Barbados so that a Ministry of Environment is less than 40 years old in this nation but it is now one of the most important ministries given the climate crisis that we face, given the Sargassum weed and the

drought and the flooding and hurricanes that are bedevilling our country on an ongoing basis, but that meant that the cost of Government would increase as a result without necessarily having the productive sectors capable of being increased.

In the end, and this was one of the last discussions we would have before he passed in the Jobs and Investment Advisory Council, he understood clearly the importance of the National Population Commission because he recognised that the absence of people coming to work every day to produce and to pay taxes meant that we were trying to sustain the quality of life of the people of this nation on a dwindling and reducing base or foundation. Indeed, I cannot remember if it is 2006 -- it was not the 2007 Estimates because Clyde Mascoll did that -- so it was probably the 2005 or the 2006 Estimates (and I commend it to Members of this Honourable House and wider Barbados to go read) because he gave a speech about the extent to which we could continue, without more, in expanding the entitlements to citizens within the context of this State, because of that lack of expansion with respect to the productive sectors.

They saw (he and those before him) the International Business Sector without the constraints of carrying capacity as being able to offset some of the limitations of domestic production and population. They saw also the Single Market and Single Economy as an opportunity equally to ensure that Barbados could benefit from expanded production, without necessarily changing the sovereignty responsibilities over 432 square kilometers or 166 square miles, but that these initiatives were to offset the smallness of us and the limited production capacity. Regrettably, they would not be enough to offset the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, as well as the wrong-headed practices that saw to an expansion, at all cost, of recurring expenditure beyond anything that the county could support. And, as he would say in his last speeches in here as an Opposition Member of Parliament, in circumstances where we became capable of only doing one thing and one thing alone, that is, servicing debt, and that we service debt to the exclusion of everything else in the management of the economy and the management of the society for a better part of the 2013-2018 period and hence, the country moving to where it became, regrettably, the Third Most Indebted Country in the World, from a debt to Gross Domestic Product ration perspective.

He was the one in the Estimates who spoke about the 69 cents in the dollar [that was] necessary to service our debt and that, in truth and fact, if you were earning \$2.3 billion and spending \$3.2 billion or \$3.5 billion, depending on the year you want to look at, you could not do anything other than continue to rack up debt, rack up debt because you were printing the money -- accumulated deficit is debt, that is all debts are, accumulated deficits. And he

understood that while we all, as post-Independent leaders came from the perspective and the school that the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow laid out, in terms of limiting deficit financing to support development, you cannot improve the lives of our people without some level of borrowing; you cannot improve your life individually, or invariably without borrowing; most of us have to borrow to be able to build a house; most of us have to borrow to buy a car; most of us have to borrow if we want to buy equipment for small business, because we all came from the same background and what we are trying to do is to lift people out of poverty, but in order to lift people out of poverty you have to borrow in order to generate the projects that will sustain you going forward, and because you are borrowing and building capacity, you are then over a period of time earning to be able to pay back that which you borrowed. That is how ordinary development takes place, and that is why he continued to insist that the macroeconomic fundamentals were the first platforms in caring for anybody, that it took cash to care, and that if you were going to be reckless about the management of this economy, then you were going to be contemptuous about the quality of life of the people of this nation. It was as simple as that, and if you asked me that irrespective of his wonderful political style and effectiveness of that, the real genius of the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, was in the commitment to nation-building on sound fiscal practices, on strong structural policies that could withstand scrutiny, and sustainable policies that were intended to be able to build platform for the future, rather than to meet the moment alone with respect to instant gratification.

Mr. Speaker, Sir that is the legacy I have taken from him. I thank him at a personal level for the opportunity to have learnt most of what I know in public life, not just through reading but through, like most Barbadians, being at the center of the action when these things were unfolding. I know that it was his open mind that led to younger people being brought into the center of Government in this country. I was a Minister at 28 years old, with the Ministry of the Education, Youth and Culture. It commands the largest budget, outside of debt servicing in the Government of Barbados. The Honourable Elizabeth "Liz" Thompson was the Minister of Health; it commands, equally, one of the largest budgets and the Honourable Member was 30 years old when he appointed her. We will never forget the words of George Belle, who said that we were "too green" to be appointed, and Owen just smiled and said to repay him with performance, and that was what we tried to do.

The bottom line is that with respect to women, prior to Owen Arthur being the Honourable Prime Minister of this nation, there was only ever one woman who had served in the Cabinet of Barbados -- Dame Billie Miller, who would have served under "Tom" Adams. Owen [had] determined that he wanted to "turn the corner" and hence

the inclusion of myself, “Liz”, and Billie was that initial step. Within the next term he was able to add Cynthia Forde, who he described always as the salt of the earth of the Barbados Labour Party and that kind of representative whom he would want to have those amongst whom he was privileged enough to lead.

I know, because he would speak to me initially when he first appointed Cynthia as a Parliament Secretary, and worked with her assiduously to ensure that we would make her the Member of Parliament once David Simmons (Sir David as he now is) retired from public life and chose to leave this Parliament. She has not disappointed him or me in the way in which she has represented the people of St. Thomas and indeed her performance at the polls tell you that she has not disappointed the people of St. Thomas, either.

It is ironic that the Honourable Member for St. George North also was able to reflect the level of meticulousness in representation that Owen celebrated, and anyone who knows anything about the Barbados Labour Party would know that the Honourable Member for St. George North was (if I would be allowed to say these words in here I would say) “partner in crime” but I do not mean “real” crime, but his partner, his true, true brother and partner. They had a relationship which was interesting because the Honourable Member for St. George North would speak his mind to him, very often, and it could be rambunctious, but if I learnt not to engage Owen Arthur in a quarrel, it was from the Honourable Member for St. George North, because he was the first person (and I confess this now publicly) who taught me that it takes two to quarrel, because if you were not quarrelling, [it would mean] that the other person would only be making noise. And I would see the Honourable Member for St. George North, whose name I cannot call in her for the reasons I set out at the outset of this speech, but I almost feel that I need to give him a name for these stories, but maybe it is better that I not tell the stories and therefore I will refrain from calling the name.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point is that that meticulous level of representation was underscored by his calling and telling you.... And when I say to some of my Members of Parliament, to do to “X” or to do “Y”, it is because that was how I was raised in this party and this Parliament, and that you cannot come to public life and believe that it is sufficient for you simply to do the files in the Ministry or to give the speeches, without understanding that, fundamentally, every day what are you going to do to make better the lives of somebody whom you represent in your constituency or whom you represent in your ministerial portfolio, not just as a technical academic issue but in a real, real way, to make their lives better.

.....Sir, that understanding that you cannot divorce politics from people and policy from people, I root in Owen’s schooling of us in the Cabinet and in the parliamentary party. My friends, I can talk for most of the day but I am not going to. I have had a lot to say already. The man, complex. His pride for his two daughters I reflected on the day of the State Funeral. If you wanted to see Owen Arthur’s eyes light up, ask him about his two daughters. His eyes would light up, and both of you have pursued passions of his; one in numbers and one in law. I go saying always that if he was ever a lawyer, God help us around here because he tried to practise law every day of his life without yet being called to the official Bar. He would joke and say he knew about the other Bar, and that was sufficient to qualify him to speak on these issues.

He had sayings that I will never forget. He would tell us that marriage is a certificate recognised by the police; a piece of paper recognised by the police. He would tell us that he did not want to stop eating pork chops and pigtail because it would only add seven minutes to his life for every pork chop that he had stopped eating. He would tell us that he would only do things that gave him intense pleasure, especially after he passed the age of 50; so that unless he was satisfied that that would give him intense pleasure, he was not going to waste his time which he had on this earth participating in those vexatious activities. He was a raconteur. He had his moods. By all means, he had his moods, but it is my judgement that ultimately he did not carry malice. He may have had an obsession with what he wanted to achieve at all costs, and that was what drove him more than any form of malice. Over the course of the last 15 to 16 months we had occasion to speak regularly, again on a range of national issues and international issues.

He was passionate about the work that he had done in Guyana and the need for the respect for the fair practices governing an election to dominate. He knew that his straight talk would not make him popular with everybody but that never stopped him from straight talk. He was passionate about LIAT because he was the one who first tried to be able to save LIAT back in the early 2000s and to recognise that we needed to ensure that there was some form of airlift in and out of the country. He was equally the first one to recommend its dissolution, as the Honourable Attorney General would tell you, because the model became completely unsustainable and even if we felt that we could do it, COVID literally spelt the death knell for it given its current structure; that it would require significant restructuring in order to be able to have anything close to being able to provide the services of affordable, reliable access between the islands and the countries of the region through air transport.

He took particular delight in chairing the Global Commission on Small States which I had asked him to chair. Why? Because as Minister of Finance, Owen Arthur

did a lot of the heavy lifting with respect to small states' work and vulnerability. It is the issue that we find ourselves fighting yet again today, 30 years after the father of Professor Persaud settled the index of the Commonwealth Secretariat years ago. We went through persons like Owen and other leaders of small states trying to get buy-in for us to have vulnerability recognised as a fundamental feature of small states, not just in fiscal matters for access to concessional funding or resources, but also with respect to our international trade obligations.

We would reflect often that Barbados' share of global trade in goods is 0.0000 per cent, and Barbados' trade in global services is 0.0001 per cent and that therefore we had no capacity to distort global trade. Those arguments, even though sound, would find no favour among the great political units or the great nations of the world which constitute the G20 as it is now and the G7 as they were before. Yet, it is our reality, and our vulnerability is captured in our capacity ultimately to absorb shocks. Can we absorb the shocks of climate crisis, of the pandemic, of international economic shock, of oil price increases, of changes in terms of trade? If we cannot, then we ought not to be excluded from concessional funding or grant funding. We ought not to be left on the sidelines of international development to become pauperised again simply because of arbitrary definitions and criteria that do not meet the appropriate considerations as to who and where we are and what we need.

I make the point that at Independence we did not receive any development compact, and what was taken from us over the decades and centuries was not settled. Therefore, it meant that instead of starting from Ground Zero we were starting from 100 feet below ground. That is why the argument for reparations has so much import and impact today. When we change the Pan African as a Government, we change it not because of the lack of worthiness of the cause but because we feel that the Pan African work needs to be supported as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) so that it does not only benefit from the resources of the state but it also benefits from the resources of non-governmental entities. I am happy that the Honourable Member for St. Michael East has agreed to help me now lead this effort along with others like the Ambassador to CARICOM and others, because this is the significant work that was started by myself and Owen Arthur in the late 1990s when I was Minister of Culture and he was Prime Minister of Barbados. He understood the importance of identity and he understood the importance of building confidence among people. He understood the importance of following the dictates of Grantley Adams and Errol Barrow in terms of standing up for something for this nation and making sure that this nation's voice can be heard and respected across the globe. He did it with the Shiprider Agreement. He did it with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) when

they threatened to undermine the sovereignty of this Parliament by wanting to tell us how we should tax. He did it with other matters of import like Haiti. I think his first international visit after being Prime Minister was to go and deal with the issues of Haiti with respect to the disruption that was happening there in late 1994 to early 1995.

Sir, I want us to reflect on his life as a guide. Was he perfect? Absolutely not. Are any of us perfect? Absolutely not. The generosity of spirit that is required, in my view, to make this nation that stellar nation that it can be and to make 'Bajans' the 'Star Bajans' that we can be, requires from us to be sanguine about people's contributions but also to be motivated by the things they did that made a definable difference. We ought not to reflect only on the individual acts but we need to look through and look at the values that underpinned the actions of people's lives, because more often than not, if you are prepared to be still and to reflect, you will see those lines remaining constant in the actions and statements of human beings. Owen Arthur's own was very definite and clear to see. He did not suffer fools gladly or at all. He was forthright in his perspective. He was not always right but he was often right. He was definitive in the need to be able to assert the right of Caribbean and Barbadian people to tell the rest of the world that we are as good as any of you and it was perhaps in his admirations for men like Sir Everton Weekes that you understood the power of what those young Barbadian cricketers coming out of poverty would do to be able to inspire other young Barbadians as to what they could achieve in this world and in this life and for this nation. It was very clear that as the first real post-independence Prime Minister of Barbados that he had a duty to settle some of these issues that for too long had been the subject of in my view unnecessary debate. A country that in 40 years ago debating should we have emancipation lectures or not, Owen Arthur literally threw that out of the window and settled a framework for national heroes of Barbados which we settled in 1998.

We made it clear that Emancipation Day as well as July 26, had to be celebrated. Those were the days of the politics and inclusion coming to it very fore. When I hear people talk now about partnerships in the political fabric of Barbados as if they are something new, then it tells me that they are not students of history and that they do not understand this point that I made earlier that this country is strongest and best when people of different backgrounds and perspectives can be brought together in a common space for a common mission. That is his legacy to me, to this party and country.

I want to say to his wife Julie that this must be a difficult moment for you, because I cannot imagine losing someone close to me and having to be reminded of that person every day in some manner, form or fashion that is beyond where my head may take me initially. That is the

regrettable load of those who are family to those who have distinguish public records. You learn that there is usually intense love or hate that they generate.

Fortunately for me I was told as a young girl by my grandfather that if you want to be successful in life expect intense love and intense hate from people in public life and that those who do not generate those extreme emotions more often than not will not spark the support base necessary to be successful in public life. Owen understood that. He understood the power of wit. He understood that in giving political speeches that every five to seven minutes you have to throw in a joke. It is a skill that I am not yet as capable as he is, but I aspire to that every day, because I know that he literally studied as an art, because he too would tell me about his difficult days of giving speeches with the stammering and when overcoming the stammering and then learning to be witty. In fact he loaned me one or two books about presidential wit and humor showing that he took this things seriously and did not leave them to happen stance over serendipity. That is the nature of the man, always prepared, even if it meant that he would shed other responsibilities, he was strategic with what he wanted to achieve and he did it in the best way he knew how to by being prepared and by bringing to build the skills that the Lord gave him from birth of analysis, distillation and communication.

To his first wife Beverley, I have already extended our support and reflected our sympathy to his two daughters and granddaughter and particularly to Isabella's granddaughter, because the rest of us have seen and interacted with him. However, it is for her more than any other person that we would want the record of this Chamber to be ample and full, so that when as a young woman she wants to look at her grandfather through the eyes of others, through how we saw him, who worked with him when we ought to be able to ensure that that body of work is there.

I also commend for ensuring that his body of papers has been given to the University of the West Indies. I must tell you that I have approached the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies to indicate that if the Barbados Government could have one wish and one wish alone, it would be to rename the Cave Hill Campus after Owen Seymour Arthur.

He represents that fine Barbadian that that campus was developed to be able to produce. As Prime Minister for a longer period than any other Prime Minister since Independence, it was his to engage with that University. I know, because for seven years of those 14 years, I was his Minister of Education and I know the depth of his commitment, I know the extent to which he wanted the rest of his days to be associated with the institutions that help shape and mold him as a young Barbadian man and that

helped shape the national consciousness that gave him the courage to be the man that he was and to be the leader that he was.

This is not a decision of the Barbados Government obviously, it is a decision of the University of the West Indies, and we will live with whatever decision they make, but we will strongly advocate for the Cave Hill Campus to be named the Owen Arthur Campus at Cave Hill University of the West Indies. We believe that that simple act will inspire another young boy, whether in Rose Hill, or a young girl in Bush Hall, or young boy in Hindsbury Road to believe that they can be the best that they can be in this country. To use his words, "that they can go for the best, because Barbados must not settle for the bronze, Barbados must not settle for the silver, Barbados must go for the gold".

Those words must forever mean something to generations of Barbadians. To the family of Owen Seymour Arthur, to his brothers and sisters, to his nephews and nieces, to his daughters and granddaughter, to his son-in-law, above all else to his wife, we thank you for your support and nurturing of him and with sharing him with a nation. Sometimes a population is not always kind in that manner in which it treats people as they stand on their feet. I trust and pray that the suddenness of his departure would cause us as a nation to want to reflect on how we can be a little more balanced, considerate and compassionate in how we treat to public figures in this nation.

It is of significance to me that the majority of children of politicians do not come in the public life in Barbados. Invariably those of us who have family are either grandchildren, nephews, aunts or cousins, or in my case, I suppose my father left early, so beyond the age of ten I did not understand the horror of public life, but it is of significance. Go through the records on both Sides of the House and you have to ask yourself why is it that those people who received perhaps the most inspiration from their parents who have done well in public life have chosen not to come close to public life.

You can start with Errol Barrow. "Tom" Adams was an exception. "Tom" was in Britain I believe for a large part of his formative years. Sir Grantley went to the West Indies Federation but when you look at the rest, including "Tom's" and Errol Barrow's own children, you must ask yourself why. I trust and pray that in spite of the fact that smallest carries with it other problems, we will be mature and discerning enough to recognize that we need to have a different relationship with those who come to public life. If we do not, we will find that the quality of persons who are prepared to come, enter and serve in what ought to be the highest form of service will start to dwindle and diminish before our very eyes.

Today, I want to end this tribute by asking this Honourable Chamber to send the appropriate condolences, Mr. Speaker, to the family of Owen Seymour Arthur on behalf of a grateful nation and a proud people that we could produce a man such as him to serve with such distinction. As I said, recognizing that he was not perfect but that his intent was honourable, and that his mission nevertheless was laudable.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps, I would want to begin by reading to the record an expression of my own personal sense of sadness and sympathy from my family and of the party which I now lead to Mrs. Arthur, Professor Arthur's children, siblings and other members of the family. Certainly, it is a sad occasion in which we were all caught up. No matter how deeply it might have affected us and I am sure it affected them, and continues to do so much more deeply. Therefore, I want to just publicly express sympathy again to them.

I first met Owen Arthur in late 1992 at a BLP conference. I attended those at one time and was invited to that particular one. I am hearing invitations coming at me again. You need to put that in writing and not just express it in asides. I was invited there to speak at the party's conference and at the conclusion it was Billie Miller, who is now Dame Billie Miller, that approached me and inquired as to whether or not I had some interest or to participate in elective politics. In fact, I did at the time though I was being very cautious. I was a little tentative in my steps in that direction. I was waiting on the leading of the Lord fully.

I indicated the measure of interest to her and she took me immediately and introduced me to Owen Arthur who importantly, I must note, was eating at the time. He shared with me something which I heard him say on numerous occasions since then. He asked why I would be interested as a man of the cloth and getting into the business and arena of elective politics. In hearing my response which was for the same reason I serve in the church which is to help people find a better life. He identified with that in a very material sense and said that he was in politics for the purpose of stopping poor people from being poor. It is the first time I heard him say that. On numerous occasions since then I heard him repeat that he was in politics to stop poor people from being poor.

Perhaps, it is in that vein that I would like to speak because there are several things which can be

Said and things which have already been said. I am sure there are other speakers to follow. How do you stop poor people from being poor, Mr. Speaker? How does one stop poor people from being poor? Through what manifestations does one live life in an effort to stop poor people from being poor? I believe it begins with experiencing the reality of poverty personally. This is extremely important. One starts with having experienced the realities of poverty in a very personal way.

It is he who wears the tight shoe that knows better how it pinches. You can identify with that. You grew up in the experience of poverty. By God's grace and the goodness of this Government and this country, you have been elevated out of that poverty into a better life. However, you wore the shoe and knew how it pinched. It is he who wears the tight shoe that knows better how it pinches. I am a New Testament boy. There is a New Testament girl on that side. One of the central themes of the New Testament is the fact that Jesus Christ, our

Lord, had to enter into our experience in order to lift us up and out of our predicament. He had to become like us. He had to live our reality.

As a fact, if you are familiar with the New Testament whether you are a girl or boy, then you know that it is a central reality revealed in the New Testament. He came into our experience. He took upon himself our flesh and lived our reality that He might lift us up and out of that. The son of a shopkeeper and plantation worker in rural Barbados of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s would have known and lived the reality of poverty. It was an experience which would have shaped a certain sense of calling. I say calling, Mr. Speaker, because it connotes a sense of duty outside of and above service to self. Not many come to know that sense of calling where you live in the service of others and for the cause of the betterment of others, and interest which relate to self and sometimes family because it is an extension of self.

Those interests are relegated to a secondary position in the service of a higher cause. The interests of the people put the interests of others at the center of your efforts. It commands and sometimes consumes your energies but it constitutes your reason for YOUR being and your sense of life's purpose not counting the cost. In other playing cards with The Right Honourable Owen Arthur did not have the privilege of that type of intimate social exchange with him but my distinct impression from my distance was that he was motivated in this way, with a sense of calling to serve a cause larger than self and to pursue interest of others even when it meant making the interest of self, and by extension family perhaps, secondary to that cause. That is when one serves with a sense of calling. How do you stop poor people from being poor beside beginning with a sense and experience of that reality yourself, you give people a sense

of self-worth and a sense of self-value. You model that in your own journey of life, a life which leads you from the experience of that poverty of which I have been speaking for the last couple of minutes from poverty at its worst to the position of Prime Minister in the land of your birth and a record of service that is exception and heralded by many near and far and even by the lips of those who personally may not have themselves benefitted so you model that journey that you make in yourself from a poor country boy to a Prime Minister. Mention has been made in passing by the Honourable Prime Minister one or two other things which signal The Right Honourable Owen Arthur attempt to give Barbadians especially those in the lower stations of life a better sense of self-worth and self-value, made reference to the establishment of a PanAfrican Commission and then of course there is the establishment, perhaps that is the pinnacle of that type of effort the establishment of a pantheon of heroes, people who embodied the best of that which is Barbadian, people who embodied the best of that which Barbados had to offer, the best of service that one can offer in the cause of our national community reflected in their lives and I think, the national heroes that would have been identified in that pantheon established back then serves a part of the use of the term as a monument to that which each Barbadian was encourage to aspire to by the leadership of the time and that is the type of leadership that we have been accustomed to in Barbados and it was certainly embodied in The Right Honourable Owen Arthur, but how beyond giving people a sense of self-value and lifting their sense of self-worth, how do you stop poor people from being poor? Well, in my view, it is very important that you change the nature of the relationship between the people in majority numbers and the land, you change the relationship between the people and the land. The Honourable Prime Minister would have made reference to that by pointing to what Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Administrations would have done with respect to land policy both in rural and in urban Barbados. I speak to that which would have been champion by The Right Honourable Owen Arthur, particularly so in urban Barbados and in areas such as the one which I represented so you move poor people and you stop poor people from being poor by changing their relationship to the land. You have to move these people from being tillers of the soil for the greed and gain of the privilege. My friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, my very good friend, would tell you those things, would tell you them in more potent and effective terms than I am capable of doing when I seek to suggest the same thing that he has sounded in the corridors of this House and outside in the public space for years. If we are to stop poor people from being poor and this is embodied as a principle in the policy, posture and orientation, implementation indeed of the Government under The Right Honourable Owen Arthur you have to change the relationship between the people and the land and move them from being tillers of the soil for the greed and gain of others, move them from being tenants in

a space owned and passed on by others in a privilege circle leaving the majority in a place such that they are tied to poverty and trapped in dispossession.

Sounds like a lot of words but the policy in actualisation is that which is revolutionary because when people find that there is a positive relationship between them and the land then you start them in their journey to becoming a part of the wealth accumulating class in Barbados. You see, Mr. Speaker, for me it is about moving people from a position where they are postured to earn money and bring them to a place where they understand and realise in actually terms the benefit of growing wealth and building on that which they have and until people can come into ownership of the land in Barbados in even greater measure than is the case now we will continue to have the spectre of poverty obtaining the disadvantage groups in Barbados. It is a type of representation that The Right Honourable Owen Arthur helped me to give in St. Michael West and forgive me, I feel these things strongly so I am not going to pass this without saying this even though some may charge me of misusing a moment such as this and introducing and indecency but let the charge come if it will but that is the type of representation that The Right Honourable Owen Arthur facilitated me in giving in the constituency of St. Michael West. I see the attempt to return to the days where representation must be based on one's capacity to purchase for the support, where representation is to be facilitated by building relationships and links with the drug subculture in Barbados. I see that in St. Michael West so let the charge come if it will but what I am speaking of here today is not that. I am speaking here today of a kind of quality and a brand of presentation that The Right Honourable Owen Arthur facilitated me in giving to the people of St. Michael West helping to change the relationship between the people and the land in a positive way. The Prime Minister spoke of the urban tenancies transfer of title programme, St. Michael West has some of the biggest tenancies in urban Barbados. In Garden Land alone 139 different tenancies. In Tudor Land down the other end on the western side in Paris Gap, 97 tenantry spots and the programme of transfer of title through the Urban Development Commission championed by the policy on urban transfer title legislation was affective in bringing many of those people into a better more positive relationship with the land and I feel those things very strongly and I say that is the kind of quality representation that people out there seek to have, not the type that comes through the reinforcement of dependency or the persistent reliance on the offerings that come through mendicancy. That is not what representation for me is about and as far as I was able to assess, that was not what representation at the constituency level for The Right Honourable Owen Arthur was about. Not dependence and building on platforms of mendicancy, no, Sir. It was about empowering people and the transfer of title programme in urban Barbados was a significant revolutionary tool in

helping to change the character of housing in Barbados, and I think by her own voice the Honourable Prime Minister as well alluded to that. Mr. Speaker, that is why I have said more than once that for me the policy of the National Housing Corporation in trying to bring Barbadians into a position of greater empowerment should not seek first to give them a unit in which to live but should seek first to provide land to which they can find title and land on which they may be facilitated in building. I see an affirmative nod from the Honourable Member for Christ Church West signalling that there is wisdom at least in what I am trying to say and I thank him for that signal of support for this position.

How do you stop poor people from being poor? The goal of a graduate of the University of the West Indies in each household is not just an aspirational statistic or was not simply an aspirational statistic. I think some interpreted this as political talk, as gimmickry, but I think that that was revolutionary thinking reflecting itself in a very practical way not intended to create political noise, not intended to muster political appeal, but coming out of a political bosom that understood the role of tertiary level education in lifting ordinary Barbadians, whether you come out of Rose Hill or out of Savannah Road or out of Joes River or out of Westbury Road, from a position of generational poverty and bring them to a better place where they could more productively contribute to the building of the nation. It underscores and appreciation and understanding for the role of the University of the West Indies empowering the nation through education and it underscores an understanding of the importance of the value represented in each household in contributing to the economic advancement of the country. We often speak with reference to these things, the units, and in an economy we speak to businesses and to households and we speak almost fleetingly of that matter of households, but unless you empower households and radically so you limit the ability to which the average person can break away from generational poverty and contribute in a productive way to the building of a nation. Those who speak out of the bosom of the University speak with one voice. When assessing Owen Arthur's contribution to the phenomenal growth of the University during his Administration, they all speak with one voice. They do not diminish the leadership of Sir Hilary Beckles but they seek only to highlight that Sir Hilary was facilitated in his efforts to move the University from simply being a place of higher learning to being a real world class university competitive with universities around the world of its kinds and of its class and to come out as a stellar type of entity. Mr. Speaker, The Right Honourable Owen Arthur facilitated that.

Mr. Speaker, I happened to work as Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office when one or two of these things went down and I knew that Hilary Beckles, now Sir Hilary Beckles, was driven by a passion for seeing the

University grow in certain direction but he had to rely on the assistance of the policy of Government, the aid of Government, particularly so the Office of the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to ensure that these things took place.

Mr. Speaker, whether you talk about the developments on the Black Rock side of the University, whether you talk about the Errol Barrow Centre of Creative Imagination or the CARICOM Research Facility or what have you, the University of the West Indies is what it is today because of the efforts of the Administration there but the University of the West Indies is what it is today because of the support of the Government led by The Right Honourable Owen Arthur at the time, and I think that that is something significantly worthy of note. Mr. Speaker, that record is clearly established, as I said, in the minds of those who speak.

Mr. Speaker, the way to stop poor people from being poor is to make jobs the number 1 job so the number 1 job has to be about the creation of jobs. When you come to leadership at a time when the country is reeling under significant levels of unemployment especially in that particular type of context you have to make the effort. We have talked about the creation of 30 000 jobs and in your first term as leader. When you start to talk about these things people perhaps react with a measure of disbelief or even distrust, but you stop poor people from being poor not only by mouthing it but by going on to make sure that it is achieved. It was during The Right Honourable Owen Arthur's leadership of the Government of the day that Barbados saw significant inroads being made on the issue of the high level of unemployment in Barbados which started particularly so in the early 1990s and to achieve that aim of 30 000 jobs, to reduce the unemployment levels from 25 per cent, some say even higher per cent, down to 7 per cent, some say 6 per cent, by 2007 was significantly to contribute to the Gross Domestic Product of Barbados and to build up the Barbadian economy such that it could aspire clearly and easily to becoming a middle level economy in the global context.

Mr. Speaker, you lifted the levels of pay to people, and that has to be given in credit to the Barbados Labour Party. It happened under Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams and it happened under The Right Honourable Owen Arthur and that is a legacy to which this party now in office of Government must cling because we have got to lift the levels of pay associated with work especially among the lesser regarded working class elements in Barbados. Providing a better deal for casual workers in the public service is something which is amazingly striking because if you talk about changing the relationship between people and the land, you are changing now the relationship between people and the institutions that control capital, you are putting people in a better position of security where

they can now go and broker deals for themselves and take responsible roles in the world of finances and see done in their experience and that of their families, that which they were unable to have done before.

Providing opportunities for small contractors unlike today's tendency to facilitate the privileged and the big contractors and the narrow interests. Barbados is faced with this for various reasons and needs to be dealt with. There were scores of small contractors who benefitted during this period and the development of the small business arena - and the Honourable Member for St. James South when she speaks which I am sure she will, will speak to that of which I am equally sure - and the expansion of the small business players in the domestic market, all of that genders a sense of self, all that changes the characterisation of poverty, all of that generates employment, all of that speaks to the building of a nation and the building of a people.

How do you stop poor people from being poor? You use these mechanisms and others, but the job is not complete, and the journey is not ended, and many of those things for which we feared Owen Arthur and his period of leadership need to be furthered. The matter of the reversal of gains, the gains of labour, a threat, a danger (which is now a reality), that the gains of labour made over time, some led by the Barbados Labour Party, some led by the Democratic Labour Party, but we are now in a day and an age where circumstances are such that there are those who take and opportunity to roll back and reverse the gains of labour, and if poor people are to be stopped from being poor it is incumbent upon us in this day that despite whatever the expediency may be, we do not allow this country to be subjected to a situation where the gains of labour are reversed. It seems to be the tendency today.

The whole issue of youth employment: We speak of employment in percentage terms and in a general way -- 10 per cent, 11 per cent, 12 per cent or wherever we are today, we are now way past that 10 per cent but in "good times" we [have] settled out for 10, 11 and 12 per cent of employment and we speak of unemployment in those broad terms, but when we drill down and start to look at it from a demographic perspective and we realise that unemployment among young people, even before COVID-19, was up to 30 per cent (even before COVID-19) then we recognised that if we are to stop poor people from being poor, a priority has to be providing for employment among our young people, and they must not be led to a place where they must think that they can aspire only to the cutting of grass or the weeding of the road, or the patching of a hole, or even putting up a sign post. That must not be the ceiling which they see, those things must be done (and expedience sometimes would have us accommodate those activities) but I am saying that we have to cast a vision for these young people that is loftier than that and help them to lift their sights to higher ceilings and to let them know that

the sky is not the limit. I repeat that, that the sky is not the limit.

We need more dignified work for our women, especially in this era when women are seemingly taking over the leadership in every respect, in several aspects of our life's endeavour as a nation. We need to find opportunity for more dignified work for our woman. That is how you stop poor women from being poor.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the scourge of underemployment historically is a problem in Barbados and it should never be overlooked because simply because a fellow has a job, it does not mean that he is well remunerated and it does not mean that the level of remuneration which he enjoys is able to help him to meet his cost of living, especially in today's world. Therefore, that underemployment issue has to be addressed if we are going to stop poor people from being poor. And we have to synchronize the offerings of the same university of which we speak, with our development goals and the global market opportunities which are being created, and the global market dynamics which obtain.

We have to adopt land-holding policies (land-holding policies) that empower Bajans. I will not repeat that today but I have spoken to that recently. We have to look at the matter of non-nationals and their power to hold land in Barbados. We have to look at the whole business of how land is allocated in terms of ownership across Barbados, if it is not land being put into productive purposes. And I will come back to that, I am sure, some time again in my life.

It is about nation building; stopping people from being poor is about nation building. These are fundamentals the Honourable Member spoke to this morning and fundamentals which were achieved, in significant terms, under the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, whether it was the lifting of the Gross Domestic Product, the lifting of our level of foreign reserves to comfortable levels, whether or not it was the matter of building our foreign reserves, et cetera, these things are important -- reducing the level of unemployment, broad macroeconomic fundamentals which are very much a part of nation building. But there are other aspects of nation building that cannot be omitted, for instance, the establishment of institutions which are viable and which are meaningful, which not only facilitates service to Barbadians and visitors to our country, but institutions which are renowned for their levels of transparency; for the integrity that is associated with their functions.

There is the type of activity in which the Owen Arthur Administration was engaged -- the building up of institutions in Barbados which were credible and which served the interest of the average Barbadian, citizens,

household, business and institutions which fitted us for our responsible role in the region and in the world. Sir, that is part of the exercise of stopping poor people from being poor, whether they are political, economic or social institutions, the institutions that we frame as non-governmental organisations are all part and parcel of the exercise of nation building, and it is in building a nation institutionally, that you help to create the platform of building the nation's people and stopping poor people from being poor.

Mr. Arthur was an unapologetic regionalist. He must be hailed for his work with respect to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. He understood the critical importance of institution like this. He understood not only from a doctrinal perspective or from a theoretical institution perspective, he understood it from a functional perspective, the whole business of the rights of establishments, the expansion of market frontiers within the region, the whole business of functional cooperation if as a nation state within the context of a region we were as a Caribbean people to take our place in the world.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I [have] heard a lot of tributes over time, one or two of which I was able to have read, but one of the best tributes I have heard made to Mr. Arthur came from David Simmons (now Sir David) who said something to this effect:

"That he and Owen saw each other as best political friends, but yet when he made the transition from the political arena to the Judiciary and took up his appointment as the Chief Justice, he (Owen Arthur) scrupulously kept his distance and did not interfere with any of his decisions or recommendations."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is a glowing testament, it is hard for the powers-that-be sometimes to observe the required distance and not to meddle. Sir David said that even though he and Owen shared a long-term political friendship, when he moved from the political arena as part of his Administration, to the Judiciary, (another branch of Government), that Owen scrupulously kept his distance and they hardly talked, except in an open professional manner. This is clear testament to the fact that an intellect of obvious enormity was also attended by a high sense of integrity in the functions of the Office of Prime Minister. It is a clear testament of respect for the tenets of democracy and an awareness of the challenges to the practice of the separation of powers in our system - Prime Ministers find it very difficult to keep out of meddling in the affairs of other critical institutions.

... That is a culture and practice of politics of our system in the Caribbean, and the way we practise separation of powers allows for itself or creates for itself three branches of Government, the Legislature and

Executive, and the Judiciary which are theoretically separate. In our context, the Executive sits here with full dominance in the Legislature, and if we are not careful we can find ourselves tempted to interfere in the Judiciary. Sir David Simmons is a man who had respect for the doctrine of separation of powers and was motivated by the kind of level of integrity that forbade him from interfering with me, despite our friendship, in the pursuit of my functions. There is a poem from which Mr. Arthur would frequently quote and it is written by Robert Frost. You are probably familiar with it. Some of the words are:

"I have promises to keep and miles to go before I sleep, miles to go before I sleep."

I heard him often quote that even on the Floor of the House.

"I have promises to keep and miles to go before I sleep, miles to go before I sleep."

The journey now has ended and over many miles many promises have been kept by Prime Minister Arthur when he served in that capacity. Sleep now has been reached, sleep now has been earned and I believe that rest is fully deserved. I offer those words of tribute today humbly. Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Andrew.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please turn on the microphone.

Asides.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat ironic that I should be here giving a tribute to a Prime Minister who is not the only Prime Minister to have terminated my term as a Member of the Cabinet. I would say that I have the dubious distinction of being fired by two Prime Ministers, including Owen Arthur, and the mere fact that I can come and speak in this debate speaks to the measure of the man. I would also like to say that his measure can also be determined by the fact that before he died he recognised that after that termination he had made a serious mistake. As a matter of fact, he is on record as having said that if it was one of the worst decisions that he had made, it was to have fired me from his Cabinet. Of course, the term "firing" was not used in the past few months. It was more of a boxing match, a reshuffle. I bear no malice. I remain a member of the Barbados Labour Party and unless for some strange reason my comments put me in trouble, I shall so remain, but I would like to say that I will always feel free to make certain statements.

Sometimes what you say and what you do not say can put you in trouble. Sometimes by remaining silent it can put you into trouble, and by saying too much can also put you into trouble. I have always had problems with my mouth, in the sense that I keep my mouth shut sometimes when I should speak and sometimes I speak when I should not, but I believe in the maxim that you should speak, as I said already in these Chambers, when you have something to say. Owen Arthur set the high standards of leadership that will not be easily matched. What has not been said by the previous speakers, including the first speaker in this debate, is that the standards which he set are standards which should be emulated and emulated for the future.

Sir, I think it is important to understand the background of Owen Arthur, which set the stage for his entry as the Prime Minister of this country. I recall in 1991 when the Barbados Labour Party won the Government, every Member of Parliament barring the Member for St. James North and myself and, to a lesser extent, the Member for St. Michael South East at the time -- I do not think I am breaching the Rules by calling his name -- Mr. Delisle Bradshaw, we were the only three persons who were not contenders for the leadership of the party. Owen Arthur came to office at that time. There were persons who felt that there was a certain entitlement which went with the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party, and Owen Arthur was not qualified. It is true that my own reasons at the time were a little bit personal because, having won an election in St. Andrew against his good friend, a gentleman by the name of Peter Scott, Mr. Arthur at the time still indicated that he would come to St. Andrew in the next election and canvass against me.

My opposition to his seeking the leadership of the party when the former leader was dethroned -- people said he had resigned -- was more or less along those lines, but there were seven contenders at the time for leadership of the party. If the former Prime Minister, the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John who was the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, had had his way he would have continued. If the Honourable Member for Christ Church West had had the support, he probably would have continued. Then you had the badgering by everybody else. Since I and the Honourable Member for St. James North were the new Members of Parliament, it was felt that we could have been cajoled into supporting one way or another. It was common knowledge at the time that I could not be really moved because I had always admired my political hero at the time, and this was the then Honourable Member for St. George South, Sir Louis Tull. I made no bones when I was being hijacked by the other six. I was even hijacked one day when somebody offered to give me a lift in the hope that the lift home, when something was wrong with my car, would result in my support for them. I made it very clear that the only leader of the Barbados

Labour Party who I would have supported would have been Sir Louis Tull. I suffered for that, but that was my position.

I have always taken certain positions in this House in the Barbados Labour Party, and having taken certain positions I do not veer away from my positions. I believe that when you are elected to the House of Assembly, you are elected to serve the people. The question of making deals, the question of someone trying to come to you with some sort of package that is not in my DNA. You either do not come or you say something negative with respect to my position. However, that has been my position and that is my position up to today. I dare say that that is the environment that surfaced at the time when I came to Parliament and when Owen Arthur achieved the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party.

They are people even after he was elected who sought to make certain derogative statements with respect to his, I would not like to say extra parliamentary activity and everybody knew Arthur well. Socially I do not think that you can have a better person, sometimes socially things might get a little out of hand and in his exuberance and his excitement. It is like if you go to a party and the drinks are flowing, the food is good and if the music is good and there is dancing you dance, and if you like food you eat the food and if you like to drink you might go a little overboard. Even within and outside of Parliament and within the leadership Barbados Labour Party who felt that he was not suitable, even after he was elected as leader. The feeling was, do not worry he is not going to last long. He probably did not have another leadership contest before the election and they were veering towards the election that constitutionally due in 1996.

However, Owen immediately put a stamp with respect to the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party on the party. I recall, notwithstanding the little run-ins that we had had earlier of a debate on the House of Assembly. We were dealing with some national insurance. I was supposed to be the spokesman in that particular area. I spoke with respect to the information that I had before me, but to my surprise while I was or rather before I gave my presentation, the former Member for the City had a stack of information. I said how comes I am in charge of this information and nobody never gave me this information. She says, well you are new and you have to learn you have to make sure you get the information by yourself. That is the type of environment that was the Barbados Labour Party in those days, each man for himself.

Coming from the same background as Owen Arthur, it pains me to see the attitude of certain persons. I hope it is not being critical of those individuals, but Owen Arthur was the first person from humble origins that ever assumed the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party. As a result

that is the type of behaviour that you would have expected in those days.

There are certain things that come to mind after he became Prime Minister of Barbados. Having had the opportunity of contesting the election under Tom Adams, being there to Barbados Labour Party under Bree St. John, serving under Owen Arthur and thereafter seeing other leaders of the Barbados Labour Party. One has a very good assessment with respect to the caliber and the quality of leadership of these individuals.

One of the things that struck me very clearly, was the way how Owen Arthur allowed his team to chart their path. In 1994, I was chosen as Minister of Housing and Public Works, including water. A Ministry that after the Democratic Labour Party came into office took four Ministers to handle. Straight away I remembered when Owen Arthur gave me those responsibilities and I looked at the various areas I could not believe it. How am I going to handle these particular portfolios? I remember Owen Arthur said to me, George I have studied your background, you have been involved in community activity for a number of years and one of the things that you are good at is you have to learn to delegate and you know how to do that. To be honest with you, I was blessed with good chairman of statutory boards including the Member for St. Joseph, and the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, persons of that caliber. I would not have no reflection on the former Minister responsible for water, having to go to on television and having to speak to the water problems. We had competent chairman of boards and we had a competent engineer, Mr. Dennis Yearwood. We had no issues in none of these areas. The statutory boards, the chairman of the National Housing Corporation at the time, the Member for St. Joseph. I did not have to know what was going on because as the Prime Minister had told me you have to under know how to delegate and you have to make sure you have good people.

The thing about it is that we had to come up with a plan and I had my own team in housing. At no occasion during that full term that I was Minister of Housing did Owen Arthur come to sit to tell me exactly what chart I should take with respect to the Ministry .

The manifesto was there very clear. We followed policies set out in the manifesto. It was a tough task for us. I will recall the utilisation of the housing credit fund, the general workers loan fund, meeting with the officers in the Ministry of Finance with respect to the \$50 million bond issue, meeting with the bank with respect to the 100 per cent mortgage, and all of this was done by us.

I remember one day after being in the office for about a year, I do not know if the Member for St. Joseph could recall, but we were summoned to a meeting by the

Prime Minister and I can be honest with you, I was trembling in my boots, because that was the first time that the Prime Minister had ever called us with respect to what is going in the Ministry. I am only saying this to show you how much confidence he had in the persons whom he had put in their respective Ministries and there was absolutely no interference whatsoever.

I remember trembling and Mr. Marshall who I had known from his student days at Combermere, he himself was trembling. We had wondered, what could the Prime Minister summoned us to this meeting for. I remember he came in and sat down and he pointed his finger. We had just done some acquisitions in certain parts all over the island. He pointed his finger and said, "George, I can see that you all are going on a housing programme and I like the programme but remember, do not forget the people St. Peter. That is all."

I felt so relieved and that was the measure of the man. If it is one thing that I can remember him for is that sort of confidence that he placed in the persons under his charge. This confidence extended also towards his elevation to the office of Prime Minister. Notwithstanding the fact that he had all of these things going against him and everyone ganging up to be the leader of the BLP at the time when he became leader. Once he assumed the leadership, he knew that he was leader. There was not a question of him feeling insecure or trying to ascertain who his enemies were within the BLP. I think it was a good lesson to us in that style of leadership that he himself was confident in his position and made us confident in ours.

The Trump leadership style is to surround yourself with people of the same view as you, so that there is a debate in the United States of America (USA) with respect to the selection of a new judge. If Trump could have had enough Senators thinking similar to him, he would have his way. The thing about Trump is that if he selects someone and he is not a person who thinks along his line, they are fired. This is one style of leadership. Owen Arthur felt at the time that he should be able to avail himself of good, rich and solid talent even though he might not have known the individuals. The Member for St. Joseph and the present President of the Senate who is the former High Commissioner in Canada are classic examples.

These are individuals that the Prime Minister did not even know before the election. He was not concerned with persons of his own view. He was concerned with getting a job done and the best talent. It spoke to the measure of the man. A lot of talk has been made and even I was a little baffled, and taken aback by the Prime Minister's comment when he decided to resign from the BLP. I was somewhat disappointed. I do not want to rehash the events of 2010 because I believe that period was more or less a watershed in the history of the BLP.

We did what we felt we had to do in 2010. I believe if those circumstances are repeated, the same thing could happen again. However, I felt a bit uncomfortable when Owen Arthur made the statement that the BLP had lost its soul but you have to understand that Owen Arthur was a BLP supporter to the bone. Owen Arthur subscribed to the ideals and the principles of the founding fathers of this party; Sir Grantley Adams, "Tom" Adams, Sir Harold St. John and Sir Henry Forde. Some of us have a way of making comments at times without thinking them through. Someone made a reference to something Owen said when he got rattled and that was Owen Arthur.

The BLP has lost its soul but Owen Arthur made this comment within context of his fear that those ideals of the founding fathers that someone from a poor, humble background becoming the Prime Minister of this country going into the dustbin. Owen Arthur did not want to see himself as being the first person from humble origins being the last person from humble origins becoming Prime Minister of this country. He made those comments within that context. It was not a personal comment. He did not make those comments as if to undermine the BLP as party which had put him in the highest position in the land. It was not the Owen Arthur that I knew. Owen Arthur believed in those principles of the founding fathers and up to his death was concerned that those ideals were being treaded upon.

As if to underscore what I am saying, Owen Arthur coming from those humble backgrounds sought to uplift people who came from the same background that he came from. He had a desire to see those persons improve their standard of life. I guess I can say that he was impressed, though it may not be a suitable word to use, but he lived by what informed the measures and principles that were enshrined in the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act. It gave persons like his relatives the right to own the land to which in many ways they were entitled to for centuries.

As a result, his own visions mirroring the achievements of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act were to see a graduate in every household. In addition, he wanted to have a regime whereby every Barbadian has a right to shelter. There were some comments at the various United Nations (UN) meetings on housing and shelter with respect to the right of every individual to shelter and own a home. Notwithstanding the fact that this is not enshrined in our Constitution, Owen Arthur felt that we should create that environment.

What a lot of people did not know is that I recall the days when the Honourable for St. George North as the junior Minister of Housing when I as the Minister of Housing incurred a lot of attacks from the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) and certain elements of the Barbadian public, including persons who were owners of land that

was acquired by Government when we went on a rampage to create a land bank to ensure that we had enough land that every single person in Barbados ... We had certain plans and we had discussed this with The Right Honourable Owen Arthur and he was excited about it and that land bank was created to ensure that at least we gave certain people certain hope. You would have heard me speak in this House with respect to lands that have been acquired by Government for poor people, people who have been affected by the ravages of nature, people who cannot afford to buy land at \$5 a square foot and people who live on the periphery of existing villages where there is no such opportunity available for them to own land. That is what informed our decision to acquire lands in order to achieve the dream of The Right Honourable Owen Arthur because we had a lot of in-depth discussions really about this. I must say that I believe that this is a dream that former Honourable Prime Minister the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow also had because when you look at the landscape in the Wanstead area and the lands that were acquired it was an ambitious plan. It was a pity that we did not use the opportunity to even go further notwithstanding the fact that we were not sort of cowed by any of the comments which indicated that we were going too far. As Minister I got a lot of calls from a lot of landowners I was even threatened, but I never made it public, but I must say that it pains me now when there are lands which have been acquired for persons, and I like to speak about White Hill all of the time in this House because there are a number of persons my Members of Parliament do not understand that there is a place in Barbados named White Hill it is a like a village that has been neglected it is not part of Barbados it is a place that has been more or less segregated from the rest of Barbados, a place where people live daily without water, without transportation, without proper housing. There were two young ladies who were living under two and three galvanises which my Branch replaced on a few occasions and people do not understand that, but that is what informed a lot of the decisions which we took. I must say that after the last General Elections I am a little disappointed that we took on the problems of the individuals of what transpired in White Hill which, to a large extent, accounted for our 30-love victory and never once since the election have we gone back to White Hill in order to analyse the problems of that particular area. As I said that is why I am pained by the fact that we can now despite the position that we took we can now go back to the same Lancaster whether it is in the terms of a land fair or whatever and speak about and involved the whole of Barbados on lands that are rightfully owned by the people in White Hill and we could continue the policies of the last Government, the Democratic Labour Party Government, that wicked Government that never ever had the interests of the people at heart and we could have an all-day land fair to literally give away the lands. Go back to the debates when I was Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development. Why was the land in Lancaster acquired? It was acquired

for the people in White Hill, for the people who were affected by the ravages of nature, for the people who could acquire lands at \$5 a square foot and we are simply for a photo opportunity to have a land fair. I mean at least the same land that was acquired by Chefette Restaurant, the land the really rightfully belonged to the poor people in White Hill. At least we were not responsible for Chefette Restaurant, that was not the Democratic Labour Party, but we should have taken a lesson from that, but no we have not taken that lesson. I think the Right Honourable Owen Arthur would be turning in his grave or rather is probably turning in his grave when he realised it was a policy of the Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development, but it is a policy that was influenced by The Right Honourable Owen Arthur. Do not allow those rich people because there are certain... Mr. Speaker, do you know that there is certain language you would use in the trenches that you do not use in certain circles? Do not allow those rich people to come and take over your land. This land belongs to the people in White Hill. This land belongs to poor people, but the last Democratic Labour Party Administration changed all that because The Right Honourable Owen Arthur wanted to create an environment and one of the best speeches that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition ever made in this House he made today and he probably did not even realise it because The Right Honourable Owen Arthur wanted everybody person in this country to be able to own a piece of the rock. The only reason why we did not go further with respect to the acquisitions of Lancaster and Farmers on other side was because in one respect I was a little fearful that we would say look George you are going a too far.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: No, I have not finished yet, not by my watch.

Asides.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: He probably would have said you are going too far and then the same landowners who were chastising myself and the Honourable Member for St. George North for those acquisitions would have been on our backs. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur would be turning heads, I said in his grave right now to see what is happening and you are selling the same lands that were literally to be given to those people at \$15 a square foot because what you are doing is like e you have taken over a Government has changed, but the Government was changed on 24th May, 2018. The Government was not changed when I was removed from the Minister of Housing, Lands and Rural Development. I mean, I do not know how to explain certain things to my constituents. I would not know how to explain certain things to The Right Honourable Owen Arthur if he came back from his grave

and it is hurtful to see that he passed and he left us at a time when something like this is happening.

You said that I have two minutes. Mr. Speaker, I do not know how I could sort of consume the rest of what I would have to say in two minutes, but among the other things that was closed to the former Honourable Prime Minister Arthur's heart was the eradication of poverty. When he lectured to us on the eradication of poverty I mean sometimes you would have to ask yourself wait this man is crazy because I mean how you could eradicate poverty, but he figured that by putting that on the table ... at least there are a number of things we could do in order to alleviate the plight of the least privileged in our society: The eradication of pit toilets, the acquisition of derelict buildings and zero unemployment, because he always felt that if he set the bar that high and you even fall below - somebody spoke about unemployment today of 6 per cent - but he figured that he would not even have accepted the six per cent if everything was going in the right direction. Zero unemployment was what he would have wanted.

The other thing that characterised his tenure as Prime Minister is his utilisation in terms of consultation was the elders of the Barbados Labour Party. I do not think that we have made good use of those elders of the Barbados Labour Party in coming to certain decisions. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur before certain decisions are taken, even if you did not agree with him, had consultations with the elders of the Barbados Labour Party.

This whole question of legacy - Mr. Speaker, bear with me just a few seconds in response to this point... Mr. Speaker, if you are a person that have done well in business at the end of the day you want to leave X amount of property to this child and that child. You have done your best to build up an empire and you are at the stage where you can now decide that you are going to give Tom this particular property, Jack this and Jack that, but you did not set out at the onset that your legacy will be that amount. I think that this is what separates the Right Honourable Owen Arthur from other leaders. The legacy of a Prime Minister is different to the legacy of an individual who has built up an empire, but it would appear as though the legacy of a Prime Minister has suddenly shifted somewhat in that you have Prime Ministers now who before or even before they could even get a grip on the management of the country want to place things in their legacy that will not be their legacy when they demit office. The thing about legacy for a Prime Minister is not determined by him, it is determined by the historians and it will be determined by those persons who will have to evaluate his stewardship. In this respect, we can look at the legacy of the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and we can say that that has been a rich legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I had to terminate my presentation halfway but I could understand you are under certain strictures with respect to time.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of Government Business.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.30 p.m. today.

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon, Honourable Members, this Sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Mr. R. A. THORNE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, politics is a unique experience, it is courageous and it is cowardly; it is fortuitous and it is predictable; it is joyful and it is tragic; it is exciting and it is dull; it is triumphant and it is failure; it is peaceful and it is turbulent; it is confident and it is terrifying; it is lowly and then you die. Our Honourable Prime Minister is dead and Your Honour, the poem that I chose in tribute to our deceased Honourable Prime Minister, Owen Seymour Arthur, is chosen not to reflect indifference to his death but I chose it with the reassurance that virtue must live on, and I quote Martin Carter, the famous Guyanese poet:

"Death must not find us thinking that we die

too soon, too soon

our banner draped for you

I would prefer

the banner in the wind

Not bound so tightly

in a scarlet fold

not sodden, sodden

with your people's tears

but flashing on the pole

we bear aloft

down and beyond this dark, dark lane of rags.

[Now, from the mourning vanguard moving on

dear Comrade, I salute you and I say

Death will not find us thinking that we die."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Owen Arthur was born around WWII, and to be more accurate, he was born after WWII, that is to say, in the aftermath of WWII. He was born within that generation that found life while that WWII was being waged and its immediate aftermath, I would say towards 1915 and the early 1950s. I identify that as a particular generation of Barbadians and I will say why later. But while Europe was concerned with rebuilding after that War, the overwhelming majority of Barbadians continued to wage a war against persistent and pervasive poverty that afflicted this country, and if poverty was to be elevated in this country, the governments of the day needed to find social justice. And I identify that period of the birth of men like Owen Arthur and men and women who were born around Owen Arthur's time, I identify that period as the dawn of social justice that has created the modern democracy that is Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is said that men and women are often shaped by the circumstances of their birth. It is said that men and women are often shaped by their lives' experience. For the duration of my address to you, Sir, I will locate Owen Arthur within that generation and to suggest to you that he is a central portion within that generation of outstanding Barbadians born around that period of time, born at the time of social justice. And I am going to identify three markers of social justice within that period.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it must now be considered the greatest of irony that the parents of this boy would be [later] become Prime Minister, that on the date of his birth his parents probably did not have the right to vote. What an ire? Except that two years of his life, in 1951, for the first time, all of the adult Barbadians enjoyed the right to vote, that was in 1951, the first marker within the dawn of social justice. Your Honour, [let us] remember this is the dawn of Owen Arthur's life, so I am going to juxtapose his experience with the experience of his country. I say "his country" because he became Prime Minister of this

country, and we will reflect on the quality of Prime Minister that he became.

The second marker within that dawn of social justice was the passage by the Parliament of the day of the Trade Union Act of 1940. You know, Sir, that the Common Law had considered trade unions to be illegal combinations (they were not legal) and therefore men and women combined at the workplace in solidarity, except that that solidarity was condemned by the law and therefore it was quite a revolutionary step when in 1940 the Parliament passed a Trade Union Act. But the historians of the Barbados Workers Union remind us that it was not until 1945 that the union began to take shape as a social and political force, and all of this is occurring within an era of Owen Arthur's birth. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have said to you before, that what a man becomes takes shape within the circumstances of his birth, within the circumstances of his early experience. And so where there is political freedom which involves the right to vote universally, and where there is industrial freedom, the right to associate as workers that must be accompanied by a sense of self-confidence, a sense of self-worth.

Mr. Speaker, Sir that brings me to the third marker within that dawn of social justice in Barbados. In 1950, a group of young West Indians, for the first time, were beating the English Cricket Team in England, and that was significant. It was culturally significant but it spoke to a sense of self-worth and self-confidence, because cricket and sport often is an occasion to establish superiority, but that West Indian Team was concerned, not to establish superiority, but to establish West Indian equality. And that victory was significant and at the epicenter of that team were three outstanding Barbadians, that triumvirate of Barbadians known as the "Three W's" -- and I will come to them shortly. And so, those were the circumstances of the birth of Owen Arthur.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I listened very carefully to the eulogist, I think on August 14, at the funeral. He reminded his congregation, he reminded his national and international audience that Owen Arthur was born in Benn Hill. He said that and no words were wasted. He must have said that for a reason - Benn Hill, St. Peter. And that assertion brings me to the biblical dialogue between Nathaniel and Philip when Nathaniel asked his brother: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" And I love the response of Philip (three simple words): "come and see".

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I say to you that for the last half century public service in this country has been carried and populated by the men and women of Owen Arthur's generation. Come and see the nurses and teachers. Come and see the police officers and priests. Come and see the doctors and dentists. Come and see. Come and see the judges and journalists who all belong to that generation.

Come and see workers in agro-industry and manufacturing, pastors and postal workers, all of whom were born within the temporal premises of World War II and its aftermath, and they have contributed immeasurably to the success of what we wish to now call a modern democracy. Come and see how it happened. It was not happenstance.

Let us go back to Dr. Douglin. In his eulogy, he said that a young Owen Arthur climbed Benn Hill to All Saints' Primary School. The beginning of consciousness, and I want to submit to you, Sir, that in hamlets and villages and parishes across this country, the young boys and girls endured a climb; if it were not literal, it certainly was figurative. These were difficult times, but parents knew that freedom and ultimate freedom was dependent upon an education. Here is Dr. Douglin telling us that not only did young Owen climb the hill to school but he carried equipment of values. Listen to him very carefully. He said that his parents reinforced the values of honesty, hard work, service to others above self, and that it was all to be measured by standards of excellence; the excellence that became Owen Arthur's generation. Those were his early days at All Saints' Primary.

Dawn is a period of the day when the sunlight is gentle and there is light, but dawn is also a time when there is little warmth, except that dawn is often a promise of what the day can become. Will it be storm or will it be bright? The day becomes bright at nine o' clock on mornings. During the morning there is no brighter period than nine o' clock. There is a Latin word called "educare". It means to bring forth or to bring up. It derives itself from another Latin word, "ducere", and that speaks to a social enterprise in leadership. When those two words join and become one, "educare" translates into the English word "education". In 1961 when Government determined that all boys and girls in this country should have an education by right and not by privilege that was a pivotal moment in the life of this country. That was a revolutionary moment in the life of this country.

Sir, we had political freedom, as I said, with the universal adult suffrage, and we enjoyed industrial freedom with the legitimisation of trade unions but that would all have become meaningless unless the boys and girls of this country enjoyed the right to an education. I say that 1961 was the revolutionary moment that gave completion to the social transformation which accompanied the life of Owen Arthur and accompanied the life of Owen Arthur's generation. Here is this boy travelling uphill towards All Saints' Primary School and graduating to Coleridge and Parry, and transferring to Harrison College, and ultimately matriculating into the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill Campus, and thereafter finding himself enjoying further and higher study at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies to pursue his beloved economics.

Sir, I spoke to you of nine o' clock and I am capturing the life and Owen Arthur's political life within a day. Dawn was significant, and nine o' clock was significant, but then comes midday, and midday carries with it not only the brightest of light, it carries with it heat. I am encapsulating Owen Arthur's life in a single day. Permit me to say that midday, having completed his studies from primary to university, he meets the two titans of political power in Barbados: the then Prime Minister Tom Adams and his Deputy Prime Minister Sir Harold Bernard St. John. That was a pivotal moment in Owen Arthur's life. He himself told me the story of how he was brought into that meeting. He had written a paper as a young economist, and that paper offered a critique of a particular aspect of Government's policy. I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, that it was Sir Harold St. John who urged him into this meeting to meet with a doubting Prime Minister at the time.

The eulogist tells us that his father was a carpenter. I therefore ask and say indeed that of all the houses which that carpenter must have built, he certainly built an outstanding house of self-esteem within this boy, within this man, within this complete man who faced off against a Prime Minister and a Deputy Prime Minister on the day. The eulogist tells us that his mother was an agricultural worker, and of all the seeds that she must have planted this was the most fertile seed of ambition planted within the mind of this 30-year-old child who became a man. He defended his thesis, and so well did he defend his thesis that he left that meeting with the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, having convinced them that he was equipped to occupy the highest office in this country. Midday.

Sir, I pause to remind you that 'the Three Ws' beat England, having learnt their cricket entirely in Barbados. I invite you to discover the fact that Owen Arthur became that complete moral and intellectual being, having completed his entire education in Barbados and in the Caribbean. Sir Everton Weekes became the world's best batsman and he did not need to go to Australia to learn how to bat. He learned how to bat right here at Kensington on both sides of the wall of Kensington. That is the worth of this country. That is the worth of this country's people. We have great self-worth. Sometimes all we need is the opportunity, and Owen Arthur was given the opportunity and never, never wasted it.

I remember well 1984. Tom Adams probably incurred the wrath of some of his party members when he predicted that Owen Arthur would become a Prime Minister in this country. In a private conversation with Owen Arthur, he remarked to me without saying more that Sir Harold St. John was the most outstanding Barbadian he had ever met; a man who had a depth of appreciation for merit. Merit, Your Honour. Here emerges this young man

from this meeting at midday. Permit me to be metaphorical that for the next three years between 12 and three and permit me to be realistic that for the next three terms this young man leads Barbados and leads the Barbadian economy to unprecedented economic prosperity. Barbados had never been as prosperous as it was when Owen Arthur was Prime Minister of this country. That is merit. That is performance.

However, he did not do it alone. He did it with generation. Your Honour, that generation thrived on the same principles upon which Owen Arthur thrived as a moral being. Honesty, industry, service to others above self and all to be judged by standards of excellence.

There is a word called integrity. It involves honesty but it goes beyond honesty. Sir, I have to say to you that you have met a lot of persons who belong to that generation. You meet them at the age of 20 and you meet them at the age of 70 and it is the same person. Unwavering in their commitment to moral values, they are constant and consistent. People who live an entire life imbued with the virtue of integrity. A generation who has been able to self-examine and to self-interrogate. This is the question you normally hear them ask, talk to them by their parents before every major decision and even minor decisions they pause and the question becomes, but is it the right thing to do. That is the excellence of that generation. Are we therefore then surprised that that generation gave the highest quality of service to this country over the last 50 to 55 years.

Some are about to retire, some have retired and in some tragic cases some have died. A Prime Minister is dead. Have we once paused to express gratitude to any of them? Our immediate purpose of course today is to express gratitude to Owen Arthur, but I want to extend that to his generation, a generation of excellence. However, we must never take public service for granted. In expressing gratitude to that generation, in expressing gratitude to Owen Arthur, whose death I regret.

I repeat the words of the poet Laurence Binyon. "Those shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we shall remember them". Those retired, those died and those otherwise forgotten let us remember them and let us express gratitude.

It was only after Owen Arthur's death that I saw the video of his last speech in Parliament and it was an amazing speech. It was short, but quite an amazing speech. That speech was amazing because it contained his prescription for the conduct of this Parliament. With an amazing prescience he said that this period in Barbados's

history would be the most difficult period over which any Parliament would have supervision.

He wrote his prescription and he left his legacy for this Parliament. He left his legacy by which this Parliament must conduct itself. It was not contained in any lofty micro or macro-economic theories. This child of a humbled mother and father went right back to his roots and he quoted Paul's famous letter to the Philippians. "Finally brothering, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things. With those words, Owen Arthur left Parliamentary service in Barbados.

On August 14, 2020 at 4.00 p.m., the metaphorical clock that was marking the day that was Owen Arthur's political life conjoined with the clock of reality at 4:00 and it was a sad moment.

When all of us stood in that church and saw a casket bearing the remains of the man who had given service to this country, and I thought not only of him, but I thought of his generation that has retired without gratitude. I thought of his generation that may yet die without expression of gratitude. The casket bore those mortal remains out of that parish church and we all men and women who are conscientious must have felt the sting of death, the sting of his death and the sting of the death perhaps of a generation retired and some cases dead.

However, I seek reassurance, but although there is a sting of death that there shall be no victory in the grave since we expect that the light of the contribution made by that generation, the light of the contribution made by that patriot called Owen Arthur must continue to be eliminated across public service in this country. If I can be so presumptuous as to even suggest to his relatives and fellow parishioners in St. Peter, that a kind tribute would be to erect above his grave that lies within that humble soil at Nazareth to erect above that grave, such as they have done with John F. Kennedy an eternal flame. An eternal light as testimony and testament to what he did and testimony to generations yet unborn that on the humble soil of Nazareth and the humble soil of Ben Hill and All Saints and Mile and a Quarter, once ran a child who became a man of excellence and who ran this country according to the highest principles of integrity. I think that would be a fit tribute to this gentleman.

Now today is the only time given to me to say farewell to Owen Arthur. Permit me to do it again with the poet Martin Carter in the second verse of his poem called Death of a Comrade, "Dear Comrade, if it must be you speak no more with me, nor smile no more with me, nor march no more with me, then let me take a patience and a

calm -- for even now the greener leaf explodes sun brightens stone and all the river burns. Now from the mourning vanguard moving on dear Comrade I salute you and I say, death will not find us thinking that we die."

I am so pleased to be addressing this Parliament in the presence of his relatives. It is the most important portion of what I do here today.

I condole with Mrs. July Arthur. I condole with Sabrina and Leah; his daughters. I condole with Isabella. I condole with his sister Valmay and brother Richard. I extend those sincere condolences to the extended family and to his excellent generation well represented in the persons of Dr. Elliot Douglin and Mr. Haynesley Benn, wherever you are this afternoon. They are excellent men. They are excellent members of that extended family and excellent representatives of that generation who built this country over the last 50 years. I condole with all of you and ask simply that may Owen Seymour Arthur's spirit journey with God. I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The brother that spoke before me, the Parliamentary Representative of Christ Church South should know that the last time I interacted with the former Prime Minister, the late Owen Arthur, was in your presence. I would not tell the story of the nature of the conversation but, of course, at that time there was some tension between Owen and I. I said on more than one occasion to my colleagues that I wanted to have the privilege to say that I am sorry but these are the vicissitudes of life, especially in politics itself. I think that I have also had the experience during my days in Cabinet prior to 2008 where for the first time in my life I felt as though I was a victim of power in Owen Arthur turning to his right at the time in Cabinet and saying, "Pressy, I will fire you."

In those strong terms he said that and as Mr. Payne said earlier, I trembled because it was the first time I was coming face to face with a man that had so much power vested in him at the specific time. He went on to say, "If I was Prime Minister when Don Blackman was doing the things that he did, I would have fired him too." I do not know what inspired the comments and at the time I was a bit jittery at the way in which he responded but the reality is that here I was a man that once worked for \$350 per week, knew about buying a Suzuki van, and selling potatoes and yams. I held an academic degree in Barbados but was not able to get a job.

Now, a Prime Minister was taking away a ministerial salary from me but he returned me to a Member of Parliament, so I felt that I was still relatively well off. I

gave him the story. I told him that as Prime Minister the prerogative is yours to make that decision. I am hoping that model, as much as I loved him, did not influence more recent events that occurred in my political experiences. Let me say this to you, Sir. The absence of Owen Arthur constitutes a major political void in contemporary history of Barbados. The things that he stood for were special guidelines that he bequeathed to all of us.

The mantra in which he constantly expressed to me underpins the kind of person that he was. Many people will have their different perspectives of him but I will tell you mine. He was committed to a journey related to the eradication of poverty. He echoed it in the mantra of I am here to stop poor people from being poor. The Leader of the Opposition said it. It was his rallying cry many times in the election campaign but it was his mantra also. It was a political underpinning that shaped everything that he was because he set about on a journey. It was very clear. No politician who comes into politics, not only leaders, who say that they do not have any philosophical guidelines, do not know what it is they are into politics for, do not know what it is they want to achieve and have no purpose or nothing to defend should never be in here because he does not know what he wants to do for the people who elected him to come to Parliament.

This is my view. Owen Arthur was very clear that he had to find a way of counting the traditional models in society in which there was that level of inequity in people not distributing the wealth of this country in the manner that it ought to be done. This came as a consequence of having a framework of what he wanted to achieve. This why Owen Arthur very early in his political career said that these outdated traditional institutions which we have had in the form of the National Housing Corporation (NHC) could not do what he wanted done as expeditiously as it ought to be done. Owen Arthur said to himself that it is imperative that new configurations be created to deliver.

Poverty is not debatable. You do not defer poverty. When a man is hungry or needs a house to live in, you do not put it back until next year. You have to find a mechanism to address the social concerns of people immediately and Owen Arthur established the UDC. He went as far as to put legislation in place to make sure there was a body of laws or provisions in the law that will help him to form the guidelines to how we respond to the public issues in urban Barbados and did the same thing for rural Barbados. He was very clear and understood the urgency.

The concept of economic enfranchisement was on the agenda. I heard others talk about ownership of property already and we do not have to try to create new strands to demonstrate that we understand him better than anyone else. The reality is that you look at the trajectory and consistency of the man and the things that he focuses

attention on. The economy was fundamental but not excluding social policy and social engineering. He understood it well. I will tell you this. I remember on an occasion he was driving across Mayers Avenue in my constituency, the constituency which I have the honour of representing many people but more so the poor people in Licorish Village; My Lords Hill, the Ivy, et cetera.

As I said, I would die with my boots on. Nobody under the sun could even tell me to walk away. I walk away when the people tell me to walk away, so I want to make that very clear to everyone in here and all those within earshot of my voice. There will be a time when there will be a need because I am not here until eternity but as long as I have breath in my body and this intellect remains as lucid even if other people believe that it is not I will remain until the people say no more. Nobody cannot purchase me. I am not an auctioneer. I am not selling the authority that has been vested in me by the people of St. Michael East. When I met Owen Arthur that day he said look, I want to have a conversation with you. I must have a conversation with you. He was coming out of a shop that we normally call "Gloria Hall shop" in M??? Road. He said the Government cannot do it alone, we have to work in collaboration with the number of institutions, the number of non-government institutions, he was not talking about the Toastmasters, he was not talking about the Lion's Club, he was talking about the Israel Lovell Foundation, the Pinelands Theatre Workshop and I knew this man had a vision and he understood the required organs that would allow him to achieve the things that he went about to achieve and on that occasion he asked me about the programmes that we were doing. At that time, I was the director of the Israel Lovell Foundation and he told me look, get a project proposal and send it to me but make sure that the items that you put in that proposal would in a major way address issues of poverty and the eradication of poverty. You have a lot of poverty in this community and I want you to make a meaningful contribution. The first time I ever sat down with the executive of that body and drafted up a project proposal and within a short space of time I got a response. I must tell you that when The Right Honourable Owen Arthur was no more, I never got any help from any of the Government agencies, you know. Not only underneath the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), but under this Government too. Never got any help since then so I could not continue the programmes and it is just from taking money out of my pocket that the institution survived, but he was therefore us, and he took, just like he sprung from obscurity, from Bend Hill, he recognised that ordinary men and women can play a meaningful role as well because it was clear, when Owen Arthur returned here - Owen Arthur was no national figure -- he was considered the boy from obscurity in that election and the mystery of that election is as mystifying as the one we had when we had the 30-love because he was defeated by 1 vote and then you had a recount and if you remember, Mrs. Leacock on

spent a few seconds or a day as a Member of Parliament and Owen Arthur from a 1 vote defeat rose to become the Prime Minister of Barbados, from obscurity to Parliament and as indicated by my good friend, my colleague from Christ Church South, The Right Honourable Owen Arthur spent three terms. No other Prime Minister in the history of this country has spent three terms and we must always remember that. I think that this party would be worst of if we do not respect the legacy of the The Right Honourable Owen Arthur. If I told you that at the 11th hour we had tensions, and I am now telling you this, I believe he was probably one of the most honest persons speaking on this issue. He was very clear and no one must forget that, that at all times -- I am not going to tell you he was a paragon of virtue. I am not going to say that even within the presence of his family -- he was like any other human being. There is a time when The Right Honourable Owen Arthur's tongue dripped acid. He would cut up opponents, not only here and at the regional level, but it was also a testimony of the sound intellectual content on almost every issue under the sun. He was not superficial on any subject matter. Whatever you talked about you would hear people in here saying The Right Honourable Owen Arthur spoke almost like a scribe in relation to philosophical concepts. I gave The Right Honourable Owen Arthur over 20 books on philosophy that I got from the BBC and he read them all. He invited me to his house and took me in the basement and he said to me, anytime you need to read anything come here and read it. That is the kind of man that he was. He tried to help even when he felt that he had people who did not qualify to reach up to what is required in modern times he was prepared bend the individual, especially if you came from grass-root origins, and a commitment to the defence of this sovereignty is mirrored in the manner in which he handled, yes, imperialism. When they wanted to come down in here and ignore the laws of Barbados The Right Honourable Owen Arthur held meetings and I remember, the Prime Minister went here and indicated that he wished he had the courage of The Right Honourable Owen Arthur to stand up to the American presidency in the Shipriders Agreement. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur said not here, Barbados would not fall victim to the tenants of any agreement of that kind or any abuse of coming into territorial waters, 166 square mile island, you cannot ignore that so you always understood the autonomy which he had as a leader and when anyone tried to undermine that well then you had to face the tongue. Fortunately, he did not have an army but you had to face his tongue and he would say what he has to say. Not only that, it took lots of courage, not only to speak at Howards University on the concept of reparation but he went up many Caribbean leaders and even ordinary people in Barbados today doubt that there is any change of any form of reparatory justice. Some people do not even want me to speak on issues related to that crime called slavery and colonialism. People feel that you are a madman. When people are walking around here abusing all kinds of rights in Barbados and

every time you talk about it people find ways of putting additional pressure on institutions and causing people to be victims, The Right Honourable Owen Arthur stood up and The Right Honourable Owen Arthur established the Pan-African Commission and there were people in Government and Ministers then, who never wanted to identify with the Pan-African Commission. They did not want it. It ended up in the Prime Minister's Office because they could not get the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to accept it as an organ of the state. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur pulled it in his Ministry. I wish it had achieved more than it did but it was a new formation, not known to the Caribbean, not known to the entire world. They had no precedent to follow, so the persons who went there had to find traditional ways of doing things without offending the traditional areas where people wanted to preserve their own ministries and their own little territories in departments and so on. They had to find traditional ways as to how can I communicate with countries across the world if I have a Commission that is out here not under foreign affairs, how can I get it done, and the Commission put important matters on the agenda and those things that we put on the agenda then are some of the most important planks in the development of the region that is on the agenda now because very few people even understand what reparation is. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur had the foresight and then the Right Honourable Owen Arthur went up to the University Of Hull University, the University of William Wilberforce, the same university that Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, K. A. went to and took the argument there. This man is a colossal. This is no Lilliputian in politics. You do not stand up to an American President and speak the way how he did. You do not come up with these policies and do not expect a reaction, and Barbados continued to develop.

When he said to us: "I will restore that eight per cent cut ..." Do you remember that, Sir? - And immediately after victory he set about to make sure that the public servants of Barbados got the restoration of that cut. The court ruled on a specific case but this is a layman pronouncing on a major breach of the Constitution and the statutory provisions of Barbados. This is the layman's view, that nobody should have lose that case in a court at that specific time. I do not have to support everything that the Judiciary say. I will never be one of those people because if I wanted to do that I would got to be one of those people that are involved in the apartheid system in South Africa or working among the establishment in the Antebellum South where I believe in segregation and the apartheid system, so everything that I hear about the law I do not fall victim to it and believe that the law is always right, I does deal with something a little higher than the law something called justice. Sir, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur on more than one occasion stood up in the manner that he ought to have stood up for the people of Barbados.

Sir, this man the Right Honourable Owen Arthur, I believe epitomised something that is important. This party from its groundings in the 1930s was shaped in the initial... I think that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South also indicated that that philosophy emerged from the people. This is no elitist hand down. This was no succession rights. He had no succession rights. His father, his mother or anything were all unknown in the body politics of Barbados. He came from no traditional family. The people put him there because they trust him and all that he was doing in his time was bringing this party back on track. I know political parties got a tendency of hailing everybody. Whoever is the leader, they're the greatest man on earth, they're the greatest woman on earth. That is fanaticism. Only cronies echo that foolishness. Probably the Right Honourable Owen Arthur had the problem of not abandoning course but he had the problem of trying to give a little satisfaction to some working class cronies who felt that handouts were necessary because they felt they were important. Sir, all Prime Ministers got to be careful with cronies. Even today cronies are dangerous things to the body politics and when they talk they are talking about themselves. They are not interested in nobody, they have no track record of doing anything for their mothers, their sisters, their aunts or their grandmothers. They did nothing for nobody over the years. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur understood parasites, people that suck the blood of the State. People who commit themselves for a lifetime to the betterment of the society itself must not be allowed to dominate in this country because we would be breaching the fundamentals of the principles that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur set for us. Those are the legacies that must be protected at all times. It is fundamental. Mr. Speaker, if I never said anything to my colleagues in Parliament that makes sense let that be my first sensible comment. Do not allow cronies to emerge because you will pay the price. Cronies are parasites, and the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was very clear.

Sir, sometimes I will just be saying these things with no intention to be offensive in any way to anybody but I had the greatest admiration for him because he never went off course but of course challenges would occur along the way because in my experience in politics sometimes you meet some ambitious people and those ambitious people probably have a greed, believe that they should be rewarded for doing nothing. Sometimes as a leader these people are all around you every day. I recall on the eve of the election before 2008 I was the Ministry of Social Transformation at the time and I kept saying to the Honourable Prime Minister then: PM, I understand the outstanding track record which you have with about 6 per cent unemployment level, which was considered as full employment in Barbados according to the theories of the economists, and that has nothing to do with who were underemployed and who cannot eat when the day come but the economists put these things down on paper and

conclude that everything is alright cause the figures look good, and you have over \$2.7 billion in the foreign reserves, and the Prime Minister said then: Pressy, the track record good". I said to him: PM, I do not like what I am hearing. I had a discussion and the Opposition Party at the time was very confident and I remember the last Prime Minister the then Leader of the Opposition saying to me: I am walking on water and he said I am waiting on you because I might hold different views sometimes, not because I hate anybody but these are my views and I feel good when I say what I want to say. As I cannot say what I want to say, you and I are going to fall out. It is even so with my mother who is dead. We are going to fall out. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur said to me: "I am alright Pressy, I am ready". I told him: "Prime Minister, I still believe that we need to use the social services to pump some capital inside the local environment as a form of preparatory work for victory. I do not believe..."

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are using some very crafty language. Please continue.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, someone is even trying to take me a little further, they are calling it "pork man" politics. I do not think that we were thinking about that at the time but I still felt that it was a necessity for greater distribution, and although we had the aesthetics of the figures looking very appealing and so on, I thought that reality required that we still go pump some largesse inside the individual communities. When he stood up, he did so on what he called a principle that he had done enough, that if he could not win on that, then that was it. He was very confident. At that time my view is that he was beginning to disconnect from the reality of how poor people responded in crisis. Nobody does not want to hear any economist telling them from any Gross Domestic Product or per capita income, when a man is broke, when so many people broke, when so many people are unemployed, and we must never reach that level to talk about \$2.7 billion in reserves and full of glee [when we say that], when whenever you turned a corner you [can] see poor people lying down alongside of the street - no housing, no food, cannot feed their children, young men on the street doing anything when they want money, and you could got 20 police officers here, when a fellow want money and he asked for it and you do not pull it out, he tells you: "Get money," that is the environment which you are in. He tells you: "Go get money, you come out broke?" and the fellow pulls the gun out of his pocket.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Owen Arthur, in my mind, remained constant, he was always connected, but as I said, sometimes you take advise from other people who visit Bridgetown once in every 365 days, [who has] never passed through Nelson Street yet, [who has] never bought a

lunch in Nelson Street yet, [who] does not know where Swan Street is because they normally shop at Cave Shepherd, they know all the clubs (well, they do not call them that) these people enjoy the Yacht Club and the other clubs. These are the place these people go and would want to make you believe that the “Master” has blessed them with a special talent, and that they must rule things and dictate and boss round people as they like, and treat people as they like. Do you know when these people went to capture these people from the African continent these people gave them trinkets because people believed that you are so cheap that they can do anything they want to do to you? And then tokenism and you are recaptured. Owen Arthur understood that. I do not have to tell you all the conversations of its kind.

Sir, one of these days I will speak more openly on his philosophy that I believe because if I say everything that I have heard him said and things that he has told me, (I am not saying this because he is not here) I know that he understood it and he kept saying to me over and over again: “I have reconnected this political party to the grassroots of Barbados.” That is what I am talking about, that he has reconnected this political party and that he was watching it carefully, he was watching to see if the grassroots remained connected or if they would become disconnected. He said to remain connected to the grassroots. He said not to mind what we heard, there were many who never wanted him to be here. Mr. Speaker, Sir, he was not lying because I remember hearing the echoes of people talking about puffy his eyes were. They did practically everything to discredit him from being ever worthy, and he defeated all of those things to turn out to be one of the best, and in my view I am struggling to determine who is the best, between him and the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. They are two distinguished Prime Ministers in Barbados. Either the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, or the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow has to be the best. Who does not like that, I am sorry for them. Because they have transformed, they were not cash boys, none of them has ever worked at Fogarty or DaCosta “running coins”, these are decision-makers, [these are] people who have made decisions to change lives; people who said that black people must have an opportunity to go university. There was no university around here then. They were trying to pollute your head at Codrington College.

The first man who [has] ever sent me to the Senate and who felt that I had some worth was the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. I remember Cameron Tudor saying to me when I was in the Senate: “Trevor, do you know that in 1961 when Errol Walton Barrow wanted to introduce free secondary education universally, I told him that I had no money. He said: “I told you to start it, money will come.” This was part of the void in the body politics. Cameron Tudor me that he started it, that he did

not know who he was going to pay, or how he was going to pay for anything, but that he started it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I likened that to the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, because when he recognised that he had to redistribute this wealth across the country he said that these were the mechanisms, that it must be started, that he must eradicate poverty. He put me as consultant. I had won my seat. He called me one day and said, he wanted me to be Consultant to work in collaboration with Hamilton Lashley. He was the “wild” boy from the Pine and I was the “wild” boy from the Ivy, but they saw virtue in both us and asked us to work together and so “Hammie” and I started off working together on the backs of trucks. We did not have any vehicle, but we got on the backs of trucks to drive through the various districts across Barbados. I remember telling people that if I could have removed the house today and replaced it by night, that they would have gotten one and so we both worked magic.

He got tarnished in this country because of an ackee tree, because people took the ackee tree and made a mountain of it, and the same man could not even pay his bills. He was not achieving anything by working in the manner with anybody. He was very genuine about what he was doing. And I see people took him and jettisoned him out the body politics. I do not be surprised about anything that happens to me because I used to hear every day: “Brother, if you ever do something that the media or politician even within the party to which you belong can point at, you are going to get a Sunday Paper front page.” He said they would treat me worse than how they treated Donville Inniss, and I watched that man there now because somebody said that he gave away \$11 000 to cut down an ackee tree and it was a national debate. Men steal all kinds of money in Barbados from the state and the taxpayers of this country. Owen Arthur said to me, “I want you to make sure you look.” The people did not even come to us in many cases. We went into the communities and we identified all kinds of derelict buildings. We identified poverty. We brought in carpenters and masons and we reconstructed houses for poor people all across Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have two more minutes.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you, Sir. We decided we would repair tenantry roads. We worked with the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission, but mainly the urban commission, to make sure that land which people had lived on for a considerable time.... At one time I think it was about two houses or more in order to qualify for the right to own the land, and then the Opposition at the time argued strongly that we were depriving even landlords who had relatives living overseas and that when they wanted to come back home, they would

have no land. They moved it up to three houses or more, then they wanted to move to about five houses or more. They could not understand the philosophical thinking that was applied to the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act and better interpreted under the Owen Arthur Government. There are hundreds if not thousands of Barbadians who were landless and who own land today across Barbados as a consequence of Owen Seymour Arthur.

There were people who walked and stumped their toes every day on unpaved roads, who had to walk with three and four pairs of high-heeled shoes, “baby dolls” and all, through the mud, and Owen Arthur put small contractors in place in order to provide well-paved roads for them. There is evidence, empirical and strongly supported by any scientific data, that what Owen Arthur said is what Owen Arthur did. There are lots of people who talk very pretty but when we scratch down and we are looking for the records of what they have done in life, you cannot even remember a quotation from them. You know there are people who are in politics for 20 years and 15 years and nobody can even remember them. Do you know if they get put out of here that nobody remembers them?

Asides.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: I tell you because they never even fed their mothers. They never even fed their mothers. I know men in Parliament whose families are suffering all like now and they will not help anybody. Everybody is trying to see if they can enjoy all of the ostentation that is possible while they are in Parliament, and they are going and looking for their mother living in a little chattel house, brothers struggling. Sometimes when brothers are before the court they are hiding; they do not want anybody to know it is their brother. Do you understand the kind of society that we are living in? Do you understand Owen Arthur had a clear vision? Have you ever heard about a visionary? He said to himself, “Mission must be accomplished.” While George L. Beckford was focusing on persistent poverty, Owen Arthur was saying, “I am concentrating on the eradication of poverty”; an ideal type for some people but he saw it as a reality that could become true. Go and read Beckford.

There are some people who believe poverty must be here forever and that we can never eradicate poverty. There are also some people in here still who believe that we must concentrate on the preservation of the middle-class. Owen Arthur understood how we are to uplift the working class in the circumstances, because there is a fragile middle-class and we must help to sustain them but you must ignore the majority class which comprises the hardest working people in this country. I know I must come home but, therefore, Sir, let me thank you. I thank you, Sir. I am coming to the conclusion every day as I detail the examination of this great man that this is the best Prime Minister Barbados has

ever had. I seriously believe that. The latter days of his life unfortunately might have overshadowed many things, but there are a few things that I have mentioned to you while certainly not expanding on the positive benefits of things like repairing roads, putting in roads, providing housing, making sure there was a poverty eradication programme, reparations, the Pan African Commission, the Urban Development Commission, the Rural Development Commission and the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act.

When you look at that within 14 years of the man’s contribution, nobody can better that; not since 1951 under self-government. When you look at the amount of ordinary people whom Owen Arthur embraced and was not subject to the pressures of cronies, he protected them. I want all of us to be guided by that great legacy which he has given us and which must remain the blueprint of the Barbados Labour Party as we move forward in a very progressive way into the general development of Barbados. Sir, I want to thank you very much. I know you are always complaining about this helicopter.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a new session, Sir, so I will not complain about the helicopter.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The helicopter will not be allowed to linger.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Thanks very much. Obviously I stood within the framework of the Rules which you are responsible for. Thank you very much, Sir.

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

Hon. R. ST.C TOPPIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not propose to make a contribution to wax as philosophical as the two speakers who went before me. I rather really intend to make quite a practical presentation this afternoon. I want to begin by saying that Barbados is the poorer on the passing of the late Professor Arthur. I truly believe that he was a phenomenal man who was really determined to use his skills and his ability to ensure that there was a betterment in the lot of people in this country, particularly the poor in this society. His journey, particularly in his early days in politics, was not an easy journey. It was not straightforward. After a very torrid nomination process for the first by-election, he ended up finding out that he had lost by actually just one vote, which is a tormenting reality. Having lost by one vote, he then had to go through a court case and then another by-election before he made it finally into this hallowed Chamber; really only because of the determination of himself and that of then Prime Minister Tom Adams.

After winning his seat in 1984 as a Government Member of Parliament (MP), the Government lost the next election and he became not only an Opposition Member but an Opposition member of only three MPs who became known as the “three blind mice” who had to go into Parliament every single week and face a torrid Government bench every single week. He had to do that, Mr. Speaker, and that could not have been easy.

I know people may see that as a negative, I really feel that that is where Owen Arthur really honed his political skills. Having of one three people every week to formulate arguments, shadowing endless numbers of Government Ministries, that is where Owen Arthur honed his political skills. As fate would have it he then went on to become the leader of the Barbados Labour Party and within a few years of becoming leader of the Barbados Labour Party, he then actually became the Prime Minister of Barbados, a very admirable feat after a very shaky start.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Owen Arthur’s ascension to the position of Prime Minister brought many benefits obviously firstly to St. Peter and of course to the Barbados Labour Party and also to the country of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, he was a visionary Prime Minister and he was loved by the masses of this country. I make that point very strongly, because after Sir Grantley Adams, you know of the fantastic contribution of Tom Adams. The transformative policies he put in place for this country. You know of the work of Bernard St. John who was actually my mentor, an idol in politics. I actually considered him to be the most intelligent leader that Barbados ever have had.

However, it was Owen Arthur who was most loved by the masses of this country since Sir Grantley Adams in the Barbados Labour Party. One thing that he did was that the Barbados Labour Party always had the image of the party of the business class, even the party white elite if we are to be honest. Owen Arthur shook that image - that so called stain off of the Barbados Labour Party and gave it the image of being a party of the masses and for ordinary Barbadians.

However, as flattered as he was by that and the extent of which the masses loved him, was clear and obvious, but he was not flattered by that because he knew why he went into politics and he was determined. Even that flattery was not going to take him off of the path upon which he had embarked when he decided to start his political journey. That was as I said to improve the lot of people and as we heard from so many others today so far to stop poor people from being poor.

He set about in a very discipline way to carry out what he saw as his mission. From punctuality to policy formulation and party implementation, he was a

perfectionist. Yes Mr. Speaker, even with punctuality. I have seen him already ripped some people to threads for turning up to meetings just 15 or 20 minutes late and even less time than that. Even people who were actually volunteering, not even Members of Parliament to assist. He was so disciplined, he was the political equivalent to Michael Jackson in music. He was a perfectionist. No imperfection at all was tolerated by him.

Although he was a qualified economist, one of the best around as we all know, he did not set out to prove in politics that he was to be seen as the best economist in the world. He did not see his economic qualification as the end in itself. He saw his economic qualification as a tool, the tool that he was going to use to ensure that he could empower, enfranchise and better as many people as he could and the best he could in this society.

When you sat in room with Owen Arthur and other economist as well, invariably they would speak first. You would hear from some who I would call self-appointed economist and he would say well it sound pretty okay. Then actual economist would speak and he would say well they sound very good, but cannot be anything left now to say. When Owen Arthur joined the discussion, there was so much else to decide that he said, and sometimes he would take the discussions up to another level all together. Mr. Speaker, you know what, he never left the discussion on that other level, he would always bring it down and break it right down to show that what he was taking about and show you how it was impacting you on your kitchen table and your pocket. He was not interested in being seen as the world’s greatest economist. His economic qualifications was the tool that he was going to use for bringing about a betterment for those in society. He was not just an academic or theoretical economist, but he was about using his skills to bring about change.

He started out as a Prime Minister finding an unemployment rate in this country around 23 or 24 per cent. He pledged to create 30 000 jobs and he did it, in fact, more than 30 000 jobs. He found Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act which was revolutionary, enfranchising thousands and thousands of ordinary Barbadians. He decided he was going to go further dealing with the issue urban tenancies to empower and enfranchise thousands more again as part of the property owning democracy in this country.

He established the Urban and Rural Development Commission to ensure that the little things that mattered to people all over Barbados, urban and rural were looked after. As he was doing that, given his vast knowledge of every area of Government and also his reliance on his Ministers, the ones that are appointed, particularly the ones that are important to economic ministries and I must concur with a point made by an earlier speaker, that he did in fact

give his Ministers quite a lot of gratitude, he really did. Of course if you did not deliver, you will have to explain why, but certainly he gave you free reign having appointed you to do certain things.

I even remember when there was a time I became a Minister not too long before and I had make a trip with him as part of Barbados's delegation to Guyana in the intersession Heads of Government meeting. I was at the airport and I went to depart and I realise that he was not there. Then now the late Carol Inks who was PS in his Ministry came and said to me, Minister there is a problem with the hospital and you are now the leader of this delegation. I said, you talking to me. Intersession heads Prime Ministers and I am now being told as we are at the airport waiting to depart that I am now the leader of the delegation because the Prime Minister has to stand back. He will come, but I will have to hold on until he gets there. I went to Guyana as Head of the Delegation, got the briefs, stayed in the room the next night, come down to breakfast the next morning after that to a meeting and I had to go as best as I could with all the advisors and information I had, sit at the table and make interjections as instructed that Barbados needed to. When the meeting was about to finish, Owen Arthur turned up. I told him that he threw me in some hot water. He said, "Mr. Toppin, if I did not think you could do it I would not have asked you to do it". This is what he told me and I never forgot those words.

He had some confidence in me and eventually when I speak to that later in my presentation. As he was dealing with being the practical economist, he used his vast knowledge of all the areas of the economy to bring about overall economic benefit for Barbados. You saw record foreign reserves and there is a place for that. People cannot pooh-pooh these things because as I said earlier, there is no love without money. Therefore, there were record foreign reserves, employment and tourism arrivals. Manufacturing was booming and that is just a small number of things that I would list.

In the midst of that, to deal with the national consciousness he appointed the Pan African Commission and established the National Heroes Day. He was a comprehensive politician and Prime Minister who dealt with all of the possible angles. I would repeat that today Barbados is poorer on the passing of the late Owen Arthur. Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me if I did not speak about our relationship and what he did for me in politics. I started my involvement in politics in 1987. I won my seat in 1994 but it took me seven years to win the seat. I started in 1987 and contested the 1991 election under Henry Forde, now Sir Henry Forde, and then the 1994 election under Owen Arthur.

If I am to be honest, Mr. Speaker, I have to say that it was clear to the blind that in my earlier political days I

was definitely part of Owen Arthur's plans for how he wanted to do things and handle the affairs of this country. In fact, to be even more honest there was tension between us. I must say more from his side than mine but he was my senior, so I could not have any tension towards him. There was obvious tension and he did not have me in his plans. It was pretty clear.

In fact, I remember a conversation I had in the Leader of the Opposition's office in Parliament around 1993 because I was gearing up again for the 1994 election. They were in fact two other people in the constituency both calling his name and saying that he sent them to seek the nomination for that constituency. One of whom I believe was true but the other person was a complete madman, so I did not really believe that person was sent. However, I remember trying to set up a meeting with Owen Arthur repeatedly. He was setting times and I would arrive, but he was not there. Eventually his secretary, Shirley King, called me while I was working at Bernard St. John's office and told me he was at the office so come now.

I ran from my office to the Opposition's office. I was sitting there and he was talking. He did not acknowledge me honestly but I was determined that our eyes had made four, and I was not leaving until I got to speak to him. After about 35 minutes of sitting and waiting, he told me to come. I went into the office and told him that I had come because I have an interest in contesting the next election for St. Michael North. I told him I was seeking the nomination but that there were people stating that he had sent them. He replied, "So what?" I told him I had just come to get his thoughts. He said that if I was so thin-skinned that you cannot take on two people, then you should not be in politics.

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We started to rally each other for a while and then, after it got to a certain point I decided that I had to show what I was made of. I told Mr. Arthur that if I wanted to seek the nomination for St. Michael North, I was going to seek it, get it and he could not stop me even if he came and ran against me for the nomination he could not get it. I told him that I only came to him as a courtesy, so he must understand that. He told me, that I really underestimated him. I told him that he underestimated the support that I have in the constituency.

He started driving around the constituency and getting a few agents to drive around to check on the level of popularity I had. I know of one encounter he had with someone that was not very pleasant. Afterwards, he started to back off and allow the nomination process to play out the way that it should. However, I had to stand up to him. As I said, I was not a part of his original plan. I got the nomination, won the seat and the BLP formed the

Government. What does he do? He does not appoint me to the Cabinet although a number of other first-time winners such as Elizabeth Thompson, Mia Mottley and Reginald Farley, who did not even contest for a seat were put in the Cabinet excluding me.

He told me that to go and run a Statutory Board and get some practice that he would get back to me. I did that. The following year, Richard Cheltenham resigned from the Cabinet. He called me one day after the kola syrup No-Confidence Motion that David Thompson attempted but it back fired against the Member for St. Michael North East. I had to make a speech as Chairman of the National Petroleum Corporation (NPC) which apparently impressed him. I got a phone call around 3'o clock on a Wednesday afternoon and my secretary told me it was the Prime Minister on the phone. I took the call and he told me that Rawle Eastmond is not well so he wanted me to act as Minister of Agriculture for 30 days in the first instance.

I asked effective when and he told me the next day. This may surprise you but I actually told him that I could not do it because I had two legal cases. One was Thursday and the other Friday for which I was fully paid which was the decisive factor. You could not have been fully paid and not turn up. He told me that the Cabinet Secretary would call me. The Cabinet Secretary called in a few minutes and asked how I could work around tomorrow. I told her Magistrate court was starting at 9 o'clock. She asked if I could get there for 10 o'clock because I would be sworn in for 9 o'clock. I went to the Cabinet and he told me that he wanted me to get six projects to Cabinet in that month.

After I took my briefing, I told him that one was out of my power and that it could not be done. In that month, I got all five of those things to the Cabinet by working up until 2.00 a.m. at the Ministry of Agriculture. After the month, he indicates to me that he will keep me in the Cabinet but not as a Minister but as a Minister of State; not a full Minister. It was always a situation where I had to continue proving myself to him. Then after I served that time as Minister of State and got a number of things done in relation to International Transport, he invited me then in the 1999 General Elections, to then serve fully as a Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business Development. I had to set up a Fair Trading Commission (FTC) which I did. I remember twice being overseas, I forgot to mention to you that twice when I was overseas on Government business he issued a recall for me to come back to Barbados right away. Once when there were some problems in the cruise industry vis-à-vis Grenada and some other matter which I cannot recall so I had to pull up root from overseas on Government business and come back right away but there was a third time when I got the call I was overseas. When it came through I was in Miami, this was not on Government business and I got this call from the Consul General, Ben Mardle, that the Cabinet Office

was trying to reach me because the Prime Minister had indicated he wanted me to come back home right away to present a Cabinet Paper. I said, well you know Ben, you have a choice. You can tell the Prime Minister that you tried to reach me but you did not get me. He said he is not a liar and he is not doing that. I said well, I agree with you. In your position I would not do that either because I am not a liar either. Then I said well then you would have to tell the Cabinet Office to tell the Prime Minister that I am not coming back. There is a lot of financial commitments I made, family members were involved on the trip and I am not coming back home. He told me, well you know the Prime Minister is not going to be very pleased to hear that. I said, well, he will get over it or he will make a decision. Such is the decision that he will make and I will await that decision. After I hung up from Ben, I never heard anything more and the vacation was completed but when I got back to Barbados and went to Cabinet the next meeting, his face was set up towards me and then eventually it was not set up anymore, as simple as that, but I always had, in my early days, to fight up a bit, but as time went on, precisely because of firstly my performance as he perceived it as a minister, and then my ability to stand my ground is what earn me his respect. I really want to say to young politicians and aspiring politicians, you have to stand your ground. Nobody is telling you to curse a Prime Minister or disrespect a Prime Minister but sometimes you can say, I do not agree, Prime Minister. That is not hard to do. I have done it already, as I said, many, many times and I did too because the politician or the political leader who can intimidate me or can induce fear in me is not yet born. That is a fact. What I did was I took the tension that was coming from Owen Arthur towards me and I used it to toughen me up as a politician. In fact, I would say that he really put me through the hottest fires and I think I have become the finest steel and for that, Mr. Speaker, I thank him, I really, really thank him.

Those were the early days, Mr. Speaker. He did go on, as I said, to respect me quite a lot even if he did not fully like me, he respected me. As the years went by it reached the stage where we did develop a bond and I could say then, yes, he liked me and, in fact, he went places repeatedly and spoke in glowing terms about me as a Minister saying that I was one of his finest performing Ministers. In my Ministry, in fact, in recent times, he was doing some work in my Ministry and he actually repeatedly said to the staff, not that I was one of, but that I was his best performing Minister and that I was the only Minister who ever fired him. That is a fact, he used to say that, which, of course, was not true, but in the last 10 to 12 years we did become very, very close. I was able to call upon him for assistance with anything that I needed advice on and he knew everything, to be honest with you. I have even had a session with a group of elders at his house one day when he referred us to some literature and some books, reports, his library was vast, and his knowledge was vast,

and most importantly, he was always willing to share information. He saw no point in hoarding information. He was willing to share it with you so that when he shares it with you, it was not that he had lost the knowledge of it but he had help you to learn something or to know something that you had not known before.

Mr. Speaker, as I near the end, because I do not think I am anywhere near 30 minutes now, I want to say though that one thing that will stand out in my mind about Owen Arthur is that he really was the 'comeback kid'. In the last decade or so, it was no secret that he made some statements, one Honourable Member referred to his tongue and the acidity that it could sometimes effuse, and we all know there were times when he made some scathing remarks, some totally unprovoked and unnecessary, and I could not understand, for the life of me, what was possessing him to say these things. There were times when he was seen in the company of some characters, I am talking politically here now, on the other side of the political divide in the form of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), and I called them characters because I feel generous and would not call them what they really should be called but there were times when he would hang with them in a way that would mystify me, it would confuse me. I did not know how a man of that calibre could be associated with that type of person at all and he would sometimes make a lot of statements that you could not understand why, unprovoked and unnecessary. There were times when he did make some statements, in my view, totally provoked and therefore his acidic response was entirely, in my view, understandable and correct and I supported them, that is a fact, but whatever the reason, no matter how you got vex with him, no matter how the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) supports got vex with him, he always came back. He was the comeback kid. In a matter of weeks, if that long, everything he said was forgotten and he was embraced again. That was because, not only of his likability but because of his share ability and the fact that the knowledge that he had was always needed to be a part of the process going forward and even -- and I was very pleased about this -- even after the last General Elections, even after the ranker of the election and the comments that he had made, he still came back again and he was embraced again. Let me tell you something else too, he never, ever, ever, stopped being a Barbados Labour Party (BLP) supporter. He was always a Barbados Labour Party supporter. He did what he did because he felt he had to do it. Agree or disagree, that was his opinion. He felt he had to do it, but at the heart of it all he never ever stop being a Barbados Labour Party supporter. Even in my Ministry when he was doing work, because the last thing he did was the preparation of a report in relation to the industrial transformation of Barbados, he told me that whenever we got around to rolling out the policies he wanted to be involved and he started to list other Ministers with whom he was in communication. He mentioned to me Ministers

who would ask him to do certain things and I said: But, so you are going to take on all of that, and his comment was: I cannot say no to the Barbados Labour Party, because in his heart of hearts he never ever stop loving this Barbados Labour Party and I am sorry that we are standing here today paying tribute to him as a deceased person but I am glad that Honourable Members in here all who have spoken so far and I am sure hope that all who speak after me will recognise the tremendous contribution he made to this party. It really is now up to us. He has left us a fantastic legacy, a fantastic wicket to bat on. He managed to change the image that this party had. Despite its performance it had a certain image and he changed all of that and we owe him a debt of gratitude to continue the work that he did for the people of Barbados particularly while being a Member of this party.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, his loss is a great loss to this country, and to his family I wish to end now by expressing my deepest, deepest sympathy on behalf of myself and my family and my political family in the constituency of St. Michael North.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

His Honour G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay compliment and also respect to my friend the late Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur. He was my friend and I believe that he would say the same thing if he were alive today. When I saw my friend the Right Honourable Owen Arthur in that casket that afternoon I felt that part of me was being taken away, and therefore I remembered the words he said to me several, several years ago in 1993 when we were on our way from the Office of the Leader of the Opposition when he quoted from the Book of Ruth and said to me that we were going to be like Ruth and Naomi. On that occasion, he said to me: Believe in the words which say: Do not entreat me to leave you and return from following after you, for where you go, I will go and where you lodge I will lodge: Your people shall be my people and your God shall be my God. Mr. Speaker, those are the words of true friendship. Later I heard it when we lost the Government in 2007 when on this Floor of Parliament the then Attorney-General who was the Honourable Member for St. Michael South said that all of his friends have left him, the only friend he had was the Honourable Member for St. George North in the Parliament of Barbados. Those words were recorded in the Hansard of this Parliament. That evening there were some biting words when Mr. Fruendel Stuart who was the former Honourable Member for St. Michael South wind up that debate.

When I looked at his face on the evening in that casket I must tell you that I believe that the undertaker did

a wonderful job and I thought too that his family really stayed with him and also that his family helped him very well through his illness and I want to compliment his wife Julie and his daughters Leah and Sabrina and his grandchildren and all his extended families. I thought that they really rallied behind a true patriot, a man to whom we paid glowing tribute.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I remain a true disciple of the Right Honourable Owen Arthur. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur had strong principles and philosophies that many will find hard to emulate. He always said in simple terms, never forget where you come from and that is one of the greatest philosophies which I will speak about, do not forget where you come from, try to stop poor people from being poor. We have spoken about that and these are the philosophies which I want to put on the records in this Parliament today, simple but straightforward: Education is the key to success, work hard for your living and manage your affairs in a way that you can take care of your family. Of course, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North spoke about his belief in punctuality, keeping your word. Of course, he believed that the best will come out of persons if they go through the hottest fires so that when the Honourable Member for St. Michael North spoke about the trials he went through it was preparing him for the hottest fire, it was preparing him to be the finest Minister we had and of course the Honourable Member who is my good friend in my estimation turned out to be one of the finest Ministers of Commerce, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Mr. Speaker, I must say too that he has prepared our Prime Minister for the work ahead and if she remains constant to the philosophy that we have just espoused and he has espoused over the years she too will become a fine Prime Minister. I must say too that I have seen her in the last two years demonstrating some of the principles that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur taught us.

I want to say from this outset too that he singlehandedly took the three of us after we lost the 1991 election, myself, Mr. Toppin and Mia Mottley, and said this is how we went wrong in 1991 and he helped us to manage our campaign. It was he who put a system in place which we now have. The system that we have in place now was put forward by the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and I must say I want to thank him for doing that, a simple thing: Never forget where you come from; always to go down in the trenches, the heights and get people to support you, manage your affairs; if you stumble get up, dust off and to again. Be never too big to say sorry and that is the meaning of the man.

I would also want to say too that we must understand that if we are supposed to demonstrate that we want to be

true disciples of this great maneuvered that we must be able to work hard. He never suffered fools. I want to say that too, you had to perform and he would trust you, persons who were able to perform were the people on whom he relied, not only in Government but also as his close friends.

I must say to you that he has a similar background to mine, that is, from humble beginning, and we always talk about his extended family in Rose Hill. He always talked about his mother. I think he loved his mother "Doll" dearly, and his brothers and sisters. He once said to me and this helps to demonstrate the man that we now pay tribute to, that he was the very first graduate in his family. He said that many nights he had to walk from Cave Hill to Rose Hill, St. Peter, in order to get an education. Despite the fact that he was bright, despite he was gifted he was from a poor family and he had to walk many nights. Do you know what it is to have to walk from Cave Hill, to Rose Hill, St. Peter? That is a far distance -- dark, in those days there was no streetlights but he had to walk that distance in order to get an education. And then when he went on to Mona, I was told (I never went to Mona at that time, I went to Mona only to pass through) he was called "Pass" because he helped many Barbadians students at Mona to pass [their exams.] He was not a selfish person, Mr. Speaker, Sir, he shared his knowledge among the Barbadian students and those who were at Mona.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, they never forgot that because I recall my friend, Cyril Walker (then Cyril Clarke), coming to me some years ago saying to me... That is why when he became the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party in 1993 many persons gravitated to him and helped the Barbados Labour Party to win that election, because of his nature, because of what he did to help persons at university level, [what he did] to help persons at the graduate level, at the undergraduate level, and the poor man. He never forgot that and therefore when Owen said to us that he wanted a graduate in every household, he meant that. He meant every word. He wanted to stop poor people from being poor, and what did he do by doing that. Through education we saw the expansion of the University of the West Indies and I recall when I became the Minister of Housing... In fact, I do not think I was Minister of Housing then, I was Parliament Secretary in the Ministry of Housing, he encouraged me to go to the university in those days with a professor and the professor there, along with Desmond Crichlow and a guy called Andrew Lewis, can recall these words.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not know if you could recall these guys, one was a Registrar and the other was Under-Registrar or something like that, but he was responsible for the expansion of the university, all down the hill by the Lazaretto, all that land he said the university would be given free of cost. And I support the Prime Minister in calling for renaming something of that university under his

name. Because it was his idea to improve education in everywhere and that is why the Honourable Prime Minister today can talk about EduTech, he supported EduTech. He saw that education was not rooted, at that time, in present-day chalk and talk, he saw that the days for teachers standing in front of a class were numbered, therefore, the EduTech programme was introduced by him.

He saw the need for Community Resource Centers where persons were able to go back to those centers and learned the technology, so that despite he was not trained from infant.... You know, today children learn the technology faster than adults. He did not learn this as a child, but he understood that the way forward was through technology. He understood that very well. Therefore he pushed education and the expansion of education.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not know how many of you have realised that he wanted to have the education so rooted that he wanted to establish an extension of the university in the City of Bridgetown. As the then Minister of Housing, he wanted me to look at the Mutual Building to see how the university could be expanded into a City center. We started that course but it was never completed because we lost office, but the expansion of the university was something Owen Arthur wanted dearly, just like how he wanted full employment. He felt that people had a right to work, he was going to put that into the Constitution that people had a right to work. When you heard him talked about the fact that he wanted 30 000 jobs created, it was not a mere boast, he went through the figures and realised at the time, (because when we took over office in 1994 we had 24 per cent of unemployment). He wanted to reduce that and he was able to succeed by having unemployment reduced by 2007 to about 6 per cent. So he established almost full employment in this country, by ensuring that people went to work. Do you know something, Mr. Speaker, Sir? He did it without [any] fanfare. He did not break the law. He did not create a deficit. The current account was balancing. As you know, he came to Cabinet in 2007, December and said colleague the reserve is about \$2.7 billion. Can you imagine that Mr. Speaker, Sir? Unemployment was down to almost 6 per cent, the foreign reserves were up, and people were doing well. At that time we had capital works programme going on. We had the expansion of the ABC Highway. The country was doing well, and he could not understand why he could have lost the election in 2008, because the country was doing well. He felt that a group of "wild" boys (because he called them wild boys) were vying for the leadership of this country and the people put them there.

The people of Barbados made a mistake, and I want to say this categorically now. I know it may not be politically wise to say this, but the people of Barbados made a political blunder when they put the Democratic Labour Party and Thompson in power and we saw the

problems that we had, from since 2007. The country was running well. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I heard the Honourable Prime Minister talking about the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Programme. The late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur conceptualised the revise to the urban and private tenancies and we are giving poor people the right to have a small plot of land at \$2.50 per square foot.

Do you know what the concept of that was too? That you did not disadvantage the landlord but that you gave people the right to own the land at \$2.50 a square foot. I had gone to housing conferences all over the world, and people were saying at the time -- I heard the former Minister of Housing speak about it today -- that this was a revolutionary step. Do you know what it is to get land at \$2.50 per square foot? You were not disadvantaging the landlord and the state was paying the difference between the economic cost and the \$2.50. A group of men came to power and stopped the Tenancy Freehold Purchase Act. In your constituency what has happened, Mr. Speaker? What has happened to urban tenancies? I am saying and I spoke to the Prime Minister on this: One of the things I would like to see is that persons who live in urban tenancies have the right to buy the land at \$2.50 per square foot.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that I think all Members of Parliament and all aspiring politicians must understand the implications of the 1937 Riots and the recommendations of the Moyne Commission; that in order to enfranchise Black people, we have to give them some land, we have to give them the right to work. Owen Arthur is right. The Prime Minister talked about giving recognition to heroes. Owen Arthur deserves to be a hero, a National Hero in this country because he understood the Moyne Commission's recommendations that the Black people at the time were rioting because they had no work, they had no land and the houses were dilapidated. They lived in bad conditions in The City, without garbage collection, no transportation. Can you imagine this? When Owen left being in office, we were buying 50 buses per year because we had money. Fifty buses a year. The Democratic Labour Party came to office and did not buy a single bus or a single garbage truck. We had money. He could not understand why. This great Barbadian -- I heard Members talk about it and I believe he was the greatest Prime Minister we had -- who understood. He was not from any high class, he was from among the underprivileged but he rose and he understood what it was to improve the lot of the people. He understood that.

This was indeed a great man who never left out his friends. He told me, "I will always remember the road across Constant to St. George Primary and Secondary School. Once you make it, you will be with me." That is why I quote today the story of Ruth and Naomi, because he said to me, "Wherever I am, I will take you." Very soon I

will leave this Parliament as well. Very soon, and it is just one of those things, Mr. Speaker. When I looked at his face in that casket that evening, I said, "Very soon my time will come. My time will come." We all must remember that we must stand guard on the philosophies and the principles that he stood by. Mr. Speaker, you could not go into Owen Arthur's Cabinet 15 minutes late. I remember one Monday -- I must tell this story -- I forgot that there was a Cabinet meeting and I was on my way to St. Philip. I had on a short pants in those days and I was going to some place that he knew, but of course he did not want me to go on that day. He did not know that I was not attending the Cabinet meeting, but I had forgotten. He called me and asked, "Minister, where are you?" I then remembered that the day was Monday and I said I was on my way going East. He asked, "Going what? The east? There is a Cabinet meeting here, skipper. Where are you?" I had to put off my friend and hurry back to Cabinet. I hurried home, put on a suit and hurried to Cabinet. When I got to Cabinet, I said good evening to the Prime Minister and he said, "Come and sit down, Minister." It just showed you who the man was. He was furious half-an-hour before but when I came in, he said "Come in, Minister" and I sat down. The civil servants who had heard him 15 or 20 minutes before were surprised, and were asking, "This is the Prime Minister? He is treating this man very special." That was the nature of the man.

Mr. Speaker, on another occasion I will tell you that he liked men who were prepared. You could not go into "OA" Cabinet and not be prepared. You had to prepare, and I knew that he had an economic mind so I always presented the cost benefit analysis, and he always said to me, "You are really smart, you know". As an economist, you have to give him the benefits, the cost benefit analysis, and I would urge all Ministers to understand you must give the benefit of how it can work. On that occasion, we were looking at the driver's licence and the Minister of Information, Mr. Eastmond, was presenting an ID card to replace the driver's licence. We were trying to get the licence out to the public and he was going with Minister Eastmond. He said, "I want a multi-purpose ID card. Minister, you have to show me how a driver's licence today will benefit." I presented my case and presented my argument, and when it came to the conclusion I said, "Mr. Prime Minister, this card is a revenue-earning instrument that we will be able to charge fees on every year, two years or three years for drivers' licences and these are the benefits of it." That is the driver's licence which you have in your pocket today. He approved that after much argument. You had to argue your case, and that was the man to whom we are paying tribute today.

He kept his word over and over again. Mr. Speaker, I believe that Owen Arthur not only kept his word but he was truthful to this country. Of course, not only this country but also the CARICOM neighbours. The Prime Minister spoke today about the Caribbean Single Market

and Economy. He wanted to see that take off more than ever, where there would be a single market around CARICOM and that people would be able to move freely to work, to play as well as to do other things. Mr. Speaker, we owe a great sense of gratitude to this man. By establishing the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission, he wanted to eliminate what we would call economic dualism. This is a term which describes some parts of the country being underdeveloped and some being developed. He wanted to see even development throughout the City, and one day he said something to me. I can give you story upon story because he and I were friends but we argued. He once said to me, "I am going to develop St. Peter. I will leave no stone unturned." I said, "Okay, Prime Minister." He gave me the Ministry of Housing and Public Works and I used to the effectiveness of my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, he did not have to tell me not to develop St. George. He developed St. Peter and I developed St. George. One time he came into St. George and said at an annual conference that I was batting on all fronts. He said, "Mr. Gline Clarke, you are batting real beautiful up here. I did not know you had The Glebe and a police station." I asked, "Prime Minister, you did not know these things as Minister of Finance?" He said, "I did not know these things." I said, "Prime Minister, remember what you told me: You are developing St. Peter so I developing St. George too." He said I see. He was pleased to see development and that is what I believed. I heard Members mentioned today that he will allow you to do the work that you are supposed to do and do it effectively. This was the nature of the man.

Mr. Speaker I want to say that I think he loved the Barbados Labour Party. I must say like Members because there is no secret to this that both he and I and some of the others who were born in the early 50s believed that education was the way forward. We believed that when Errol Barrow introduced free education in extension of what Sir Grantley stood for that we went with Errol Barrow in those days. It was when Tom Adams came along that we both joined the Labour Party, he went with Burton Hinds and I went with Jack in St. George and Nigel Barrow in those days. We always believed that the way forward was through education as I said before. That is why he like me, when the Democratic Labour Party between 2015 and 2017 brought a Resolution here to abandon tertiary education, paying tuition fees that we felt badly. That evening we had to get up and speak. Owen felt it was a bad and wrong thing to do to abolish tertiary education, the payment of tuition fees, because we saw what it did to poor people and when the former Member of Parliament I think it was Christ Church East Central, Ronald Jones came here, I felt it was the worse time. I made mention of this Sunday night. It was bad, he felt badly and he gave a perspective. He said let us fund tertiary

education, I do not know how many of you was on the floor then, I guess the Member for St. James North was here. He said we have to fund education. He believed and he still believed up to his death.

Since the COVID came I spoke to him and he felt that the Government should use some of its resources, reserves to help with the COVID situation to create employment. He said there was no need for us to have money sitting in the foreign banks or wherever it is and people are suffering. He want to see creation of jobs and opportunities. That is what the Throne Speech is speaking to. In a way the present Prime Minister is following the dictates or following the philosophy of our former leader.

We understood, those of us who sat at his feet like Gamaliel. Those of who sat at his feet will realise that we could only do it when people are employed and working. It stops social upheaval. We believe like him that we should stop poor people from being poor.

Mr. Speaker, Owen Arthur utilised the office of the Prime Minister in a magnanimous way. Can you imagine it was he who in 2007 bid for the World Cup. Have you ever heard this before a small island state? Barbados still remains the smallest island to host the Cricket World Cup.

Asides:

His Honour G. A. CLARKE: The Finals. We had to relocate hundreds of people from Kensington and then the former Member for St. Lucy was saying he want a facility in St. Lucy and Owen said no.

The Democratic Labour Party did not support the refurbishment of Kensington. Owen said no we have to improve Kensington, and we were able to relocate 100s of people from Pickwick Gap and therefore we had the World Cup. A splendid facility down there and this is what he believed.

He also believed that places like Nelson Street and the other depressed areas of St. Michael and City slums should be upgraded. That is why he supported the neighbourhood upgrade programme that we went fought for with the IADB Bank that the Democratic Labour Party threw out. He believed that the upgrading of tenancies and inner cities were important. He wanted to see the housing programme of the National Housing upgraded. That is why he remembered something that he did while working in the Ministry of Finance. He used the facility called the Housing Credit Fund. The Housing Credit Fund was his initiative while he was working at the Ministry of Finance. Tom Adams allowed him to go to Washington to do that to get that loan for us. He used that to help upgrade housing stock across Barbados.

Mr. Speaker we can go on and on to speak about the work and the worth of this great soldier and that is why I say today that I am an un-repenting disciple of Owen Arthur. Why? Because he has fought the fight and he has done his best and I believe wherever he is today he will be looking down on us saying well done. If you follow our philosophy then you will succeed. We have to stay the course and you must understand in order to be the best you have to go through the hottest fire. It is sometimes I will make no apologies to say this, it is sometimes your leader will say to you, you have to do this and we do like it. Sometimes we have to say to our children you do not like to do your homework but you must. You must stay the course in order for us to be the best we can be.

Mr. Speaker on behalf of myself, my family and the constituency of St. George North, I want to say to his family, Julie and the girls and the grands and the extended family that you have in your late husband, father, relative, whatever, a man that you can be justly be proud of. You must hold your head high because we in the Barbados Labour Party will forever be grateful to the legacy of this man. We will ensure that we do for his daughters and relatives whatever we can do to help we will to ensure that they become the finest that they can be. Mr. Speaker I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker Sir, I want to begin by saying that there are very few genuine friendships in politics and I am privileged to be able to count among the friendships that I have had in my life, the one that I enjoyed with the late Former Prime Minister.

I heard the question asked earlier by an Honourable Member. I think it was the Member for St. Michael North, when he talked about the extent of the affection that the people of Barbados had for Owen. Mr. Speaker Sir, it is really stand up in a simple word, sincerity.

Owen Arthur was a man who said what he meant, what he felt, and note what he said and felt. The people of Barbados picked that up very early and have never let go of the fact that is and was the nature of the man throughout all of his time of interacting with us.

Mr. Speaker, I remember well that one of the things that struck me about him was the time that he went to Parliament and made it abundantly clear on the floor that he was going to confront the country with the hard truth that as a Member of Parliament and a citizen of Barbados, he was being discriminated against because of the fact he had a political allegiance. Therefore, there were people in this country who felt that because of his politics Owen Arthur should find it hard to get a job. I heard all sorts of

people keeping noise and saying that he should not have said that. They stated that it made it look as though he was begging for something.

In fact, there is a deceased former Prime Minister who when he led the Opposition sought to make an issue of that. Note, I just said a deceased former Prime Minister because it betrayed a lack of intelligence on the part of that former Prime Minister. What he failed to grasp was that Owen Arthur was using himself as an example of one of the major mischiefs in public life in Barbados at the time and still to some extent is perceived by people to exist today. It is because there is a partisan divide in the country that, therefore, they must follow as night follows day a form of discrimination and exclusion as though we are not all Barbadians together and should not be all given an equal opportunity to contribute to the development of the land of our birth.

These were real challenges of the time in which Owen Arthur lived; the vestiges of it quite frankly and some still remain today but to a much lesser extent. It was that type of sincerity and courage of conviction, the willingness to confront the country and hold up a mirror image to look at itself and how it functions that people bought into. This is what they liked about him; the absence of pretentiousness. He did not have to pretend to be anyone else when he was speaking. He was Owen Arthur.

What Owen Arthur stood for, he stood for. Take it or leave it, Mr. Speaker. Quite frankly, I think that is what also gave birth to the philosophical position that he took about the politics of inclusion. Perhaps, I am one of the clearest examples of that. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, if we look at the society that we live and will be serious about it, we all know that especially in the context of combatted electioneering there is a divide that is created in this country. However, when it is all said and done, the battle lost and won there needs to be a reunification of the country so that we can get about the business of governance and being good citizens.

You cannot do that on a partisan political basis. Owen Arthur lived in a Jamaica where he saw it divide, destroy that country and bring the economy virtually to its knees. This was the larger and greater more purposeful message that he wanted to send across to Barbadians. Mr. Speaker, due to my close relationship with him so that even before I went to university, it is difficult not to do what others have done and stray down the anecdotal path of fond, sweet sentimental and saccharine memory. Mr. Speaker, I think that memory of personal relationships has its place but I do not know that a man who was of robust intellect like Owen Arthur, disciplined in social scientific investigation as he was and a transformative political figure, I do not know if that was the type of presentation he would want to have made in this place at this time.

Rather, I suspect that the Owen Arthur I knew would have wanted us to reflect a little bit more on the philosophical commitment that he demonstrated to the social and economic transformation of this country, and of some of the longstanding ills that afflicted Barbadian society which he was born into and grew up confronting. These were challenges which he had as an individual to overcome in his early and formative stages but which as Prime Minister he never forgot and had the courage, as I said, of his convictions to continue to fight against. The transformation of some of the historical adversities affecting our society is what I suspect Owen Arthur would want us to be reflecting on at this time.

The transformation of the historical basis for those adversities and to that end, I adopt much of that which my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East has said in this House because he is entirely right in the context of looking at what the society would have been if there had not been an intervention of a Prime Minister like Owen Arthur at that time. Mr. Speaker, let us be even more specific than we have been this evening because Barbados was confronted with a form of bigotry. Let us call it what it was and see it for what it has been, and to some extent still is.

The Honourable Member spoke about cronyism. Mr. Speaker, there are those people who "Tom" Adams would have described as the running dogs of politics and that they would find themselves aligned to a political party. Quite frankly, aligned as high up the ladder and chain as they perceive the political structure to be, so that they could feed off of the political process to the benefit of themselves and to the detriment of others who are out there in the society and need to eat, and live in Barbados too. This has to be confronted. Equally, there is bigotry of low expectation. Persons born to certain strata of this society in the 1980s, 1970s and before were not expected to do certain things.

I need not tell you that, Mr. Speaker, because there are those who would tell you quite frankly that when you were at age 10 years that you were not expected to become leading lawyer in the community of Barbados. You know that. The bigotry of low expectation has been inflicted on too many of our young people. Owen Arthur was one who came to confront that by using the office that he held as Prime Minister. He said that there would have to be institutions created which helped us to lift up the society and help people in certain sections of Barbadian society by virtue of the way in which their surroundings changed. He wanted to give them the opportunity to see themselves in a different way.

He wanted to give them the opportunity to see the relationship with the land of their birth in a more developmental and better way. Mr. Speaker, it is a social, scientific construct being brought to bear on the day to day

operations of a country. Let me be even more specific. I have heard it mentioned in here that there is a creation of Rural and Urban Development Commissions. It is true but the larger issue is not that there was a creation of these things. What was the purpose behind them? What was the intent behind them? What was transformational policy that was to be delivered to the people, Mr. Speaker?

It was to confront directly the bigotry of low expectations in working class communities in urban and rural Barbados. Mr. Speaker, let me give me five examples of what Owen Arthur was focused on. He grew up in rural Barbados as we all know and knew what it was to have entire communities without electricity. There were not any lights, in other words, do not let me use fancy language, there were not any lights out by me, that the children learnt their lessons by smut lamp when the night came, Mr. Speaker, and that there was a difference in that household to the household where there is light that you could hit a switch and very often the social stratification was such that there was no mommy and daddy inside the house when the night came home that the children had to do lessons either because there was a different family construct. That had to be dealt with and in my constituency, which is not entirely rural, part of it is very urban, but Mr. Speaker, straddling urban and rural as it does, I can tell you that even today, in 2020, not in 1999 and 1994 when Owen Arthur was Prime Minister, but today in 2020 one of the issues that we still have to deal with is getting proper electricity across the constituency. That is perhaps in the context now more so about making sure that lighting the pathway to your home is corrected, but we were talking back then about light in your house and, Mr. Speaker, let us also understand -- and this is the second thing that the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission were created to confront -- the challenge of land lot houses in Barbados. Again I am using nice language, but let me explain it and make it more straightforward. When Owen Arthur told you he wanted to stop poor people from being poor, what was the reality of that? The reality of that, Mr. Speaker, was that when you have a community where there is no road but you have a house that is planted there and the neighbour told you that he was putting up some paling and you could not walk pass him, the person across the other side where you would normally get an entrance from, you and them fall out two or three years ago so you cannot even think about passing that way, Mr. Speaker, you get stranded in the middle of nowhere and you are home at home, but you have to beg for an ease to get to where you want to go when the day come. Have you seen this in your constituency, Sir, because I see it in mine even today in 2020 that still exists? It has to be wrestled to the ground. It is a vestige of a post-colonial underdevelopment in our society where people who sat in cushioned comfort in Town Planning, in the post-colonial days did not feel that working class people's plight was something that mattered that much. Another battle we have to fight against because

there is still a vestige of that neo-colonial thinking in the structures of Barbadian governance. Mr. Speaker, therefore what is the day to day reality that those people confront. It means that if you get sick in your house the ambulance cannot come to get at you and you have to hope that the same neighbour who did not speak to you for two years would be helpful enough to come and help pick you up to carry you out to the ambulance instead of leaving you in there to die. Mr. Speaker, it means that if your house catches afire as has happened in my constituency because of land lot houses, the fire truck goes so far and no further and if it cannot get the hoses to reach you would stand up and watch it burn to the ground. That is your little investment, Sir, and at the base of the society for working-class Barbadian people, Owen Arthur understood that those people bought but one house in their lifetime. It is not like some that have two, three, four, five or six properties about the place here and some investments overseas as well - and if you are talking about members of the former Administration you may have to count a little higher - but the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that is what he was trying to confront and to correct. The other thing that had to be corrected is the absence of running water to people's homes. Again, Sir, the vestiges of it continue and you find there is still a challenge in urban and rural Barbados to deal with and to correct the problem of outdoor toilet facilities. Mr. Speaker, it is a degrading thing in 2020 for people to have to be relieving themselves in exactly the same way that their ancestors did in 1920, but if we are going to sit in the office of Prime Minister and not realise that you have to make a conscious effort to intervene and you cannot solve all of the problems in one term or in two terms or in three terms and quite frankly, Sir, we began Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission decades ago and we still have not stamped it all out yet, but it had to be confronted and that was the magic of the man. That was the magic of his ability to say to Barbadians candidly, I want to stop poor people from being poor, but you have then to go down and drill down a little bit more to understand and to unravel the social scientific intent behind that which the policy was intended to achieve so the Honourable Member for St. Michael East is 100 per cent correct. I am not going to get bogged down in any debate about the great man theses of history as to whether "Barrowism" or "Arthurism" was the better prescription for Barbados or who was the better Prime Minister. That is for the historian to decide after collating the evidence with the passage of time. I lived and I am privileged to have lived in the era of both Barrow and Arthur. I am privileged to have known one of them very well, I only hear about the other one because I was too young, but the truth of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, I do not think that it is too hard to work out when a man's heart is genuine and I think that both of them had genuine hearts and that is why the people of Barbados have latched on to them and their memory and hold it. There is another man, who people clamoured behind, but nobody talks about him now. They may talk about \$3.33

million but they do not talk about him because they saw no sincerity, Mr. Speaker. There is another man who left about here the other day and nobody do not talk about him, see about, see, hear or think about at all other than in moments of pain when we say, what did they do to bring us to this stage? Mr. Speaker, that is what made Owen Arthur a transformational figure in my estimation.

I heard the Honourable Member for St. George North speak passingly about community resource centres. Again, we have to do our best to allow the records of this Honourable House which will be read by people in future times and hopefully better times, help them to understand the passage that we went through to get here and to get down the road where those people will be when they read it. Mr. Speaker, there was a time when Owen Arthur was Prime Minister he came and found and had to confront and correct a digital divide in this country, that there were those who had and those who had not. It still plagues us to some extent today and it has, like most things been laid bare, absolutely naked by Covid-19 so the Honourable Leader of Government Business right now sitting in her capacity as Education Minister has to preside over and education structure, Mr. Speaker, where you want to use G Suite platforms, et cetera, to make sure that our children can get the benefit of education because you cannot have all of them in the school at the same time in this Covid-19 environment but, Mr. Speaker, the reality is that there are families that do not have any Wi-Fi in at them. There are families, Mr. Speaker, with electrification problems at them far less Wi-Fi. There are families, Mr. Speaker, where, if there is a computer in the house, that is a luxury. How do four little children use one computer for school? These are the issues that have been laid bare. This is not just something that happened today, however, it finds its genesis back at the immediately post-colonial period, but, Mr. Speaker, what we needed and needed badly were leaders who were prepared to intervene in the way that The Right Honourable Owen Arthur was prepared to intervene and that is why things like the community resource centres were very important because the digital divide, not only here in Barbados but the digital divide between us in Barbados and those of us in the rest of the world because you cannot produce any serious economic outturn, you cannot export, you cannot develop your services sectors, you cannot develop as an economy and as a country unless you are part of the information technology era so that was an investment in making sure that our people, rural and urban Barbadian, poor working-class, black skin people, were able to get an understanding, a toe-hold. To this day, Mr. Speaker, the digital divide continues to haunt the people of Barbados and it is a challenge that we have to wrestle with robustly. That is why for the first time ever in history we have now an education ministry that is into teaching people about robotics and coding. When I talked about this on a platform two years ago in a general election I remember a young man saying to me: But, Mr.

Symmonds what you talked about sounds good, I would like to learn to do. He was about 18 years old but you know the sad thing is that there are little children in China at primary school level that are doing it at age four and in Europe there are little children at primary school level that are doing it age four and five and this is the struggle that we have. We do not lightly talk about losing 10 years. We lost a decade of development. Sir, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was ahead of his time because he was confronting a digital divide that threatened the country's development then, and as technology does not stand stagnant, it continues to change every single day, it continues to be a challenge for us now.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can only say to you that again part of what he represented in my judgment, in the eyes of the people of this country, was a leader who much like J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams, and frankly in the vein of all good Barbados Labour Party leaders because the current Honourable Prime Minister is demonstrating her own capacity in this regard, was able to look at the financial infrastructure of the country and make a conscientious analysis and demonstration of whether it is fit for purpose.

The financial infrastructure and architecture of Barbados when the Right Honourable Owen Arthur became Honourable Prime Minister was not fit for purpose and he confronted that so I am not just going to stand here and say oh he was a good economist and he had good training, it went beyond that. He utilised those skills, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to make sure that the architecture was fit for purpose hence the creation of an Enterprise Growth Fund Limited, hence the creation of a Fund Access and hence the understanding of removing some of the constraints that small entrepreneurs and micro entrepreneurs have as they try to find the financial wherewithal to get about the business interests that they have, that era of introducing the Enterprise Growth Fund.

Mr. Speaker, when I go back down memory lane there are countless small hotels in Barbados that benefitted from that Fund where people were able to retrofit and equip hotels and to retrofit and equip catering and culinary businesses in order to make sure that the economic activity of this country and more importantly in order to diversify the base of commercial activity in this country so that black Barbadians were able to achieve high levels of commercial activity when before the door was closed to them, so it was a democratisation of finance and access to finance that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur represented.

I want to go further, Mr. Speaker, Sir. He also understood the need for us to build resilience across the economy. One of the things that we must not lose track of or sight of is the fact that it was his Government - and I came into Cabinet for the first time in 2003 - and the Minister of Commerce then would have been working on

an e-commerce strategy for the country, and let me explain too the significance of that, that was 2003, this is 17 years later - when we first rolled out that e-commerce strategy, Mr. Speaker, Sir, there was actually a supermarket in Barbados that started to go online and allowed people to put in orders - I believe that process died a natural death shortly after the Government changed. I am not going to say it died because Government changed because part of the concern really is this point I am coming to - we were ahead and the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was ahead of his time. Vision means that you got to lead from in front and you got to take your people with you.

The Barbadian community also had access in 2004/2005/2006 to certain financial institutions allowing you to do your financial business with them online. It was fledgling but nobody was ready for it yet. Sir, one of the things that I now as Minister of Commerce must confront is the need for us to do the necessary financial literacy work in every community of this country because our people must be comfortable with financial opportunity. Mr. Speaker, Sir, one of the things that COVID-19 has laid bare, and we see now the Right Honourable Owen Arthur's vision, is that we had an e-commerce strategy rolled out in Barbados in 2004 but in 2020 when we had COVID-19 and an economy shut down we had major restaurants in this country that had to shut down because they had no platform to do business by way of e-commerce. Seventeen years (17) years later the business community had not caught up with the leader of the land back in 2003 and 17 years later some of our consumers have not caught up with where the leader of the land was in 2003. Hence that is why I do not buy into the great man theses because it has to be about a whole community coming to a common understanding as a result of being trained because I do not care how bright you are or how visionary you are, at the end of the day we got to lift everybody up with a common tie, a tie that will raise all ships.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that we have to look at is his contribution or look at by way of his contribution is the modernisation of the Barbadian economy. To my right sitting immediately behind me is a former Minister of Commerce. It is that Honourable Member for St. Michael North who would have presided over the fair trade commission legislation and the consumer protection legislation. Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me say to you candidly that there are countries in the Caribbean that do not have any Fair Trading Commission yet or no consumer protection legislation yet. Again, we are far ahead and part of that reality is... I remember sitting in Cabinet with the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and him making the point that you cannot build a modern economy if you are not empowering your consumers or you cannot build a modern economy if you are not building into it fairness in terms of the way in which businesses operate, how monopolies operate and how monopolies are treated and monopolistic

practices are curbed and democratisation in the economy is encouraged. That is what the Right Honourable Owen Arthur lived and breathed and believed in, Sir.

Sir, allow me to say that it is reflected even today the urgencies of the issues because while we had to break a monopoly with Cable and Wireless and we have all heard that Cable and Wireless said that they enjoyed a quality of life off of the consumers of Barbados that was second to none that they could find anywhere else where there was a Cable and Wireless. The best returns on investment was Barbados. We are now in the process of unbundling and democratising the provision of electricity and breaking a monopoly with the Barbados Light & Power Company Limited and part of the whole vision has to be or was about taking this economy and, as I said, democratising it and place at the disposal of every Barbadian family an opportunity to be able in the context of what was Cable and Wireless before, you were needed to have mass access to the airwaves, and in the context of the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited you needed to have mass access to the ability to produce current and drive down cost, and when you are able to drive the cost down you are then able to broaden your base and get into things like manufacturing. There was a time when we had a manufacturing industry, it died and it died largely because of the fact that the cost of energy was just too high for us to treat it as being competitive.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you know, again, I do not know how much has been said before. Since I have been in here I have heard nothing about it and it would be remiss of me not to speak to it because I think that it is in this regard that Owen Arthur was perhaps most stellar and I know for sure, without any fear of contradiction, that his reputation was cemented across the region in the area of his leadership of this region in international trade-related matters. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the period that he spent in his capacity as lead Prime Minister for the creation of the Single Market and Economy has been second-to-none. It was a personal pleasure for me to be able to enter Cabinet, to be given the responsibility at ministerial level for working in that particular area.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can honestly say that sometimes sitting with him the late hours into the night, talking early hours into the morning on the phone, it was like doing a Master's course. The reality is, though, that what we had to show for it was the creation of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy. As the Honourable Member for St. Michael East said, you cannot gainsay these things because the evidence is there for all to see, and we were in four theaters of negotiations -- all at one time: the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the World Trade Organisation, the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, then we are doing Bilaterals with several other countries in the hemisphere. We have those trade agreements with the countries in the

hemisphere, many of them. We have, Mr. Speaker, Sir, through no fault of our own, America and Brazil fighting up over the Free Trade Areas of the Americas and collapsed the whole thing. That had nothing to do with little Barbados but we were in there punching and kicking as usual. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the fact of the matter is that we are represented at high level and with excellence at the World Trade Organisation.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point that must not escape us Mr. Speaker, Sir, is that there are benefits that are being discussed, even today, that the visionaries back then... The truth is, let us recognise that while we are talking about Prime Minister Arthur, he sat in the company of a pantheon of Caribbean heroes. Back then there was a Prime Minister in Jamaica, P. J. Patterson, who again is a Dean in terms of quality of public service and contribution across this region. Mr. Speaker, Sir, intellectuals who attended and participated in the meetings - Professor Norman Gervin, Professor George Beckford, Professor Benn. These people, Mr. Speaker, Sir, gave of not just their time and talent but their heartfelt energies towards building out this region's Single Market and Single Economy. Also, initiatives like the "Jagdeo Initiative" which would have seen Guyana being a place which was utilised for its abundance of land, for all of us to be able to access, and we have farmers who do their business from Guyana. Barbadians farmers are able to access Guyana and grow their crops there, and then Mr. Speaker, Sir, using the manufacturing base in Trinidad and Tobago for you to do the value-added to the product, and then Mr. Speaker, Sir, using the marketing skills and qualified people here in Barbados for us to be able to penetrate the international community. That was the dream. Even, Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of that time that is past (2007) Owen Arthur would have left Government. Thirteen years later we are right back to where we had begun. So that today the Government of Barbados has to be in dialogue with Guyana and Suriname about some of the same issues that we had then determined and had settled back then. That is the difference between leadership in a proactive way, and leadership as in just sitting in a chair. So our Honourable Prime Minister is now in talks with Suriname, in talks with Guyana about issues that have been settled in 2004-2005, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Also the type of arrangements which would be symbiotic and complementary, assisting this region to be able to penetrate international markets, we have made little or no headway. Moreover you cannot fault the vision.

Also I say, quite frankly, Sir, that I think one of the things that we have to do is to recognise the contribution that the late Professor has made to this country, in a tangible and analytical way. Mr. Speaker, Sir, perhaps I should not sit without reflecting again on something that has allowed us to set ourselves apart from the rest of the Eastern Caribbean, but we take it for granted. Do you know that there would have been no homeporting in Barbados

were it not for Owen Arthur? However, the homeporting business, prior to COVID-19, was a robust part and a major part of our tourism sector. Mr. Speaker, Sir, let us be frank, a ship passes through the Caribbean and stops at many places; people get off the ship and they do a tour inland, that is when, for the first time, they come face-to-face with the magic of the little island called Barbados. They fall in love with the people, the culture, our ribbon of life, and the beauty of the place.

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

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that then turns itself into a long-stay visitor because he or she wants to come back and spend a little bit more time, and very often it turns itself into an investor because he or she comes back, falls in love with the country, wants to buy a piece of land, build a house, have property here, et cetera. That has happened over and over again and that has nothing to do with the obvious business interest of provisioning ships and people having to stay post-cruise, pre-cruise, hotels and eat foods at our restaurants, et cetera. Hence it generated a whole new avenue of business opportunity. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that did not exist before Prime Minister Arthur, it did not, so let us understand that we are talking about fundamental transformative changes in this economy.

I want to say, Sir, that even as I close and without having gone to the point of national consciousness which I wanted to touch one because the whole thing about Heroes Day is another story all by itself, and again because of his leadership. So, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are talking about a truly giant figure. He may have been small and petite in stature but he bestrode the world like a colossus and we as petty men had to peak between his huge legs, and that is a reality, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that [quote] was borrowed out of Shakespeare but it applies here in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want personally to offer my sincere condolences from this place (I have offered them personally) but I want to offer them to Julie, his wife, Sabrina and Leah. I want also to say that to take courage, he loved you all dearly. He spoke of his daughters with an affection. I am privileged to have a daughter of my own, and I learnt from him and he prepared me for the kind of unparalleled affection that a father has for a daughter. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say on the behalf of my own family and my constituency as a whole, I do offer my condolences.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of Government Business.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I now beg to move that this Sitting be suspended, to be resumed at 5.55 p.m. this afternoon.

His Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting be now suspended until 5.55 p.m. was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of Government Business.

NOTICE OF BILLS

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give Notice of the Public Service Appointments Bill, 2020.

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

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give Notice of the First Reading of the Public Service Appointments Bill, 2020.

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

The question that the aforementioned Bill be read for the first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

RESUMPTION CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to indicate today that we meet here to revere the late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur, a man who rose from humble circumstances to the highest heights in this country and, of course, in the region. His parents were regular, rural people. His mother was "Doll" of whom he often spoke very proudly, and indeed his dad, from way back in St. Peter with his siblings. His parents instilled in him the virtues of life and living; all those principles that are necessary for one to be able to live and get along with

people in the community and to serve at every level. Therefore, there is the humility, the honesty, the character. They taught him about charity, how to love, how to share, values such as respect, thrift, love for God and mankind, service to community and country. Indeed, he was a boss at quoting Bible verses. He would always talk about everybody wants to go to Heaven but nobody wants to die, or he would say you have to go through the hottest fire to get the strongest steel.

It really was a distinct honour and a privilege to have become acquainted with such an outstanding son of the soil. I met the late Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur in 1983, to be exact, when he was a young, brilliant senator. I was the President of the St. Thomas constituency branch and, of course, having had dialogue with the Honourable Prime Minister then, the late Tom Adams now, when he spoke about this brilliant economist who had just arrived from studying and working in Jamaica and all of his exploits, I felt so happy to hear of an ordinary guy from St. Peter being uplifted and revered in that manner by the then Honourable Prime Minister. Having heard him in the Senate one day, I asked the Prime Minister, "Sir, would it not be good to invite him to address the St. Thomas constituency branch on a second Sunday at the Holy Innocents' School?" Of course, the Prime Minister supported it and extended that invitation.

Sir, it was a moment for me, in my youthfulness at the constituency branch level and being the President, to have met this young, handsome and brilliant young man who, when he spoke, attracted the attention of everybody in the hall from the beginning to the end. To me, he was like a young batsman who scored a century in his first innings. It was that outstanding. I, being a young woman wet behind the ears, was so deeply impressed with his wit, his wisdom, the delivery of his presentation and indeed his maturity. Then the Prime Minister said, "Cynthia, do you not think I should run this young man somewhere in the Barbados Labour Party? He is so sharp!" Of course, I was trying to grapple in this political area in my young age, and I said, "Sir, obviously we have to use him in the Barbados Labour Party." So said, so done when that by-election came up in St. Peter, and the rest is history.

We know he became victorious on his second try and, of course, his representation would have gone on for many years, indeed more than three decades. Actually, I became so familiar with the St. Peter branch, and St. Lucy as well, that I would go there on the third Sundays -- I think that was the meeting time -- and we would always have a load of people going down with the late Lawrence Johnson in his vehicle that looked so much like a "ZM". I knew the Babbs, the Cumberbatches, I knew most of the people in St. Peter because then Owen Arthur believed that the synergies of constituency branches should be such that people should go and visit each other. Of course, Sir, you

would know that transportation would have been limited but Lawrence Johnson was determined that we would go there every time and attend the parties and the dances and so on, so we did have a wonderful time.

Mr. Speaker, his mantra was that he would remain steadfast. He said he came to political life to stop poor people from being poor. He wanted a graduate in every household and he successfully achieved many of the goals through the policies and programmes that he had outlined in his various Manifestoes for his 14-year leadership which, for me, was one of the most profound. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that all of his intentions were in almost every speech he made as he talked about enfranchising people, making Barbadians become more self-sufficient instead of being reliant on handouts and so on. The emphasis in most of his Manifestoes over those periods was to ensure that persons who were disenfranchised were empowered in a special way. Those who were the most vulnerable were targeted so that they could develop and move from dependency to independence and perhaps later on, to interdependence.

Therefore, his “Job No. 1 was Jobs” slogan was most integral in whatever he had to do, and we saw every engine of our society start to expand and grow. When it came to construction, nearly everybody in the village got a job in construction and the building of roads and houses. We were able to build so many housing units, and then with the mortgage finance company and the 100 per cent mortgage that he persisted must happen to keep poor people from staying poor. There was also the kind of money that was put into the Housing Credit Fund for un-lending and the loans that were given to given to ordinary people to build on a water toilet or to expand the house. Rural and urban people have a lot of children. Poor people usually have a lot of children, and so he put such policies in place to make sure that poor people would have had a chance and an opportunity to get a stake in this country. That too, Sir, helped to cement the fondness and the love which I extended to my late, great leader.

Mr. Speaker, to prove his brilliance we had a newspaper in the Barbados Labour Party called ‘The Beacon’ with a motto that stated “Out of Darkness Light”. It is interesting that in June 1984 -- if you will allow me, I can make it a Document of this Chamber -- there is this one little paragraph which spoke of Owen Arthur and his brilliance as a young Senator, and other colleagues in the Honourable Chamber would have said, “In the Senate to which he was elevated on October 17, the exact date of his birthday, his calm, clear, concise and always coherent analyses have made him the prominent debater in the Upper Chamber when his every speech is met with applause and heaps of praise from all Government, Opposition and Independent Senators in that Honourable Chamber.”

It then goes on to say, “All of this has made Senator Arthur a much sought after person on the local lecture circuit where his capacity to deal with seemingly almost every possible topic and to all audiences whether schools, youth organisations, businesses or bankers has made him a favourite.”

Therefore, I concur that I met that young man and I was extremely proud of his delivery all along. Then Sir, when the no confidence vote in the then Honourable Sir Lloyd Sandiford, when that profound debate came about, he too batted like a man who would have made two centuries in that one innings. Therefore all of the other labour party team that would have been there they threw their weight behind him. It said in the Advocate newspaper of August 26, 1994, “Owen all the way”. Then David Simmons I should say, spoke to the media and said, “Owen Arthur is declared undoubted and undisputed leader of the Barbados Labour Party”.

Sir I think that that was what helped to cement him with the confidence of the team that would have been with him that he could go for three consecutive terms as the Prime Minister of Barbados with his astute leadership. As I said his mantra would have been building strong families and communities, the eradication of poverty and we saw that through the poverty alleviation fund; the provision of effective safety net of the most vulnerable in the society; the reform of the social sector to meet the challenges of the new millennium then; and of course the creation of a caring society for all.

I always admired him for his forthrightness. One could not fathom that smile, that grin on his face all the time and therefore I never took a chance of anything underestimating him, if I could not fathom him. I do not know how the other Honourable Member did, but he always addressed me Fordie or Forde. He never called me Cynthia or he never called me Miss Forde. He would say, “Forde what you think about it, or Forde you understand politics better than some of these in here you know” or “Forde, you know the civil service”. This is in the period of 1994 to 2001. I believe it was because I was assigned to an Honourable Minister in education who was able to help to strengthen me in a number of areas where I did not have the understanding. Hence, our relationship grew for those decades.

Mr. Speaker, I had the distinct honour of working with his wonderful daughter Sabrina in her formative years and I knew that he loved his daughter dearly, she was his gem. Indeed, I considered her one of my little nieces because at the same primary school where I served for 25 years, there was this beautiful little girl Sabrina and my nephew Corey and others were in the same class and I kept my eyes out for her like a real aunty, without even the rest of the staff knowing because people were nosey in those

days and they took up the certificate and walked around. I do not know about now but I will say that birth certificate will go no further and curtailed it right there and Madame principal would say Ms. Forde you were right, because nobody was to have exposed him in his capacity and his daughter because it was not their business.

I latched on to Sabrina and I am so proud to see how she has developed as the apple of her daddy's eye. Of course I cannot forget little Leah. Leah is also another beautiful daughter that he has been doting over and his granddaughter in a special way perhaps that I can say that I have done with my grandchildren, but they have to hear me, I do not know if he ever had to administer any touches with a little tap or so with his, but I did that with mine and not to leave any marks or anything. Sir I know you will object to me because of the position that you served in the Child Care Board under your social work. However, I believe that his children were so well behaved, he worked with those little children to make sure that they conform with the rules and regulations of the society and here they are today wonderful children.

I also want to recall in a brief way in 2001 after I had been identified and I knew the support of the rest of the Cabinet that he was shaping, in 1994 when he made me the Parliamentary Senator and a Senator, I well recall the support that I got from all. Of course, the then three of us in the Honourable Chamber and the other place, I messaged Glyne Murray and Tyronne Barker, they were also Senators and we had the Senate rocking and every time the Honourable Prime Minister would say, Forde you are something else you know, I said, yes Sir, I have to speak for the people of Barbados and not just for the Barbados Labour Party. Therefore, we were like a tag team although a tag team is more than two. However the three of us, those two other Honourable Senators and myself used to make sure that the Senate was always lively and bubbly as we put forward the policies and the programmes that came through from the guidance of the Right Honourable Prime Minister.

His ex-wife Beverley in 2001 when I was identified as a Senator and as a candidate, she came out every day of the campaign at 7:30 in the morning to my house. She too was a tower of strength in St. Peter, working in the trenches and then when she heard, she said Cynthia I have to be there with you. Every day and every night she made sure that I prepared myself, got a little rest, sipped my water, things that I never took interest in before and I do not think I have ever done it since then. However, she always made sure that I was on the path to be able to gain some success.

Of course after that experience the fondness continued and I won that by-election in St. Thomas, when then another now constituent his now wife Julie is a resident of St. Thomas, so she is my constituent. We also had a wonderful relationship before because her sister and I

were tight and I would go there to get things done with my hair. Hence, I was always in the family whether it was the direct family or the extended family of the Late Right Honourable Member.

I am eternally grateful for the relationship that we developed and I want to say how happy I am today to be taking part in this discussion and the celebration of his life and his witness but also to be able to see his wonderful family here with him. I thought that the vision of the Late Right Honourable Prime Minister for somebody of my upbringing was that he made sure that he invested in a poor country girl to further fulfil his mantra and to lift me and others out of poverty. Today I thank God for the privilege that he has extended to me.

I rose from poverty to Parliament and a lot of it is to do with the Barbados Labour Party after my family and the people in the community and the schools where I worked helped to elevate me to a level. The Right Late Honourable Owen Arthur saw something in me and it has made me very proud.

Of course, over the years there would have been challenges like any other human being, you will have differences and so on but I never ever refrained from extending to the Honourable Prime Minister the feelings and the understanding and respect that was due to him. His personality was strong and so was mine and therefore I made sure that I did not rub him up the wrong side or anything because I know that sometimes I cannot be controlled either. However, I so highly respected him that really I felt very lonely when there was difficulty.

Sometimes, it is always to do with people carrying news that is not right. Therefore, our relationship started to slacken. However, after 2010 and the confusion I would see him and still say hello. I would ask about the welfare of his daughters, Sabrina and Leah. I would ask for his granddaughter. We would still have an exchange of pleasantries. I am saying that in politics you will get the ups and downs, but at the end of the day there should be no malice. I do not carry malice and he did not because regardless of the confusion and the differences in opinion, at the end of it all we saw him in the BLP though he had gone his way not serving the BLP but Barbados over the past few months.

He reached into the Caribbean with the brilliance that he had that very few people can match him because of the outstanding brilliance and his relationship with people. There are very few people who can carry that and put their differences aside. I want to say that the people of St. Peter, Barbados and the region have lost a brilliant, astute son of the soil. We lost a tower of strength. When it came to his recording and filing of his Cabinet Papers or whatever documents, he was a boss at it. I understand his library was

in such pristine condition that you could easily go and pull whichever document. It was properly catalogued.

I remember that one of the persons who is sitting here today who came to be a part of this- If you would allow me to call his name, Mr. Speaker; Mr. George Griffith- I went to his house in St. James for a cricket match. He came and said to George that he had pair of Nike shoes that he did not want. George told him that they could not fit but asked if I thought they could fit me. I said I would try them and the pair of Nike shoes lasted for five years. I felt so proud walking in these shoes of an Honourable Prime Minister; you would not believe it.

When they became irreparable I was so sad to know this because I like that if someone gives me something, I care it like my life. As I come to a close, Mr. Speaker, because I know many Honourable Members wish to speak I want to say that the vision of the late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur was such for his country, people, region and indeed the world. I will not mention the ShipRider's Agreement because that is another story. His vision that he had for the development of this country was beyond a lot of what I see happened during period when we were in Opposition. He made sure that the policies and programmes, as I said earlier, were about the empowerment of the ordinary man.

This is where the Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) and the ZRs emerged. He said that for poor people to buy a ZR is an investment that can be passed on from generation to generation. He looked at Project Oasis which was for the boys on the block. We made sure that they were given the necessary skills and opportunities for employment that they too can build their families. We had janitors and general workers who worked for many years and when they left, they got a little pension but no gratuity or security of tenure. It was his mantra that these people must not be disenfranchised. They must now become public workers so that they can go to the bank with a letter or documentation to access loans, mortgages, et cetera.

The UDC, RDC, Mortgage Finance on lending 100 percent mortgages and the thousands of properties were accessed through the Mortgage Finance. There was the Public Sector Reform and the construction of schools due to many of the buildings being in a bad condition during the period of 1986 to 1994. The Honourable Prime Minister said that we have to build schools because poor people must be in environs that are conducive to learning and safety. Therefore, the All Saints School, an extension of the Barbados Community College (BCC) and a special area for children with special needs were newly constructed facility.

There was construction of the Ignatius Byer Primary School, Lester Vaughn Secondary School and St. Christopher Primary School with a new pavilion that it

never had before because you were now catering to people in the community and engaging them so they would do meaningful things instead of being lawless. He made sure that the Mangrove Landfill was changed from "Mount Stinkeroo" because of the vision he had for making sure that Barbadians become healthy and conscious of their role. I am not going to mention the upgrades. I will not talk about the prison now. I will not talk about international business, et cetera. He had the vision and instituted it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to indicate that when the Right Honourable Prime Minister would talk about ordinary people doing extraordinary things, I saw him as an ordinary man and a boy from the village in St. Peter rising to excellence and doing extraordinary things for not himself alone but for families and Barbadians on the whole that they know to rise to the level that they can be able to give back to their society. I take this opportunity to publicly express my gratitude to his family, the extended family, friends and others who were close to him. My deepest sympathy and that of my family, and from the people of St. Thomas for one of the best sons of the soil that we have lost within the last few months.

We have lost a brilliant man and astute leader who will be extremely hard to replace in the political arena. Of course, I wish to publicly say to Mrs. Julie Arthur who served as First Lady of Barbados then, Sabrina, Leah, his granddaughter, siblings and all of the people for whose shoulders he would have stood on that he could have achieved so much in a lifetime as being the Right Honourable Prime Minister of this country, I say to the youth to take a leaf out of the book of the Professor Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur.

As a result of opportunities by the nurturing of parents, people from the village where he was raised and by persons in other sectors where he had the opportunity to blossom, take a leaf from out of his book that it is not where you come from but to do with how you pattern your mind, how you create in it the opportunities and take the advantages of them that you could rise from the earth or ashes to the next level with God's help and his guidance. I say to all of you, ladies and gentlemen, relatives and friends that may good continue to bless and may the Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur rest in peace. God bless you all.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join this debate to offer my words not of sympathy but of condolences and the words that my father used to describe the late Professor Owen Arthur. I was born in a BLP family

in a rural village similar to the late Professor Arthur. Why I am a bit emotional is simply because daily I received messages from my father even before I received ministerial duties of conversation with him and the late Professor Arthur. Their discussions, conversations were primarily about the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and governance and who was the best Prime Minister. I do not want to go further into that because in the words of my father, Luther Sutherland, my biological father, he had his opinions, most of which I shared, but I can say to you that he had high admiration for the late Professor Owen Arthur and I do not only speak on the behalf of my father but on the behalf of the entire Sutherland family and to say to the family of Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur, his wife Julie, his daughters, his brothers, his nephew, his friends who are sitting in this Honourable Chamber and I recognise his friends when I came into active politics, they would die for him and one is sitting over there, that this country has lost a great leader. We have a void. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael East mentioned that we have a void but I want to stay on the positive side to say, in the words of Red Plastic Bag:

“Tell me who are heroes are and I will hail them from near and from far, you must know famous and notorious, that is a must here in Barbados.”

You can pick sense from nonsense or sense from those words. I want to go further to quote the late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur as a leader of this great institution and Prime Minister of this country and he said in these words:

“Let us go forward in this battle fortified by conviction that those who labour in the service of a great and good cause will never fail.”

He never failed this country, he never failed the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and he never failed the people of Barbados.

I have been fortunate when I came to political office when I offered myself as a candidate for the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), leading up to the 2013 General Elections, the day before the 2013 General Elections, my dad received a call from the late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur, they could not find me that day because I was all about in the district trying to get my last lap in to encourage persons to vote for me on that day because I had the support - and I heard the Prime Minister mention that support is not votes -- but the former Prime Minister showed up and he actually made me feel special when he said to me: “Every Prime Minister chooses some candidate to spend the day with before an election with and I chose you.” We went from Ellerton to Greens to Frere Pilgrim and the rest is history. I am not as familiar with the late Prime Minister from back in the 1990s, but I served on

National Council when he was indeed the Chairman along with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. We were young boys on the National Council then and it is there that I picked up some tips about leadership that I used in the private sector as well. You have to be in command of your troops at all times and certainly he was in command of his troops at all times, but it is through him that I learnt the art of reading the Estimates when we sat in Opposition and I usually use these blue books to make notes and I share with a few of my colleagues that I have two books written out, this sides of notes from the late Professor The Right Honourable Owen Arthur on Estimates so that when I shadowed certain ministries in Opposition we were able to enter this Honourable Chamber as Opposition Members and we were able to debate vigorously. They cursed us even about our family but the five Young Turks and I can speak on the five Young Turks’ behalf back then benefitted from Professor The Right Honourable Owen Arthur’s wisdom and, of course, we had the support of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and the Honourable Member for St. James Central, but it is there that I honed my skills about policy and what to do and what not to do from that great man, Professor The Right Honourable Owen Arthur, but it did not stop there. When I assumed the office and ministerial portfolio of Minister of Small Business, Entrepreneurship and Commerce, he took to me and he said, you are in a very critical ministry. We need to grow our local economy and we recognised then that Fund Access was started on by him between those years 1994 to 2008 to provide financing to the tune of \$10 000 and up to \$150 00 for those small business persons who could not access financing from the banking sector. He started Fund Access for the small business sector, persons who engaged in small business to help grow that critical sector called the micro, small and medium enterprise sector, but that was not all. When he formed UCAL -- and I heard the other Honourable Members spoke about some of the things that he did and I would mention the African, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU) partnership agreement because before I sit down within the next five minutes I will make that speech that he made a document of the House -- but when he formed UCAL and if you look at what is happening today with that small sector, the micro, small and medium enterprise sector, we can truly say that Professor The Right Honourable Owen Arthur was visionary because he recognised that working class people needed the opportunity to be enfranchised, to be empowered, to own their fair share of the rock, to contribute to the economic growth of this great nation and he recognised that tourism alone cannot do it for us and look at what is happening today. Tourism alone cannot do it for us. While it is the main foreign exchange earner he recognised that any challenge with the first world economies will impact us and we needed to grow that sector, the micro, small and medium enterprise sector which is grow from within the local sector. Fund Access, empowering small working class people like UCAL, those

were some of his projects and I listed 33 major projects that we had. There were others within the 14 years under that astute leadership of Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas briefly mentioned project OASIS to train the young people. He more than doubled places at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP) now Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI), the Barbados Community College (BCC) and the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus because what we now talked about, creating skill, only Owen Seymour Arthur recognised then that we needed to create scales in an effort to take people out of poverty, in an effort to have more global citizens, in an effort to make Barbados the best place to live, work, raise and family and do business, so tell me who our heroes are and I will hail them from near and from far.

This afternoon I hail Professor, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur in this Lower Chamber as one of the greats. I love his words: Let us go forward in this battle fortified by conviction that those who labour in the service of a great good and a great cause will never fail, and he never failed. He also said help the man in the street make sense of the bewildering and help the average man to make sense of difficult confusion, what he called complex issues, so he was geared towards empowering working class people at every juncture in his tenure as Prime Minister of this country and even as Opposition Leader. He invested in us so that we can come today... I am proud, I can say that he taught me how to read the Estimates. I have a book on agriculture, my good friend the Honourable Member for St. Philip South who was dear to him as well can tell you that I envy him because I love that ministry, it is a good envy. I have notes, he and I shared notes. Many of evenings when we came from Estimates meetings we sat and we spoke about how good the Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur is.

Mr. Speaker, let us talk about preparing Barbados for today, let us talk about preparing Barbados for the eventuality that we face. The COVID-19 Virus struck us and it is Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur who said we need to push different frontiers. Yes, tourism is our chief foreign exchange earner and yes we have a lot of reserves but we need to push other frontiers, and it is him who started the drive on renewable energy. The Honourable Member for St. James Central who I admire and I aspire to be like him, actually missed this one. They can speak to what they want to speak to but I speak to the good things politically, Honourable Member for St. James Central. Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur introduced Barbados' first alternative fuel cards and he also introduced the National Sustainable Energy Policy because he recognised that renewable energy was the way to go back then. Is not this man a great? Tell me who our heroes are and I will hail them from near and from far.

Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur focused and he developed and introduced the Global National Green Energy Policy which was the first in Latin America and the Caribbean so when we speak about greats we cannot speak about greats... When we speak about great cricketers we often speak about Sir Garfield Sobers, Sir Vivian Richards, Brian Lara and Sir Charlie Griffith and when we speak about great leaders we have to mention the word Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur as being great. He greened the ABC Highway so his focus on renewable energy what we are doing now... I must say this is a compliment to the present Prime Minister of Barbados, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. What I am seeing her doing today and some of the strategies that she has employed in order to take Barbados forward, and as Kofi Annan said when the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was the Prime Minister of this country between 1994 and 2008 that Barbados is punching above its weight, some of these policies were engineered by Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and if you pick up this book, the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto and you turn to the last page just before the signatures you would see 33 major achievements between that period 1994-2008. If you doubt me just pick it up and see, from housing, from renewable energy to addressing "Mount Stinkeroo", the redevelopment of Kensington Oval, extending the Deep Water Harbour and building a new cruise pier - I heard the Honourable Member for St. James Central mentioned that - from establishing the Caribbean' first hostel for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Tell me who our heroes are and I will hail them from near and from far.

Mr. Speaker, this afternoon is indeed one of sadness but indeed we should take the positive from it. We have someone whom we can recognise as a great Caribbean leader, we have someone who we can recognise as one of the greatest Prime Ministers in the region and we have someone who we can be proud to say came from humble origins, rural Barbados, from a working-class background, and rose to the status to become Prime Minister of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, that is what development is about and that is what opportunity is about. Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur saw it fit to give others the opportunity that he had.

Mr. Speaker, let me end on this note because I know that some of my colleagues are eager to speak and while I endorse everything that has been said before as it relates to the greatness of Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur this document, which I would like to make a document of this Chamber, is the address by Professor Arthur then the Right Honourable Owen Arthur Prime Minister of Barbados at the Opening of the Twelfth ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly at the then Sherbourne Conference Centre November, 20th 2006 and in that speech he challenged the European Commission as it relates to trade liberalisation - and we know that the

European Union similar to how his vision for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, we modelled the CARICOM Single Market and Economy after the European Union when we look at the history - and said, and I will quote him, it is page 13 of this document, where he said to the European Commission and the leaders of that conference from all over the world, I think they had leaders from over 30 or 40 different nations, in his word: This implies that a meaningful EPA, the Economic Partnership Agreement, process needs clear policies and strategies aimed at bringing about competitiveness in the ACP economies and fairness in the ACP-EU trade. This proactive approach is not compatible with the idea of trying to tackle the wide variety of development circumstances in ACP countries through a one size fits all strategy but it rather call for careful design and collaboration. Mr. Speaker, he was trying to say to the EU what you took 50 years to achieve. He said countries in the developed world have enjoyed 50 years within which to prepare for their economies and societies to accommodate total liberalisation. There at that stage in 2006 - the Honourable Member for St. James South understand where I am going - he was saying to the first world countries, as you seek to bring about trade liberalisation, that they had to be mindful of the Lesser Developed Countries and the unequalled nature of development as it relates to these Lesser Developed Countries. Hence you took 50 years to achieve trade liberalisation and an EU that was functioning and you are seeking to impose those policies on a Caribbean nation and also on the African, Caribbean and Pacific Nations. He was saying that one size could not fit all so that is why we are said to be punching above its weight by Kofi Annan because he challenged First World policies as it relates to bringing about the Caribbean Single Market and Economy but I saw the wider and still see the wider Caribbean Single Market and Economy as opening up avenues for trade in this country and for small businesses to take their products and services beyond this 100 square miles.

This work and the strategy was started by Owen Seymour Arthur and he challenged all First World policies that did not fit with our developing countries as we seek to build out our economy that was socially, environmentally and economically and he challenged them, and we see the same thing today with our current Honourable Prime Minister. Some of us mentioned and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East kept saying that she learnt a lot from Professor Arthur and I am saying that this is a great man. Tell me who the heroes are and I will hail them from near and far. Therefore, the work that he did between the period of 1994 and 2008 has allowed those persons that he developed, has allowed us now to have world leader or a world-class leader in Prime Minister Mia Amour Mottley, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, who is indeed showing her true worth as it relates to building out Barbados and making it that country that can again boast of punching above its weight. Mr.

Speaker, Sir, I will stop here and will say to his family, his wife, his daughters, again his friends, his nephew and to us in the Barbados Labour Party and indeed the Opposition Leader, we have lost a true gem of a leader. We have lost a true gem of a man. We have lost a true gem of a family man... and we have lost at true gem, a son of the soil of his country. May he rest in peace and may we carry on the work that he has started and the work that he has done to empower working-class people and people of all classes in this country. May God bless the years he has spent on this earth and hopefully we would see him again in another life. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East, you have the Floor.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to be very brief because obviously there is great competition for spots today and I do not wish to deprive anybody of shortening their time by virtue of elapse in time. Sir, what does Malcolm "X", Martin Luther King, the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, and Owen Arthur had in common? They all have something in common; many great people are reduced to a phrase and it is the kind of phrase that defines them and what they stand for. Martin Luther King had "I have a dream".

Asides.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAMS: I am glad that everybody is listening. Any time you say, I had a dream, it was synonymous with Martin Luther King. Malcolm "X", "by any means necessary". It is on posters, T-Shirts, in memes. "Friends of all, satellites of none," by the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. "Face it and fix it", by Owen Arthur. Sir, of all the things I have heard Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur said, all the things I have seen him done, the thing that stuck with me most personally (and I have employed and used to great effect) is the phrase "face it and fix it." It can be applied in every aspect of our lives. It can be applied if you have difficulties with your children; it can be applied if you have difficulties in relationships; it can be applied with business; it can be applied with constituents; it can be applied in Government; it can be applied in a ministry. We tend to run from our problems. A lot of us do not want to open the bill, because if we do not see it, it is not due. You get a health check and you do not want to look at the results because until you see it, it is not real. You have a difficulty, you know something is happening and somebody sends you a message, you do not look at it, because until you see it you can pretend that things are not as bad as they are. How many times do we actually "just miss the boat" or miss the chance to collect something to collect something because we took too long to face it and fix it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other thing I wish to address is that we have heard today about Owen Arthur, the family man; Owen Arthur the Honourable Prime Minister; Owen Arthur the Economist; Owen Arthur the teacher; Owen Arthur the friend; Owen Arthur the mentor, and as noble as all of those were, the thing that stands out most for me to Owen Arthur is Owen Arthur the regionalist. Owen Arthur perhaps did more for CARICOM and Caribbean integration than perhaps anybody else. He drank his own Kool-Aid, he believed it and through his belief we all thought it was possible. Barbados became the country that exemplified CARICOM. We became the de facto lead country for CARICOM. Owen Arthur took the bold step to be one of the people to push to the creation of the Caribbean Court of Justice, which, to my mind (and maybe I am biased in this perception) that is perhaps the single greatest institution in the Caribbean.

We all got independence at different times; for those of us who got independence, how truly independent are we? You may consider yourself independent if you make your own laws but can you be truly independent when somebody else decides on the application of those laws? Can you be truly independent when the final decision or your final Appellate Court resides somewhere with people who do not look like you, who do not know your background, who do not know your philosophical leanings, who are completely unaware of the social structures that inform not just the creation of laws but the behaviour and the application of those laws? To my mind, Sir, we can never be truly independent unless we are in control of our judicial process. It must begin and reside with us. When I say “with us” I do not necessarily mean limited to Barbados, I mean limited to those whom we consider family; those of a similar historical background, those of a similar origin. We have gone outside of Barbados, Sir, to look for judges. We have gone outside of Barbados to look for Justice of Appeal. We in Barbados have decided that for us, no matter where you come from, that we want the best for our judicial process, and that is also reflected and amplified when you get up to the Caribbean Court of Justice. The Caribbean Court of Justice is our Final Court of Appeal. Not all of the judges come from the Caribbean, not all are from our background, but we have sufficient representation there among the finest legal minds in the world to show our worth and our ability to stand on our own two feet. We have shown our ability to craft our own jurisprudence. We have shown our own ability to decide finally and fairly and with exemplary record about things that touch and affect us. We have shown, Sir, that our court of first instance for matters involving states can reside with us; not with people for whom powder wigs is not simply a farce but it is how their hair used to look. Sir, we did not get there by happenstance. We got there by persons fighting for this and sticking to it and against all of the odds and the clamourings, internally and regionally. They

said this was the right thing to do, and one of those persons was Owen Seymour Arthur.

Sir, for a number of years I sat on the Trust Fund of the CCJ; that is the fund that manages the resources of the court and funds the court in perpetuity. I did that because I firmly believe that the survival of our final court was of paramount importance to the survival of our jurisprudence and our way of life as a Caribbean people. I would never have got that chance if it did not exist. We look at all the things which Owen Arthur did, and people have touched on those things. They have touched very briefly on what he meant to CARICOM. Owen Arthur was the leader of CARICOM. It did not matter who was the Chairman of CARICOM at any given point in time, Owen Arthur was effectively the leader of CARICOM. When Owen Arthur spoke on regional issues, everybody listened because they believed that his heart was there. He may have played politics at home. He did not play politics regionally. He firmly believed and understood that we are stronger as a unit than we are as small, independent countries.

The voice of Barbados shouting by itself may be heard. Sir, recently we can see it is being heard in every sphere but the voice of Barbados is one voice. When the voice of Barbados is linked or joined with the voices of Grenada and Guyana and Jamaica and Trinidad and all of the rest, then we become a force to be reckoned with, which we could not do standing alone. A great mind realised that and he fought to convince others that this was the way to go. We have not fully got there with respect to the other Caribbean territories adopting the CCJ as its final Court of Appeal. Do you know what? We may never get there, but for Barbados that has always been seen as progressive, we took the right step at the right time and, Sir, I can tell you, our judgements out of the CCJ and the jurisprudence from the CCJ can match or surpass anything from any final appellate court anywhere in the world. Sir, the Privy Council has nothing on the CCJ. That was one of the children of Owen Arthur; so when you call the children of Owen Arthur and we issue our condolences and we speak about Leah and Sabrina, we should also speak about the CCJ and CARICOM because they are as much his children as you all are.

Sir, the last thing I am going to say is that Owen Arthur was that figure whom you either loved or hated, but nobody was ambivalent to Owen Arthur. We did not start out on the right foot and he showed me some kindness when I got involved in active politics. We were not on the right foot when I was the President of the Bar Association and he was the Prime Minister of Barbados, but there was a critical point in time when Mr. Arthur showed to me that he had put aside whatever issues we had, and he supported me in the 2013 campaign. Even when Mr. Arthur demitted membership in the Barbados Labour Party, we had the same barber and I knew he used to disappear every Friday

at 5:30 in the morning. I knew that because my appointment was 6 a.m. and I would get to the barber at six while Mr. Arthur would be getting out of the chair. I could vouch for him at 5:30 on Friday mornings. I cannot vouch for anything past that, but at 5:30 on Friday mornings if he said he was at the barber, he was there.

In those little visits, he would stay on a little bit after his haircut, and he would give me advice. A lot of it was sound, well-meaning advice and it did not matter where he was with his public rancour with the party at any point in time. It did not matter what his sayings were out there with respect to the party. He gave me on those mornings some really sound advice. That is the person he was. Someone said he never really left the Barbados Labour Party and that his heart was always there. I think his heart was always there for Barbados, Sir. I think his heart was always there for Barbados, and if there was anybody he could help to help Barbados, he was prepared to help them. Sir, for the passion that was Owen Arthur, for the loyalty that was Owen Arthur, for the vision or visionary that was Owen Arthur, for the regionalist that was Owen Arthur, for the integrationalist that was Owen Arthur, I say, Sir, we will miss him. There was never one like him before and I do not think there will ever be one like him again. To his family, his children, one of whom I see from time to time -- wink, wink, I will not say where, a secret spot -- my condolences. You have my deepest condolences for a man who made a difference to Barbados and who made a difference to the Caribbean. He will be missed. I am much obliged, Sir.

Asides.

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

Hon. R.R. STRAUGHN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to join this debate and very briefly to give a perspective which I have heard repeated on numerous occasions during the course of this debate, and reflect on my own journey to where I am today in the context of that reflection. Sir, on September 6, 1994, I voted for the first time and I voted for the Barbados Labour Party candidate in St. Michael West and, as you know, Sir....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Continue, Honourable Member. Do not listen to the asides. Continue please.

Hon. R.R. STRAUGHN: I voted for the Barbados Labour Party candidate at that time and the Barbados Labour Party went on to obviously win the election and the rest, as they would say, is history. What was important was that on that day I voted, it was the day before I entered Upper Sixth Form, Sir, and as a young person coming to grips with adulthood and coming out of a period of serious

structural adjustment in this country, it was clear that what Barbados required then was decisive leadership, leadership that understood what was required to move beyond what had transpired over the previous three years where thousands of Barbadians had become unemployed, Sir. There was an eight per cent cut for the public servants of this country, which saw increased hardship on the people of this country.

Sir, I have heard reference throughout the day of Mr. Arthur indicating that he was in politics to stop poor people from being poor. Sir, I start there simply because I am one of those poor people who, having voted for the Barbados Labour Party in 1994, can say today -- not just myself but as a boy growing up in Bank Hall....

Mr. SPEAKER: Peterkin.

Hon. R.R. STRAUGHN: Peterkin, Sir, to be precise. Equally, Sir, my wife grew up as a girl from Gall Hill, and we are both beneficiaries of that philosophy because having left school we both were able to pursue undergraduate studies at the University of the West Indies. Sir I recall distinctly that when I was in junior school, they were persons who were coming through during that harsh time between 1990 and certainly 1994, the economy the way that it was, persons had to defer going to the University of the West Indies, because they had to find work due to the circumstances.

Sir, I find myself as fortunate to be able to move from school into University. I recall some of my friends from school who had to go and find work first, coming into University subsequently in the latter half of the 1990s. Most of these persons are coming from very humble beginnings in the same way that Mr. Arthur certainly would have risen from humble beginning and benefiting from the investment in the people of this country through access to tertiary education.

It is important that we understand that public policy is complicated and getting it right is important because it makes a substantive difference, not just to the lives of individuals like myself but certainly to the welfare of a large number of persons and families across this country.

When Mr. Arthur made the statement that he wanted a graduate in every household, I am that graduate in my household. My wife is that graduate in her household, and subsequent to that Sir, her brother has now graduated from the University of the West Indies. That is the kind of success and investment in people that is critical to ensuring that we can carry the baton forward.

Sir, you will hear me speak of my wife and myself interchangeably because before she decided to change careers Sir, she was an economist at the Central Bank

doing public finance and she reminded me that when she was doing the public finance in the Central Bank, she had occasions to attend the annual meetings with Mr. Arthur in 1999 which as you could appreciate for a young economist is quite an experience.

Sir, it is instructive because over the last two years I have attended the annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in the same way that Mr. Arthur did and it is in strange way quite fortuitous that I find myself representing Barbados in the same way that Mr. Arthur would have as Prime Minister and Minister of Finance at that time. Had it not been for that vote in 1994, certainly myself and thousands of other young people across the country that some of these things may not have been possible. Sir it is for that reason that in 2014 when the Democratic Labour Party eliminated or change the policy with respect to tuition of supporting Barbadians at the University of the West Indies that incensed me so much because I know my own journey, my wife's journey and thousands of other Barbadians journey with respect to the investment in young people that the reason I am here today in part Sir is because I benefited from all that Barbados has had to offer personally and at a time Barbados requires of all of us the absolute commitment to a country that I feel as if I have a role to play in helping to bring a next generation of Barbadians to the fore in the same way that Mr. Arthur's leadership would have brought to this country.

Sir it is important that we all understand that the decisions that we make as politicians and policy makers, that we are here to support people and to move people from their current circumstances to a better circumstance. Therefore, it is critically important that the people of Barbados and us as their representatives understand the balance that that requires of all of us.

Sir, as an economist I could not leave this debate without speaking about the economics, because the truth is Sir Mr. Arthur as a Prime Minister, as an economist certainly regionally, and certainly here in Barbados would have brought a certain swagger, if you like, to the profession. As economists, seeing Mr. Arthur perform not just at the domestic and regional level but the international level, it gave the profession a sense of pride and confidence that here it is that a son of the soil could respond to the most dire circumstances and to move Barbados from where we would have found it in 1994 to where we would have left it in 2008.

Sir, I want to speak to that not from an economic philosophy perspective, but I am going to speak to it from a perspective of automobiles. The execution or the crafting of public policy is often very complicated. As economist we tend to look for what we call secondary and tertiary wrong effect in terms of the introduction of policy and the impact it will have on this, the next and the third, and the

multiply effect. Those are the technical jargons. Sir, however the reality is this, during 1994 to 2008, Mr. Arthur made economic policy seemed too easy. It was not for lack of hard work but he made it look easy.

Sir, for most persons, I come to the analogy that the experience of Mr. Arthur's leadership during his tenure was like an automatic vehicle. You have park, reverse, neutral and drive. However, in reality and I have heard references from members throughout the day, Sir if you google and through you I ask all Barbadians to google Mack truck gears, you will see the illustration of what is required to drive or move a Mack truck. Sir it has 20 gears and pictorial is quite confusing if you do not understand how to drive a Mack truck.

Therefore, I am saying to all Barbadians that who you entrust with the stewardship of the country must first understand the complexity of the execution of public policy and how it affects your lives. Sir for example, I recall most Barbadians were enamored with the fact that you can have your mortgage interest deducted, your credit union contributions as part of your tax allowance. Sir there was a whole slew of things that were available to Barbadians under Mr. Arthur's tenure, that quite quickly after the change of Government in 2008, all of a sudden became complicated and things did not make sense. That is simply because we chose a different path with persons who were not equipped to be able to even understand how to move the truck, how to get it in first gear in the first place, because all that they see and what I am hearing today and if you read the papers, they are accurate, is that they seem to be gearing up for an election, but they still have not come to grips with what is required to govern a country like Barbados.

Sir, the truth is, yes Barbados is a small economy, but the waters are always rough and because the waters are always rough for Barbados, it requires, personnel who are capable of navigating extreme circumstances. Sir, certainly I am proud to be part of a Government right now that has demonstrated up until now, that no matter the conditions out there, this Government will ensure that we chart a path that allows ordinary Barbadians to come along the journey.

No matter how rough the waters get, Sir, and certainly COVID-19 unlike two years ago have shown a level of impact that I can tell you thinking about how we are going to get through this process is not easy, further more execution. However, this Government will not rest. We will not throw our hands in the air and ask what should we do, when to do it and how to do it. We have engaged with all of the social partners in the process but as a Government we will continue in the same way that Mr. Arthur would have demonstrated leadership in times of crisis. First, it is important to understand that governing is

not a simple process as getting into a car, turning the key and moving it from park to drive, Sir.

Barbados like any other economy is like a Mack Truck and the driver who would be the Prime Minister, Cabinet and the team, have to be capable of understanding which gears are required at what point in time. As I said earlier, Mr. Arthur made that look too easy and I applaud it because it is skill. Thousands of Barbadians would have benefitted from his stewardship and by extension, across the region he would have inspired a level of investment and confidence I think the Member for Christ Church East referred to. Personally, it felt to me that coming into 2006 and 2007 we were the closest since Federation to seeing the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) coming to reality.

It is sad that we did not quite get to that point because had we achieved that objective between 2006 and 2007, then the region's response to COVID-19 today would have been completely different. It was Mr. Arthur's vision and I want to whole-heartedly support his approach to understanding that to improve the lives of ordinary people required sound public policy and not election rhetoric. Therefore, I say through you Sir to the people of Barbados that the example of Mr. Arthur in terms of the execution of Government's policy is critical to understanding how your own life and that of your family will be impacted certainly not only in Barbados, but in the context of what is happening globally.

I feel proud to stand here today as one of those poor people who I assumed Mr. Arthur was referring to in order to stand in this Chamber being the beneficiary of the investment that this BLP continues to make in young people. Certainly, as we came to office and I remind the public through you that our reinvestment in young people to attend the University of the West Indies (UWI) tuition-free though there is a cost is important to the continued development of this country. In 10 to 15 years' time, there must be another set of people coming to this place who are capable of responding to the challenges of that time.

This Government will ensure that we continue along that path. I did not serve with Mr. Arthur but I can say to you that I recall one afternoon I was at home in my veranda around 1998 and at that time M50 was a Black Lexus vehicle. It drove up to my front door, the window came down and there was Prime Minister Arthur which had me completely surprised. One of our neighbours had died and he came to ask for directions to the house. We gave him the directions and it was instructive at that time because no one expected the Prime Minister as busy as he was representing Barbados would have been looking to extend condolences to a family that he obviously knew. It was just not expected.

I imagine that it was just the nature of the man. In recent times, we had a chance to converse in relation to the work that he did with the Ministry of International Business and Industry regarding industrial policy. Coming out of the Jobs and Investment Council, we had a number of conversations consistent with the mantra of politics to stop poor people from remaining impoverished. Mr. Arthur was quite concerned and I share the concern also that during this pandemic the impact on households and poor people is that they could potentially go bankrupt, and the impact it would have not only on poor people but making people poorer.

Therefore, we had a number of conversations around what the Government could do potentially to respond to that in a way that not just provided social protection but equally would see a much more resilient economy. Mr. Arthur acknowledged quite clearly that we had from inception a lot of work to do. He did acknowledge that. Therefore, the pandemic amplified further that which he was concerned about because during the lost decade, as

we know, persons were not saving as they were during Mr. Arthur's time. Therefore, his concern in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic was that the long term economic prospects for the country may be impaired simply because as households are having to spend more resources it may be difficult for the economy to recover unless, certainly, the Government would intervene in manner that would allow for as much economic activity to be possibly generated.

We had a few conversations on how that would unfold and I can say to this Honourable Chamber that this Government shares the concerns that he expressed to us and we certainly will work to provide that buffer to ensure that as many households, as well as businesses, are able to get out of this situation as smoothly as possible. Again, this is consistent with the philosophy as espoused today with respect to ensuring that poor people do not remain poor but from our perspective to ensure that we can mitigate against the worst impact

with respect to COVID-19. These are only some of the reflections as an economist that I can say that as we go through the next 12 months to two years responding to COVID-19 in the first instance but over the long term ensuring that we invest in the transformation of the lives of ordinary Barbadians, I am confident we will live up to the ideals of Mr. Arthur.

I want on behalf of the people of Christ Church East Central and my family certainly to extend condolences to his family, and rest assured that this Government intends to continue on the good work that Mr. Arthur would have done on behalf of this country such that his name and

legacy will be forever known to be of works on the behalf of the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. Ms. C. S. V. HUSBANDS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This evening I rise with my colleagues to pay honour to a Prime Minister who stood head and shoulders above many others of his time. I stand this evening to honour a brilliant man and to thank his family for sharing him with us and we are a grateful nation for the tremendous work that he has done. Owen Seymour Arthur had a giant of an intellect. He was a titan when it came to economics. He was Prime Minister of tremendous ability and of tremendous stature. What was interesting about him is that there are many people who are economists who studied economics but Owen Arthur had a flair and in church we would call it a tremendous anointing for effective use of economics in order to build and shape policy, in order to lead and govern a nation. Why was this so? Because he came at a time when we were at a watershed moment in the life of Barbados where the dynamics of the world had change so significantly that what governance of a small nation like Barbados was in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s that had now disappeared and a new international environment had arrived on the scene that challenged the survival of all countries and only those countries that could make the transition, that could make the change were going to be able to be successful in a very new world and God gave Owen Arthur as a gift to this nation for such a time as that because he stood over a watershed moment and understood how important it was for us to safely transition into a new world. This is one of the reasons why he would have coined that phrase that was shared earlier, "Help the man in the street to make sense of the bewildering change that threatens to engulf him." Indeed many small nations across the world found themselves threatened by change that they could not understand and were finding it difficult to make the transition into a globalised environment. Owen Arthur's walk took him took many streets. One of the streets that he found himself in was in 1998 when he was there to represent CARICOM at an International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank programme where he had to make representation on the behalf of the CARICOM countries in relation to this huge powerful organisation that held your life in their hands. He said to them that in the age of global interdependence manner matters when implementing measures. He went on to say we feel very strongly that there is a tendency by staff of these institutions to analyse our circumstances as if they are no different than those of large countries with the same endowment range, with the production flexibility, institutional depth and their adjustment options. This is what he said to them and the

point that he was making on that street was to help the powerful to understand that when they made decisions, when they made determinations that they affected the lives of millions of people who life in the far flung corners of the earth and that this affected whether they could eat bread get water or whether their young people could dream dreams that this depended on their outlook and he saw them as the ones in bewilderment because they did not understand the differences between small countries and large countries and our ability to be able to respond. Thus their tendency to put on us conditions that were not favourable to us that this was inimical to our well-being. He represented us there in terms of constantly sharing with them that they needed to treat us differently and indeed Barbados has had to fight that battle with others many times to gain acceptance by others for what our real genuine circumstances were. It took years to get them to appreciate that we needed special and differential treatment. It took years to help them to appreciate that we were Small Island Developing States (SIDS), therefore, they needed to treat us differently. We have tried as we have moved on to be able to bear that in mind when we engage multilateral organisations that the manner matters when you implementing measures.

In 2006 speaking at a Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Meeting, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was able to share with business people a concept that at first I did not quite understand because I had never but up on it before. He said that in order for an economy to flourish there must be confidence and I thought that was strange. I thought you needed resources, I thought you needed initiatives but he said you needed confidence and there was a room full of business people looking for initiatives and he spoke about confidence and he made this statement that I will always remember. He said look, Government policy must be sound and Government policy must be certain. He said any policy that you put in place must be examined 360 degrees to ensure that the policy will deliver that which you want it to do, that it did not have unintended consequences, that it could be effective, that it was doable, that it would solve the problem and he said, that is just the first step. The second step is that there must be certainty, meaning that the way in which it was implemented, the speed at which it was implemented must allow that policy to be effective and so he knew that in order to take policy and turn it into goodness for a country required that your public sector, your civil service was up to the task of delivering on the policy initiatives, implementing it properly and that you also needed your private sector actors to partner with the Government, working together to help to bring prosperity and transformation to a nation and so he drove civil servants, he demanded the best out of them, he asked for them to give him of their best, inspiring them to do the necessary work to transform Barbados and for those civil servants who were committed, who are hardworking who caught a vision of what he was sharing and the importance of what they had to do, these civil servants shone. They

gained experience and they contributed massively to the transformation of Barbados. This was how he got the change, by being able to inspire civil servants to give of their best and then he partnered significantly with the private sector and I had the privilege of being part of the private sector when he was in office and during my time as the president of the Small Business Association (SBA) we were one of the many partners that he worked with to be able to bring transformation to the small business sector.

The Right Honourable Owen Arthur was deeply committed to the necessity of getting small people to be able to own a piece of the rock, to participate in who and what Barbados was, therefore, he was committed to helping small businesses to be able to grow. He did not cry over the small black man, he did something about the circumstances of the small black man, therefore, when he came into office, one of the things he did was to pursue a very aggressive programme of financing for small businesses. One of the things that he was especially proud about was the fact that in the history of Barbados, the Barbados Labour Party Administration was the first Administration to place close to \$150 million at the disposal of small business development and he spread them over four institutions: Enterprise Growth Fund, FundAccess, the Rural Development Commission and the Urban Development Commission, and also venture capital and the Small Business Association. He knew that by empowering them to do that we were going to be able to develop a cadre of small businesses and build a culture of entrepreneurship.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to share briefly what were some of the successes that occurred. In the Rural Development Commission programme we were able to provide training for over 1 221 micro businesses. The Rural Development Commission was able every year to be able to provide small loans to as many as 100 micro businesses covering things like doing leathercraft or hairdressing or doing design or fishing or being able to do agriculture. A whole set of small businesses got a start up from that Rural Development Commission programme but the brilliance of the man was that he did not just provide it he always thought of how he could get the maximum out of any one movement, so what did he do? Those 1 221 people who were trained in small business development were trained by the members of the Small Business Association. It was small business people training small business people to do business. This was very important because it allowed the Small Business Association itself to be able to earn from out of those contracts and therefore have money to assist its members.

Mr. Speaker, not only did he provide training and financing the third thing he did was Government procurement because he recognised that it was important for small businesses to have the opportunities that big

businesses had in getting Government contracts that helped them to be successful and helped them to be prosperous and so he tasked the Government units to ensure that small businesses were able to participate in Government contracts and so we were able to get contracts in doing school uniforms, uniforms for Government offices, furniture, landscaping, fencing, road building and housing construction because at the bottom of everything that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur did was sound policy and policy that was certain. He always said that if you do that your country would flourish and so the small business sector flourished.

Lastly, Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur walked the streets that led him to the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill helping the man in the street to make sense of the bewildering change that seeks to engulf him. Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was a teacher by nature and he taught Caribbean Economic Affairs at Cave Hill, and the man in the street that he was helping was me. I was his student. I was bewildered by economics. I took first year economics and I thought to myself if I am going to pass my university degree I need to stay far away from this subject and so I did, but as you would know there was a confluence of disgusting circumstances that forced me to have to engage economics again and I had to take Caribbean Economic Affairs and with great trepidation I turned up for that class me and about three other people who had difficulty with Economics. I did not know how I was going to pass it because if 1st year Economics was difficult a third year course was not going to be easy. Mind you, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was so good at what he did. He had the ability to take concepts and explain them, break them down and link them to the ordinary everyday lives of people and as we sat there Economics came alive and that transformed the education of a number of people sitting under his tutelage now engaging Economics with a passion, now engaging its concepts and understanding how they could translate it into what they did in their professions. Mr. Speaker, what that did for me was helped to give me a passion not only for Economics but for CARICOM and a vision for the growth and the development and upliftment of people through effective policy.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply grateful to him for what he did in helping to translate the concepts from a book and make it a living thing. Not only did it change my professional life because then I was able to use it to advance what I did as a management consultant, it is also been extremely helpful in the Ministry where I am right now that even as the economists sat around yesterday and we were discussing the issue of the assured demand framework that we were grappling with and looking at changes to the CET bearing in mind that everything you do must have a positive impact on people's lives and your policy must deliver the results that it needs to deliver in

order to transform people's lives, I was able to keep our team focussed on what are the changes we need to make to this policy to make this policy work for enterprises that we can grow the demand across the region for our goods and services and position our enterprises for prosperity not only within the region but also across the world.

Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur had taught us to know you landscape, understand its nature, understand the people that you are governing and the culture and their circumstances, investigate the causes underlying that which you are seeking to address and that will guide you in how to implement policy and what policy you need to engage.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados was blessed with a great man and I am deeply grateful to him for all I have learned. He was a legendary leader, outstanding and dedicated. I want to sincerely thank Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation for the terrific job they did in showcasing the man Owen Seymour Arthur in the series that they presented on his life, his thoughts and his vision. You genuinely could not help but be inspired and captivated by the brilliance of the man. We learned at his feet and he brought light to our minds and helped us to make sense of the bewildering change that was around us. His life can be summed up in these words: The lives of great men all remind us we can make our lives sublime and departing leave behind us footprints on the sands of time.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. E. G. HINKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will not be long but certainly it is my obligation to also go on the record in this tribute to one of the greatest Barbadians whoever lived not only because I represent part of St. Peter. In fact, 20 per cent of my constituency is in the parish of St. Peter, The Whim, Ashton Hall, Road View, Bakers and some of Black Bess. Sir, 20 per cent of those on my voters list live in the parish of St. Peter. In fact, when the late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur entered electoral politics all those areas were in the constituency of St. Peter and therefore on behalf of my constituents particularly in those areas I wish deep sympathy to his family, his wife Julie, his children, his siblings, and of course his first wife as well. I want to thank them profusely for lending late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, not only to the people of St. Peter, the people of Barbados, the people of the Caribbean region but also the people of the world. Of course, a lot has been said today about his achievement and certainly I will not repeat them, [as they were] all of the well-documented today, in terms of the lowering of unemployment [rate] from an astronomical high of 24 per cent in September,

1994, when he became Honourable Prime Minister, to approximately seven per cent. As I have said many times, both in and outside of this Parliament, seven per cent [was] the lowest unemployment percentage rate in this country since the abolition of slavery, 180 years ago. That alone maps out the legacy of the great man but also leading Barbados at the greatest period of economic growth and transformation this country has seen and coming, of course, in-between periods, both before and after by the Democratic Labour Party, where you had continue negative growth, but also the housing policies which he would have championed as Prime Minister and leader of this country, and all the achievements internally that he led as political leader of this country. Clearly, Sir, I would want to focus in my short time on his legacy as a Caribbean political leader and certainly the manner in which he has made us proud to be Barbadians, again after the lean period of Democratic Labour Party Government that we went through. His stand against the United States of America on the Ship Rider Agreement has been spoken of in this Parliament, his ability to stand up as an equal to the powers-that-be in the most influential and powerful country in the world. sir, certainly at that time it was, and there was one Caribbean Prime Minister, who shall remain nameless, who said that he wished he had the courage and fortitude of late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, to stand up to the United States of America and defend the sovereignty of his country and to say no, on the Ship Rider Agreement. Also, Sir, as has been spoken, his piloting of the Caribbean Court of Justice cannot be underestimated, the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur leading and establishing a Court at regional level, a Final Court of Appeal for Barbados. Unfortunately, only four of our CARICOM countries are yet members of it. Also, his leadership at the Caribbean Single Market level. We do not have the Economy, and I felt so proud of it, so that in January, 2006, when the agreement to bring in the Caribbean Single Market was signed at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, I went up to witness that signature, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, his leadership, which has been said, of the Caribbean Integration Movement, whether he was formally the Head of CARICOM which he was as Barbadian Prime Minister but whether he was actually Head, as happens on a rotation basis every six months where a Honourable Prime Minister of a different Member Country is elected leader. Whether or not he was that leader, he was still recognised by all of his contemporaries and by the international community, as the leading Prime Minister in Barbados. Also, the pride that he would have restored in the Barbadians brand, as was mentioned by the Honourable Prime Minister Gonsalves, the pride that caused the then United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan to say that Barbados as a Small Island State punches above its weight and held its place amongst the Group of Nations internationally.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that alone, in addition to all of his legacies, in terms of improving the lives of the people of Barbados at every level stands out as the legacy of Professor Owen Seymour Arthur. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in terms of my relationship with him, even though, of course, as everyone knows, I was born into a Barbados Labour Party family, I only joined the party formally in 1993, after he became leader of the party. That has been said, in fact, the Honourable Member, Rawle Eastmond, when I was seeking nomination spoke about that. I went to the Honourable Member at that time and said that I wanted to join the party, that the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur was now leader of the party, that I was satisfied that the image of the Barbados Labour Party, as has been said on the Floor of this Parliament today, which before, even though all the historical facts which shows the Barbados Labour Party has done a tremendous amount, (more than any other party), in this country for the working-class family the perception was still there that the Barbados Labour Party was a party of the middle-income people and was not as “labour” as it ought to have been. I joined the Barbados Labour Party just after the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, became leader.

I was also satisfied that the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, was the person. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew who was Members of Parliament at the time spoke about tusslings for the leadership after Sir Henry Forde had resigned, and that he was satisfied that late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, was the best person. I remember where I was when I heard in a breaking news flash came over that evening about 7.30 p.m. That the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, was not the leader of the Barbados Labour Party, and I went and put in my membership application. Mr. Speaker, Sir, he, more than anyone else, is responsible for the perception, (the perception). It was a fact before but yes, as has been said, in politics sometimes perception counts more than facts, but he, more than anyone else was responsible for the perception that the Barbados Labour Party changed and went through a transformation and was recognised as a party for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, he became Prime Minister and it was by a stroke of genius, never before happened, in the whole Caribbean the vote of No-Confidence which succeeded against the Democratic Labour Party, I think in May or June, 1994. He was being urged to hold a Vote of No-Confidence before, to bring a Vote of No-Confidence in Parliament before that time, and he said to wait, wait, wait until the right time came. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that whole episode showed not only his economic acumen but his political acumen which I would agree, as was earlier said today, would have been of course harnessed with being only one of three Opposition Members of Parliament in a

Parliament of 27 for eight years between 1986 and 1994. His first term as Prime Minister, I always say, was a term of almost perfection in terms of what was achieved socially and economically in Barbados, much of which has been documented today. So much so that for the first time in the history of Barbados, a party in Government increased its majority in its second term of office, 26 to two, Sir. It was a vote of full confidence in the policies and leadership of Owen Seymour Arthur by the people of Barbados.

Sir, his legacies in every area of society stand out. He was not able to complete the natural transformation of Barbados’ sovereignty to take us into becoming a republic, but I was certainly extremely pleased to hear last Tuesday in the Throne Speech the intention of this governing party, of which I am a proud member, to take Barbados into republic status. That would complete what Owen Arthur intended to be done in terms of full sovereignty of Barbados’ nationhood.

Sir, I owe him as well my first entry into public life. I remember a Saturday morning walking in Bridgetown with my wife and my first child. My second child would not have been born yet, and I remember someone meeting me and telling me congrats and that I was now Chairman of the Severance Payments Board. I asked the person what they meant and I said I knew nothing about this and had not been asked. In the next two weeks, to be frank, I received an instrument with the signature of Owen Arthur, his fancy signature, appointing me indeed as Chairman. He had full confidence that I would not have said no. There were also all of the other appointments that were given to me during the period he was Prime Minister, whether at the National Housing Corporation as Deputy Chairman, in terms of the committee to promote the rights of people with disabilities as Deputy Chair, National Conservation Commission’s Chairman, and I am eternally grateful to him and his Cabinet for having the confidence in me to lead me into public life where I have gone on from there to be a Member of this Parliament as well.

Sir, I again wish to commend his family and thank them tremendously for sharing such a great personality and individual with the people of Barbados. Politics is not an easy life for the family of those of us who enter, and it would be even more difficult for those in the top leadership positions, Sir. However, he led a life which was worth living, and we thank the Lord for lending him to us, Sir. Really and truly, all of his life came together from his humble background, and obviously the psyche which he had in terms of coming together and reaching the top position, Sir. Of course, the end of the elective political career was one with a bit of controversy. It saddened me to see him leave the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, and I suppose the whole episode speaks to the need for us not only as a party but as a country to be able to define a role for a former Prime Minister who still remains in

Parliament. I think that is where the critical point comes, because the other party had that problem as well, Sir. We heard Sir Lloyd Sandiford complaining about his lack of a role within the other party. I know the Honourable Prime Minister sought to define a role for Professor Owen Arthur, and I suppose that is a challenge that we need to confront: the role which a former Prime Minister plays. It cannot be easy either for someone who bestrode Barbados like a colossus for 14 years -- the longest serving Prime Minister of Barbados -- and then you are no longer Prime Minister but still in Parliament. We have to seek to define that role, Sir.

Sir, it is to his commendation and to the commendation of the now Honourable Prime Minister that after May 2018 with the Barbados Labour Party back in office that roles were found for him to channel his tremendous experience and his tremendous intellect for the service of Barbados in terms of the preparation for UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) as a consultant, the chairmanship of LIAT, his role at the Caribbean level as chairman of the body overseeing the Guyana elections, and other roles which he played in terms of mentoring Members of Parliament and younger MPs, Sir.

Therefore, again on behalf of the people of St. James North, my constituents, 20 per cent of whom reside in the parish of St. Peter, I place on record the tremendous acknowledgement of the achievements of Owen Seymour Arthur to this country and to our region. I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Turn on the microphone, please.

SUSPENSION

Hon. D.D. MARSHALL: Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until five minutes to nine o' clock.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 8.55 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. I promise I am going to be extremely brief this

evening. I just could not let this moment pass to publicly extend my gratitude to someone who has shaped my life and in fact I would say it is the reason I am actually even in his place. I do so on behalf of the good constituents of St. Michael South and on a personal level on behalf of my whole family who admired and totally loved Owen Arthur.

When I met Owen Arthur as Prime Minister in 1996, I was then a relatively young man. If you allow me to call one name Mackie Holder had invited me to join a group called Wednesday 2000. I joined Wednesday 2000 and quickly thereafter there was a Christmas occasion and we had a gift exchange and the person's whose name I pulled for the gift exchange was none other than Owen Arthur. You know, I am a boy, I am nervous and shaking now because to me Owen Arthur for the first time really in person and to then to be presenting a gift to him was nerve racking for me. In my mind I figured a number of ways this conversation was going to go, but our first exchange was going to be something profound and meaningful. As I was approaching to deliver my gift, Owen said to Mackie, "Mackie, who is this young man?" I remembered feeling a little jilt in the chest. He then said, "Young man are you nervous?" I pretended not to be and he said, "I am just a man, do not be nervous son".

Over time, many times I would get messages from Prime Minister Arthur. Several times it would surprise me. I would get conversation that was surprising. When I left to study in London in 2000, I went to the Office of the Prime Minister and I ask then Julie, if I could call her that. I said, I have a picture of Owen Arthur and I wanted it signed. I had it autographed and I took it with me in London. In London there were three pictures on my wall. As a student of the year and some that I was there. It was a picture of Barbados, a picture of Tupac because I was young and a picture above my head of Owen Arthur. I would get up every morning and look at Barbados. Tupac thing was in the vent of demise, when my heart can beat no more, I hope that I die for a principle or a belief that I have lived for. That was on the poster. I felt at the time Owen represent also represented that, this idea that he was living for a principle that he lived for. In my own way I felt that I too should live my life in such a way, but I have no regard to be truthful with you as a boy for politics. I have zero regard as a boy for politicians. I felt the whole thing was a scheme and scam and that those men who offered themselves to political leadership often did not have the interest of poor people at heart.

However, something changed when I was introduced intellectually to ideas of Owen Arthur and I thought that perhaps that things could be for real and that maybe they are some men who generally want to see the interest of people be advanced in this country. When Prime Minister Arthur would say he came to stop poor people from being poor, it meant something to me because growing up in the

Pine I was that poor person he came to stop from being poor. I joined the branch and I worked a lot under Hamilton Lashley and at the time I became PRO, then Vice President and then President of my branch. I remember when Hamilton Lashley became a Minister, he would say to me all the time, the only Prime Minister that would have made me a Minister in this country is Owen Arthur. He said that to me repeatedly. Perhaps, because other Prime Ministers in his mind might have found all kinds of reasons why he was not good enough, but that Prime Minister Arthur kept faith with him and made him a Minister at the time.

Sir I recall around 2006 when the Prime Minister visited Mauritius for a UN SIDS Conference. When he came back he kept saying, small island states have to look out for themselves, they are on their own. He said it to me, he said it to the public, and he kept saying it over and over. He tried to engage the private sector to stimulate the third sector. All of the things that we are now doing, he foresaw and sought to put things in place to address them.

In 2014, I was in the mall with my daughter who does not take pictures with anybody for any reason. In fact, she does not even like to take pictures with me for fear that I might post her on Facebook or Instagram. However, we were in the mall and I saw Prime Minister Arthur there, we spoke briefly and he gave me words of advice and she asked to take a picture with him and she does not take pictures with people. I think she wanted to take the picture with him because of how I felt about Prime Minister Arthur and how I represented him. In her own little mind the idea that she could take a picture with somebody who was so genuine, not great necessarily but genuine and real and who made such an impact on my own life. I think it meant a lot to her, it surely meant a lot to me, but I also really think it meant a lot to Prime Minister Arthur, because there was a smile on his face when she wanted to take a picture with him. I think that as we get older sometimes and as we go into political life sometimes we are forgotten and that maybe there is a way in which we like to think our legacy extends itself to future generations.

If I have time, I would tell you the story of when I met Skeeter Davis. The Attorney General is saying I have time so I will tell it. She was here for a concert and I went at the end of the concert and I got a tape, back then you had tapes. I wanted the tape autographed. Skeeter Davis was so excited and she said tell me more about yourself and I did. She asked, "What brought you into my music?" I said, "No it is not for me it is for my mother." I saw her facial expression changed to sadness and when I think about it I regret the fact that I did not read that moment, that I completely misread the moment. She also felt I guess that she wanted to think that her music would extend itself to other generations and I was a young man.

Asides.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: I was a young man then Sir.

However, I would also start getting messages when I was present at the branch, when hemming on horn should I run should I not run. Many times it was Owen Arthur calling giving me advice. As a young Minister, from time to time on Whatsapp, because then I must tell you it felt good that he realised my name. I remember in our first conversation with Mackie Holder he asked, who this young man is and then I became young Humphrey time and time again. Young Humphrey you are doing well, young Humphrey you should enter public service even though I am not so young anymore. However, it felt good to have that kind of reward and recognition from Owen Arthur.

I promised I was going to be brief and as I close there was an incident that kind of hurt my feelings as it related to Owen. We were at a school function and I would not say the school but he had come to see his daughter and my daughter was there at the time. The Barbados Labour Party had just lost the Government around 2008 2009 or so. We got there late and the hall was packed. We were entering the hall of the school and you had to go and find a chair for yourself. Each man was breaking into other classrooms trying to find a chair for themselves. A former Prime Minister probably a few months ago I cannot remember the exact time but he too had to go and try to find a chair for himself. I offered him the chair I had and he said no do not worry young Humphrey. Sir I just feel that there is a dignity that should be shown to Former Prime Ministers who served this country that they should always be recognised in this country as a Prime Minister. They should never find themselves in such a position. In fact, it is an anathema to me and I think to any right-thinking Barbadian that such is the case.

I think that Former Prime Ministers should have access to a driver with an official car and should be given and official invitation to these things and should always be given seating. It was shameful and I am not saying so politically because as far as I know there are no living former Prime Ministers in the Barbados Labour Party so it is not a political point.

I feel the same should extend to any Prime Minister because serving a country at that level is hard work and it has a price on your health and relationships with family and friends. If you are not careful, it has a price on your relationship with your Lord. It is difficult work and I feel that in this country we have in to treat former Prime Ministers a lot better than we do. In my mind, I can still see Owen Arthur having to look for a chair and I never felt it was right. I hope that as a Government we rectify it because it is one of those things that do not stand well with me. Sir, I just want to close by thanking the family for being here, listening to us, giving us Owen Arthur and

allowing him to serve his country the way that he served this country. He molded us, Sir.

When Owen first affected me, I had not met. You do not even know the extent to which people in this country were affected by Prime Minister Arthur in the way Minister Straughn spoke about earlier. I want to offer my most sincere condolences to the family but beyond that, I want to offer a real deep, genuine sense of gratitude for what Prime Minister Arthur has done for my family, this country and I. With those few words, I am obliged.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the hour is late and I promise you, Members of this Chamber and members of the family that I will be brief. I have enjoyed tremendously listening to all of the various anecdotes that were related by Members. I feel a little bit impoverished because I do not think that any of the personal anecdotes that I can offer would generate anywhere near as much interests as those that we have heard. Anecdotes apart, I stand tonight in this Chamber to express the debt of gratitude that I feel towards Owen Arthur. My regret is that I never expressed it to him personally.

There are two people in public life to which I feel I owe this debt. Of course, one is the Member for St. Andrew who has known me since I was about 16 years old and has guided me along much of this journey. There was a point in time when the Member for St. Andrew and Owen Arthur had diverged somewhat. I was more than surprised when after we won the 1999 election that he telephoned and offered me an opportunity to sit in the Senate. Due to the extent to which he and the Member for St. Andrew had diverged, I never even thought that it was a possibility that he would embrace me in that way.

I well recollect what he told me. We were at Government House where the swearing in had taken place

and he said to me, "Young Marshall, I am giving you an opportunity. Use it well." I do not know that I particularly distinguished myself in the Senate but one fateful day there was lawyer who called me frequently. He was on the other side and would always call me. My secretary was told when she asked who was calling, "Tell Mr. Marshall it is Owen Arthur." After the first eight times of this particular prank, one day in question I got a call and my secretary said it was Owen Arthur. My response when I picked up the phone was not polite, Sir.

Unfortunately, it turned out to be Owen Arthur. He acknowledged that it was really Owen Arthur and asked if I would consider running in St. Joseph. I have seen a man of tremendous brilliance and wit. I think that we as politicians can lose the common touch but if you have seen Owen

Arthur playing dominoes, eating souse, drinking rum or whatever else he would drink, you would know that he was individual who recognised that it was the people to whom he was obligated. It was the people who gave him the strength and authority that he had. I suppose it would be historically accurate for me to say that I was one of his three deputies.

I had two deputy Prime Ministers and one deputy Leader of the Opposition. Someone told me that there is no such thing in the laws of Barbados and, therefore, I should be careful laying any claim to it. During that time, I enjoyed a relationship with Owen Arthur which I do not imagine that it was in any way precious. I do not delude myself into thinking that I was of any tremendous value but what was important about it to me was that I got to see how a brilliant political mind works. He led our party into the 2013 election which I considered to be a remarkable success for us even though we did not win at the polls.

I have seen the brilliance of Mr. Arthur in law. In fact, it was a terrible thing being an Attorney General for Mr. Arthur because whenever he asked you a legal question, you were almost certain that he already knew the answer especially when it came to matters related to CSME. In fact, I worried then that he only asked me to confirm what he already knew to be correct. I could go on and on but I will not. I am eternally grateful to him for having invited me to be one of Senators, to run, to be a part of his Cabinet and then, to become Attorney General.

On all of those occasions that we worked, I believe that I saw a mind at work and not just a man at work. I will always regret that I did not take the opportunity, especially in recent times to express my gratitude. However, I express it now to his family, the widow and children, and to all grieving relatives. I feel that the party has suffered a tremendous loss. The country has suffered a tremendous loss but I know that the loss you feel is the hardest one of all. I extend to you on behalf of myself, my family and constituency of St. Joseph our heartfelt condolences.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable Member for The City.

Lt. Col the Hon. J. D. BOSTIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The many things that have been said about Owen Arthur here today, especially his achievements as Prime Minister, I believe bear testimony to the rich and enduring legacy which he left behind. It is a legacy which I think will serve us still in good stead as we navigate the murky waters that confront us as a nation. I want to speak to the three things I would say that connected me to Owen Arthur and consequently my tribute will not be long. All three things were outside of the realm of politics with me because they all occurred while I was a serving officer of the Barbados Defence Force (BDF).

The first one had to do with the fact that I was responsible for providing some draft speeches on security for Owen Arthur as Prime Minister. In order for me to do that, I studied Owen Arthur, in terms of the speeches he would have made; each one on security here and abroad and one day he looked at me and he said to me, you are writing these just like I would and I said, yes, Prime Minister because I read every single speech that you gave on security for which he chuckled.

That was the first thing, but the second, and I would say the most important of the three had to do with the two occasions that Barbados' sovereignty came under threat. Both occasions had to do with agreements by the United States of America (USA) with other countries in the Caribbean and in one case globally. The first one was spoke to today or spoken about, it was mentioned, and that is the Shiprider Agreement. That was a bilateral that the United States of America (USA) signed at the time with Caribbean countries, an agreement which gave the United States of America (USA) the authority to pursue vessels suspected of drug trafficking within the territorial waters of Caribbean countries, that is the United States of America (USA) Coast Guard and their Navy, and Owen Arthur refused to sign that agreement for some obvious reasons at the time. We, Barbados, ended up signing a shiprider agreement that was completely different from the agreement that was signed with all of the other countries and for me that was a very strong statement, but the second one had to do with a United Nations (UN) Article. I do not remember the number, but I think it is 92 in which the United States of America (USA) was seeking to have exempted from prosecution their military service men and women who were deployed on overseas missions and who might have committed some offence, exempted from prosecution by foreign countries. Owen Arthur did not agree to that either, he did not sign it and that resulted in Barbados being denied military assistance that we were getting at the time.

What for me was really very encouraging about the response from Owen Arthur at the time, and I happened to be in a place where he was speaking to some official from the United States of America (USA) and he said, at the time, that he did not have any problems at all with the United States of America (USA) denying military or security assistance to Barbados because in his view, the security of Barbados was not the responsibility of the United States of America (USA) but the responsibility of the Government and the people of Barbados and in my eyes as a young officer he grew about three feet because I really looked up to him. It was something for me that remained with me for the remainder of my career and he did not only talk the talk, he walked the walk. He walked the walk in the sense that after those discussions and after we were denied the assistance, Owen Arthur proceeded to ensure that the Barbados Defence Force vehicles were changed, we got

new vehicles, the old weapons were changed, we got new weapons, and the Barbados Coast Guard got a new base, a new fleet of vessels, three or four patrol vessels and some other vessels for the small boat flotilla and that was the Prime Minister and the Government of Barbados doing that. For the members of the Barbados Defence Force at the time, that was something that was significant and that really made me understand the type of leader that we had at that time.

The third connection had to do with the fact that one day one of our colleagues approached me out of the blue and told me that he was emissary. He came to me and told me that the then Prime Minister sent him to try to influence me into contesting the seat in the City of Bridgetown on the behalf of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP). To be honest with you, that was totally out of my mind. I had no inclination, intention, I had never even dreamt of being involved in elective politics so that my entry into politics really was as a result of Owen Arthur making that request and because it was the City of Bridgetown and he had said clearly to me when I first met him to discuss it, that he wanted someone who grew up in the City of Bridgetown and who had done well to represent the City of Bridgetown and at that time, for me, it was an offer that I simply could not refuse.

Those are the three points I would say that have connected me to Owen Arthur and as a Barbadian that joined his stewardship that was a period of time that I, as a Barbadian, felt very, very proud and I felt at that time that there was nothing at all that could happen to us economically, socially or otherwise, even in terms of having a natural disaster that we could not face, as a nation, because he gave that level of confidence to each and every one of us as a citizen. The words I will never forget is to go for the gold. That was the Owen Arthur that I met and I am really happy. I had never had the opportunity to serve in a Cabinet with Owen Arthur but I certainly, as a citizen, I too would have benefitted from the many things that he did so I would like to really say thank you very much to his family who are present here and those who are not here and even to his very close friends, a couple of them who are still here with us this evening. Thanks for sharing because we, as Members of Parliament, all of us in here know the impact on our families and the sacrifices that our families are called upon to make to facilitate what we do and we know what it would have been like especially for 14 years serving as the Prime Minister of this country. Thank you and we are very, very grateful for his service.

I am obliged.

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

Hon. I. G. P. GOODING-EDGHILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the hour is late and I too will be very brief.

It is said that the measure of a leader is the shadow he leaves behind and I join my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, and the constituents of St. Michael West Central in paying tribute to this outstanding son of our soil, one who came to public life driven by a passion to serve. Owen Arthur's contribution to public life, Mr. Speaker, is an example for those of us who have come to politics or who have come to serve in public. Mr. Speaker, his service was driven by love of country and we all know that this young bright star who was spotted by the late Prime Minister Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams when he returned from Jamaica to serve the Government of Barbados as a Budget analyst in 1981. Mr. Speaker, after winning the nomination to contest the by-election in 1984, Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams who, as you know, was highly renowned for his intellectual ability and on the same occasion of the nomination described Owen Arthur as having one of the finest brains of the 20th century and Owen Arthur lived to Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams assessment. He did not just expound economic and social development theories, he lived and practiced it in a very pragmatic way, I might add, that made a great difference to enhancing people's lives and when he became the leader of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) he went to New York to speak to Barbados Labour Party (BLP) supporters. He was interviewed by the Nation's North American Editor and in that interview he said that with the right policies there was nothing to prevent Barbados from creating 30 000 jobs. Mr. Speaker, we know that he accomplished 30 000 jobs. In fact, he went beyond 30 000 jobs and he created 35 000 jobs. That was a time, Mr. Speaker, as we all know when unemployment was in the high 20s, 26 and 27 per cent. His colleagues perhaps at the time felt he had gone too far but through the policies that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur implemented as Minister of Finance he created the jobs, he fulfilled the promise during his 14 years. Mr. Speaker, when he demitted office unemployment was around 6.7 per cent. His pronouncement, Mr. Speaker, of that 30 000 jobs pledge was a demonstration of his own inner confidence, his confidence in his training as an economist, and those policies led Barbados to great success. He was very confident, Mr. Speaker, and he never looked back. In fact I can recall him reciting that famous quotation that great causes cannot be won by doubtful men. He used it, Mr. Speaker, in Budget Speeches and I confess that especially when I were on long haul travels I had electronic copies of his speeches and it gives me no greater joy to read the Right Honourable Owen Arthur's speeches because you learn a lot.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to salute the Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur's vision in creating the Rural and Urban Development Commissions. As a product

of a rural parish he recognised the disparity between rural areas and urban Barbados in that you could not have two Barbadoses as it were. He created special institutions to accelerate development in Barbados not only in rural Barbados but across the landscape of Barbados. He created business opportunities and in the community by ensuring that persons at the community level had an opportunity to participate in the economic gains of this country.

Mr. Speaker, between 1994 and 2008 our loyal son of the soil did much for Barbados. You heard it today, Mr. Speaker, and I am not going to go into details because of the hour but he surpassed every social and economic indicator. He transformed Barbados as the longest serving Prime Minister. His legacy, Mr. Speaker, in no small measure contributed to the Barbados Labour Party's proud record of performance.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that his talent was spotted and since he was a beneficiary of someone who spotted talent or potential I should rephrase it, he practised the same thing. The Right Honourable Owen Arthur was responsible for bringing, and you heard it today, several persons to public life and, Mr. Speaker, I count myself lucky and fortunate to be one such person. He first appointed me to the Senate in 2003 and I served until 2008. He even reposed confidence in me, Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Transport Board. As you know at that time the Transport Board had a history of challenges and he reposed the confidence in me as a young person to take on the leadership of the Transport Board. I must admit, Sir, that Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur has prepared me in a most fundamental way for public life. He taught me the importance of public service and for that I am eternally grateful. I never thought I would have been in a Cabinet at this time but his knowledge and his ability to teach one helped me to transition from a Backbencher to a Government Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I perhaps would only have one regret for him that a man who led Barbados and accomplished so much for Barbados was never afforded the opportunity to sit on any Board in Barbados for the private sector and it was unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, I admire his political craft as well. He had the ability to take a negative story and convert it to a positive. He had a way of turning a negative political outcome to a positive result.

Sir, in recognition of his exceptional performance not only as a Prime Minister of Barbados but as a representative of St. Peter, I feel that thought should be given to the erection of a monument in his honour. In my view the ideal place for any such momenta would be the roundabout that leads into Speightstown north of Cobblers Cove Hotel. Professional the Right Honourable Owen

Arthur was a very modest man who did not seek personal glorification in monuments and honours, however, in my view, and after consultation with his widow and family, every effort should be made to create a tasteful monument that would tastefully and tangibly and visually reflect both his wishes and appreciation as a grateful nation. He was a great Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker.

To his widow Julie, whose grace and elegance adorned Barbados with humility and whose guiding hand would have to lead now his daughter Leah and to his other daughter Sabrina but in particular to Leah, a well composed young lady who read the Bible lesson at her father's funeral for the world to see with confidence, a hallmark of Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur... As she spoke I remember Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur. When she read the Bible lesson at her father's funeral, she certainly would have done her father proud.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I will miss a dear friend, a man of remarkable intellect, one who believed in Barbados and understood the political landscape. He was a visionary who understood how to develop people and how to transform Barbados. Mr. Speaker, if only he had his hand at the wheel much longer perhaps Barbados would have accomplished that goal of being a developed nation.

Sir, I am very pleased to have met a man like Professor the late the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur in my lifetime. May his memory live on for the glory and the pride of a grateful nation.

To you, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

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

Mr. N. G. H. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to add my contribution to the record of tributes echoed by the Honourable Members of this House honouring the leadership of the former statesman and late Prime Minister Owen Seymour Arthur. Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur journey and humble beginnings shaped him into becoming the best and he never forgot where he came from. Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was a man who was very determined and fearless. He was a man who created opportunities for poor people to embrace; he was a man who faced any challenge and fixed it. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I remember I was 14 years old when the late Statesman became the Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados, back in 1994. I can remember the good things the late Statesman did for this country, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I can remember the hardship my mother, "Myrna", and the people of Barbados had to endure at the hands of the Democratic Labour Party Administration, especially with the 8 per cent pay cut back in those days. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when the unemployment rate under the Democratic Labour

Party back in the 1990s was at 22.98 per cent and when the late Statesman became the Honourable Prime Minister and took over the Government of Barbados on 6th September, 1994, jobs were created and the unemployment rate was cut in half and reduced to 10.61 per cent by 1999. This is a perfect example of how the former late Honourable Prime Minister, late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, used to face it and fix it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the late Statesman did not stop there. He went on to further transform Barbados and the people in a way to benefit many generations to come. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission were conceived and came into existence at the hands of the late Statesman, those two departments are perfect examples of the true meaning of transformation in Barbados under his leadership for poor people to benefit and many generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have constituents who have benefitted from the Urban Development Commission and who are still benefitting to this day. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may not know but I have strong roots in St. Peter, and the current Honourable Member for St. Peter can attest to this: My father, Collis Richards and the late Statesman, late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, went to school together and my father told me about the days when the late Statesman, late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, and him used to go to the standpipe and fill buckets of water together, because in those days most of the houses did not have water supply. My father and the late Statesman, late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, grew up together and lived four houses away from each other. Despite I was raised in Black Rock, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had days as a child roaming in Rose Hill, Benn Hill, Maynards, and Mount Beviton, [all in] St. Peter because my father's side of my family originated from Rose Hill, St. Peter.

I can share many stories, Mr. Speaker, Sir, but I know that time is limited. I [have] worked between four to five general elections, including the last General Election, May, 2018. I can remember working in the 2003 General Election campaign with the former Members of Parliament for the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, Mr. Mark Williams. I remember when the late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, turned up at the campaign house unexpected. When he entered the campaign house, had the earth opened, everyone present would have jumped in. There was no long talk. All I heard late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur said: "I want every so-and-so body out of this campaign house now and on the road working." Mr. Speaker, Sir, just the forcefulness of his voice caused everyone to literally disappear from out of the campaign house at that point in time. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the late Right Honourable Member,

Owen Seymour Arthur said that to win an election you had to be one the ground; that in order to win you had to spend the time. He said that money may be your friend during a campaign but it can also be your enemy if you did not have it to spend. Mr. Speaker, Sir, one thing late Right Honourable Member, Owen Seymour Arthur, said to me was that in politics you had to put in the time, you either spend the time or you had to spend money. Sir, I never had the money, so I made sure that I put in the time.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to conclude by echoing the words of the Lord, quoting from Psalms 136: vs. 1-4:

“O, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; For His mercy endureth forever;

O, give thanks to the God of gods; For his mercy endureth forever; O, give thanks to the Lord of lords; For His mercy endureth forever.

To him who alone does great wonders; For His mercy endureth forever.”

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to give thanks to the former late Prime Minister, Owen Seymour Arthur, for developing Barbados and the lives of poor people in this country. I want to give thanks to the former late Prime Minister, Owen Seymour Arthur, for his good deeds and may his legacy endure forever. Mr. Speaker, on the behalf of my constituents, I also wish to extend condolences to his wife and children and to his extended family. May his soul continue to rest in peace and rise in glory.

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

Hon. C. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. Speaker, I too want to lend my support to this debate as it relates to Prime Minister, Arthur. Mr. Speaker, unlike a lot of my colleagues in this Honourable House, I would not have had the extensive interaction with him. I can speak to about five occasions on which I had interacted with him and in every single situation in which I interacted with him I can say that constituents from St. John would have benefited in some way from that interaction. Mr. Speaker, in 2003, I was working as a Youth Officer in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and our current Prime Minister, the Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, would have introduced two other officers and me to Prime Minister Arthur in Parliament. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas referenced to it earlier, in relation to Project Oasis. I remember it was a Tuesday that we saw Prime Minister Arthur, who said to us, to bring him a proposal and he would support this initiative that was then not new. A week later we took a draft back to him, which he said he would support. Mr. Speaker, that gave birth to Project Oasis. Mr. Speaker, for

the next four years or so, across the length and breadth of Barbados, Project Oasis was providing an opportunity for those youngsters who, (let me say), reside outside of mainstream society, those individuals who were on the “blocks” across Barbados. My next interaction, Mr. Speaker, was right in Cabinet Office. I remember going to the Estimates because I was told that if questions were asked about Project Oasis, that I was running the Project and that I was the one who would have to answer questions asked about Project Oasis, I was running the project and I would be the one to answer those questions. In the initial stages, the project was capitalised by about \$150 000. At the end of Project Oasis, it was capitalised at \$3 million; more than the budget for the whole youth affairs programme. Mr. Speaker, I said that my interaction also benefited constituents in St. John because we have guys on the block in St. John as well who benefited from Project Oasis. On another occasion, I remember that in Maynards we were providing some equipment for youngsters on the block and I called the office and said, “We are doing a presentation to some youngsters in Maynards. Can you ask Prime Minister Arthur if he would be interested in being at the location when we do the presentation?” His secretary took the information and called and said yes. She also gave us a date and we agreed to be in Maynards to do the delivery.

Mr. Speaker, I guess in a similar vein to some of those who went before me that we have a couple of things in common. My mother worked on the plantation, and I too am from a poor background, and that is the mantra which I have heard throughout the day in these tributes. Mr. Speaker, what impacted me most in relation to my interaction and my knowledge of Prime Minister Arthur was in 2010 when he came to St. John in my village to speak at a political meeting. I had heard it before but on that particular night there was a twist, and I think I heard the Honourable Member for George North mention it earlier today. On the platform in Edgecliff, Prime Minister Arthur indicated that, yes, he went to university and on many nights when the bus missed him, he walked to St. Peter. He said he did not only walk St. Peter from university but he was walking out of poverty. His journey at the university and his walk to his home were being done out of poverty.

His daughters are here tonight, Mr. Speaker, and I too am not a father, but like Prime Minister Arthur I am a daddy. I recognise that since 2018 that was my guiding light in terms of how I treated to the constituency of St. John and the people in St. John. I am a father of three and as I stand here tonight I am exceedingly pleased for my children, who came as a result of half belonging to me in terms of the interaction, and I have a son who is in banking and a daughter who is a doctor. Sitting here today, Mr. Speaker, I got a note from my last daughter that she was

just accepted into Hugh Wooding Law School to study for two years.

Asides.

Hon. C.McD. GRIFFITH: Mr. Speaker, like those young ladies, it is good to know that this journey now since 2018 was shaped by those words about walking out of poverty as a result of a solid education. For the rest of my political life I am here to facilitate the needs and aspirations of the young persons in the constituency of St. John to ensure that the same pride which I have from that message and from my interaction as a daddy -- not a father -- that I too can contribute to several persons within the constituency of St. John walking out of poverty. I can contribute by ensuring that the three primary schools which I have in St. John excel and become institutions of excellence on the landscape of St. John, and by ensuring that all of the infrastructure necessary is in place to move St. John forward in the same way that Prime Minister Arthur moved St. Peter forward, where you can see change on the landscape.

If nothing else, Mr. Speaker, to see individuals lining both sides of the streets in St. Peter on the day of that funeral, I was blown away. You only do that because of the life of the man who we are here paying tribute to this evening. I do not expect that this will happen in St. John in terms of lining the streets, Mr. Speaker, but if at the end of this political journey one youngster, one family in St. John indicates that their lives were changed as a result of the representation from Charles Griffith, then I would have achieved a small portion of what Prime Minister Arthur achieved in his years as Prime Minister and as Member of Parliament for his constituency. I too want to extend my deepest sympathy to all of you and your families on the behalf of myself, the constituency of St. John and the branch in St. John. My political journey now is simply to help persons to walk out of poverty. Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. P.R. PHILLIPS: Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity tonight and I join Honourable Members in paying tribute to the life of Professor the Right Honourable Owen S. Arthur. A lot indeed has been said by colleagues which I have no intention of rehashing, but I just want to locate my contribution in the simple but very important theme as I look at Owen, the Member of Parliament; a lesson in excellent representation. I first heard about Owen Arthur soon after I joined the Barbados Labour Party back in 1980. At that time there were political titans around. There was the late Tom Adams, my mentor and the one who actually caused me to join this party. There were also

persons like E.W. Barrow, Sir Harold Bernard St. John, Sir Henry Forde and of course Burton Hinds, the man who Owen Arthur replaced as the Member of Parliament for St. Peter.

The political journey of this man called Owen Seymour Arthur was not an easy one. I remember, as a youngster fresh out of school and now into the workforce back in 1980 when I worked at Cave Shepherd & Co. Ltd., the many arguments and discussions which abounded. When he came into political life, he met many obstacles and much criticism. They talked about how he stammered. They talked about how this man had come and mashed up the economy in Jamaica and had now come back to Barbados to do the same thing. That was the talk. He had a tough by-election, he lost and came again. In my view, all those things shaped Prime Minister Arthur to perhaps become the best Member of Parliament that any constituency would want to have. Indeed, I look at St. Peter -- since I am a neighbour and there are parts of St. Peter which electorally belong to St. Lucy - and we share borders in Date Tree Hill, Alexandria and Oxford but in 90 per cent of those cases most of the borders belong to me. However, because of the Barbados Labour Party leaning in St. Peter I obviously do not get votes along that particular corridor.

However, St. Peter lacked for nothing where their MP was concerned. Be it infrastructural development, transportation, recreational facilities, nothing of the sort. Whatever that was necessary Owen did for his constituency and that is the kind of representation I want to emulate, even though I may never be the Minister of Finance, but the one thing he always said, you have to find creative ways to help your constituency. I remembered hear him saying that on more than one occasion. You do not have to wait for the Government to do everything but you build relationship with the private sector and so on and you can get a number of things done within your constituency. Obviously, then the Government infrastructure would come into play and help you along.

His stance was that he would never leave a development plan for his constituency for somebody to come and do after him. I intend to be the same, because whatever development there has to be in St. Lucy, I intend to do it for as long as the people of St. Lucy would have me there, because this is the way Owen Arthur taught. He was quiet when you see him moving around, but he had some good values and lessons to teach a young Parliamentarian like a number of us here tonight.

Owen was not just the people's man across the country, but particularly so in his hometown St. Peter. Not often would you find someone who would have born and grown up in a constituency and then turn out to be the Member of Parliament for that constituency. Perhaps a number of us here have that opportunity. I know the

Honourable Member for St. Peter and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas as well and the Honourable Member for St. John. We have to ensure that we do right by our constituencies. This is the path as far as I am aware and as far as I see as I watch on growing up as a youngster I watched this method being exhibited by Owen Seymour Arthur. That is very important.

In my view, from his way was that the constituency that raised him, he had to give back to and that is why he represented St. Peter with every sinew in his body. I recently became the candidate for St. Lucy back in 2006 and there was a house fire in one of the borders we shared in Date Tree Hill. I went to that particular fire and while I was there, he turned up in his jeep, MP50. He said, “Young boy, it is good to see you, you are learning fast”. It was only his part of the constituency, but I heard Date Tree Hill and I went. You would not think that in some instances you do not normally think that Prime Ministers have the time to look at things like that, but Owen found the time for his constituency.

His contribution, his method of representation should be emulated by all of us. That is very important. He also found the time to visit the community shops to sit with his peers and youngsters, would like to enjoy a game of cards, dominoes or whatever, because he always said that our politics is local and you must always find that time to spend in your constituency.

Of course, in my closing he had some connections in Pie Corner, St. Lucy. In his eulogy I heard about the man Harakite who was related to him and he was from Pie Corner, St. Lucy, the very district where I was born and grew up. This is one thing that stayed with me for a long time. I did it in my first campaign. I remember the night in Speightstown, where KFC now is, the carpark. At that time cave Shepherd would have been below and Courts is there now and so on. In the carpark above the Speightstown Mall, there was a meeting being held there by the Barbados Labour Party during the campaign. Owen came on to the strains of the sound, “I just call to say I love you, I just call to say how much I care, I just call to say I love you and I mean it from the bottom of my heart.” That night and even now I got goose pimples when that sound was played and Owen showed by the life he lived and the representation that he gave, not just to St. Peter but to Barbados. He did not just call to say so, he showed that he did indeed love his constituency, the place of his birth, and he showed that did indeed love his country Barbados.

I want to say that this is the kind of representation that I want to leave behind. To his family, I want to say thank so much, because I understand that it would be difficult sometimes and challenging when as a family man he could not be there because he was called to national duty. I want to say thank you for the time you lent him to

Barbados, thank you for the time you lent him to all of us and his contribution will ever be remembered as the man. For me he was the great example of good and proper representation. I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. At 10.10 p.m., the last time I heard him say it was in West Terrace in 2013, somebody quoted it earlier that at this kind of hour of the night....

Asides.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: His widow just laughed, I am not sure if he was telling the truth, but at this time of the night he only did things that caused, and he used the word intense, and when he used words like intense you would see mischief in his face, intense pleasure.

Tonight though at this hour, this is not intense pleasure, even though there is some pleasure involved in being able to pay tribute to one who I consider my mentor and one who is responsible for me being here to actually pay this tribute this evening.

I begin where I think he would have want me to begin, because in February he repeated this about four times in the space of about 60 seconds, and I am happy that it is in the actual Resolution that we are speaking to this evening. One of the clauses which is clause 7 or 8 says, “and whereas the father of the house having serve those 34 years as a constituency representative of his beloved parish of St. Peter, boasting of being the only Prime Minister to represent the constituency of his birth that the constituency would also feel his transformative touch as the son of a carpenter and a plantation labourer and he would go on to transform his northern parish”.

I start with that because I do not want to end and forget to mention it because the vast time I forgot to mention it he chastised me, so I wanted to start with that. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Arthur was very passionate about the parish of his birth.

While I was President-elect of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA), we invited him to give a speech. We would always invite the leaders of both parties at two different times of the year. On this particular occasion, his biography was shared with the audience and the matter of his schooling was obviously a part of the biography. His biographies in these scenarios always include his schooling because he is very proud of the fact that he went to All Saints Primary School which we call the college on the hill. In the last election, I was a bit unsure about myself because I did not go to All Saints Primary even though I am from Rose Hill as well.

I went to Black Bess Primary School but that is a different story. Coleridge and Parry Secondary School was mentioned also. Now, I heard the full biography and I did not hear the school that he and I have in common mentioned. Mr. Arthur is an interesting man. When he was finished, he returned and sat down. I asked him about it and to this very day he has not answered me, Mr. Speaker. However, I know that Mr. Arthur was very focused on St. Peter; his roots, heritage, family, district and these are what shaped him. There is another aspect of his growing up that I know his brother Richard would want me to share this evening as well. We talk a lot about the scripture that he would share.

Even though his attendance might have been as frequent as his wife would have wanted it to be in later times, Mr. Arthur did for some period of time teach a Sunday School. His familiarity with scripture was not from as he would read Shakespeare and all of the other books. He had a familiarity with scripture because he actually taught it. In another place, I have paid tribute and I will not go through all of them except to mention the themes I used. I will only use words.

For us in St. Peter; the constituents and I, Mr. Arthur was visionary. I think enough has been said to support that idea. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, the Honourable Prime Minister, spoke to that big picture approach. For us he was also a teacher. This was spoken to also but I have to indicate here that one of the reasons why I decided to study economics at university was because for the first time I heard someone in Budget Replies around 1985 explaining economic concepts in a way that a teenager could understand. I found it interesting because prior to that it seemed to me that these kinds of discussions were for people who went to university for 20 years and whose heads were really large.

Mr. Arthur was able to break down important concepts. May be sometimes difficult concepts but break them down in a way that allowed persons like I to want to listen to a Budget debate because we were able to understand the principle and concepts. Mr. Arthur was a practitioner also. It was one of the areas that I think made him for people including myself, outstanding. There are a lot of people who know a lot of theory but being able to translate theory into practice and real life, there is often a disconnect. Mr. Arthur was able to use his theoretical knowledge. He had a Bachelors of Science degree and a Master's degree in Economics. He was able to use all those theoretical concepts to connect to real life issues.

I believe one of the areas of genius of the man was that while being visionary and strategic, he was able

to connect to day to day activities and realities. This kind of a combination is not common. I went to school

with a gentleman who knew mathematics. We would call him, "Koohblye" for those who attended school the same period I did. The ability to translate heavy concepts into real activity and situation is not something that every great academic is able to master. He was able to put into practice all of those concepts.

All of us know he was fearless. We talked about the Ship Rider Agreement and standing up to the OECD. I spoke to him before Christmas because I had just completed a tour in Bridgetown and I saw him Parliament's yard. I think he has gone to his grave thinking that we need to remain aggressive in our standing up to blocs like the OECD and EU. He believed very strongly that we ought to be equal partners on the world stage and that we have the intellectual capacity to stand up for what we believe in spite of whatever the consequences may be. The Honourable Member for the City put that quite well, so I would not need to go there.

The role of education has been spoken to and we in St. Peter understand his perspective on that. Education was the way out of poverty. Education was the way to develop self. Education was and is also to develop country. We can see in this generation of leaders of the BLP that continuing commitment to education as integral in personal but in country development also. Our approach to that, Mr. Speaker, I would want to say it is something we have inherited from former Prime Minister Arthur.

Mr. Arthur was inclusive, very inclusive. There is a lot of talk about the politics of inclusion. Hindsight is always 20/20 vision. I have to be careful what I say because my tongue is not like his and my brain is not either. There are people now who speak to the politics of inclusion without rancor or acrimony. In St. Peter, we were aware that it was not always the case. He got a lot of licks over his concept of the politics of inclusion but in St. Peter we recognised that in order to develop a small country, we all had to do it together. In St. Peter, the way we practiced and still practice politics is that at election there is the cussing, grandstanding and all the other stuff because we hold different positions. However, when the election is over we have to go back living together because we are all in this together.

He recognised, like we recognised, that we have to live together. He came from a family like many families where there are people strong on one side and strong on the other. On a number of elections he ran against his first cousin so there is the understanding in St. Peter that that can happen in family but at the end of the day, we have to embrace each other if we are to move forward and that inclusive concept that he brought to the table reflected his nature and I think we can now look back to recognise that including people in spite of their own beliefs is something that we have to hold on to. That is why the policies of this

Barbados Labour Party (BLP) continues to be that we will include people, we will not discriminate against people in spite of their choices, in spite of their value systems, we see people as human beings. That is how Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur saw people, people who we can engage with even if you “bused” them and those people who suffered at the tongue of Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur the stories can fill many volumes. They would get “bused” today and he will call tomorrow as if nothing had happened. The recognition that we argue, I would call it arguing. I also used the word “bused” because it was a little stronger than arguing but at the end of the day he recognised that all of us had to pull together, all of us had to band together. In the tribute that I wrote, I used the word ‘conviction’. I said he was a man of conviction and that is really the politically correct term but, Mr. Speaker, Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was the most stubborn man I know, stubborn, stubborn, stubborn. He was very self-confident and once he had interrogated his own decision-making process and had come to the conclusion that he was right, then there was nobody, nobody, at least on earth, who could convince him that he was not right and that was the man, a man who stood by his conviction, a man who was stubborn and, of course, everybody knows that he was a straight talker so he pulled no punches. The Honourable Prime Minister spoke to the fact that he asked no quarter and gave no quarter so he would take but you could rest assured that he was going to give and give sometimes in a very, very rough way. Mr. Speaker, the people of St. Peter had, and I would say still have, a very interesting relationship with Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and it was a relationship based on love for the man and respect for him. I encountered after 2014, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur left the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) in 2014 and the people of St. Peter were very upset with the Right Honourable Owen Arthur for him leaving the party, but what I found on the campaign trail is that people would first criticise, sometimes very strongly, him having left the party but would almost immediately go on to praise him for his representation to talk about how much they loved him. They would call me inside to show me the pictures that they still have up in the house because, in spite of his decision, the people of St. Peter recognised that this man, Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur, the former Prime Minister Arthur, was a man who had their interests at heart, a man who believed in St. Peter. He was not as proud as he was of his family, especially his daughters, but going through St. Peter and seeing the transformation in Boscobel, in parts of French Village, in The Castle, in The Mount, in Gays, there were a number of places in St. Peter where you can see the transformation, the very, very visible transformation that took place during the years of the stewardship of the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and it pleased him to see the transformation of the parish that shaped him, the parish of his birth, of his growing up and the parish that he loved. The Right Honourable Owen

Arthur was a mentor to me and early on I said that he is responsible for me being here today. First, like I said earlier, my decision to study economics, I switched then to do a double, economics and accounting, but that was because my father asked me one day: “When you finish studying economics, where are you going to get a job?” So I started to do some thinking and he told me you could only work in the Central Bank of Barbados and I think it was because at that time, Mr. Arthur was working at the Central Bank of Barbados. I think he was working actually in the Central Bank of Barbados so I decided to do economics and accounting but that decision was due, like I indicated earlier, to the fact that I realised that economics was not just some theory or some amalgam of theories up in the air somewhere but that economics really explained real life. It explained how individuals operated. Economics explains how firms, that is what you call it in economic theory, firms/businesses/companies/organisation, how firms operated and economics explained and explains how countries, how economies operate, so my decision to study economics was based, in some measure, on his making the subject very real to me. Then he agreed to my entry into politics and, I do not remember who said it earlier, but he uses scouts, it was the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown, and I was minding my business one day at a funeral and now the Consul General Mackie Holder asked me the question so I thought about it for a couple of minutes and - I really should have gone home and asked a few questions, but you know how men are -- I responded and then a couple of weeks later, Mr. Holder told me that Mr. Arthur said, “perfect”, but I had recognised, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Arthur had a lot of confidence in the people of St. Peter and I think it was based on, not just him, but it was based on maybe his own entry into politics where the people of St. Peter, hearing the stories - the oldsters in St. Peter still like to talk about these stories -- hearing about all of these people who were coming to take over from Burton Hinds and the people of St. Peter, Sheriff, Peewee, a number of the oldsters, Mr. Gilkes, a number of them saying to Prime Minister Mr. J. M. G. M. “Tom” Adams and the others who were the power brokers and the ‘big wigs’: “don’t bring nobody, we got somebody” and that person was Mr. Arthur and I realised that maybe coming out of that and his other experiences, I am sure, he had a lot of confidence in the people of St. Peter to do the job of representing those who they would be called or elected to represent.

The period 2013 to 2018 was a very interesting period in the life of the Barbados Labour Party. I found myself in 2013 as the person identified by the Right Honourable Owen Arthur -- well officially identified more in 2014 - but in 2013 starting to move around because I spoke on some spot meetings in 2013. I was actually assigned beside St. Peter to St. George South but after the challenges in relationship between the Right Honourable Owen Arthur and the Barbados Labour Party I felt that I

was a real, in St. Peter we say ticklish, ticklish position and as the rancour... I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas speak to this earlier because sometimes the rancour is amplified not because of those who are involved but because of the others who are looking to create mischief so there are always... I want to say to young people who may be listening if they are not sleeping that this is not anything peculiar to politics, it is common in leadership everywhere where they are people who join sides and then create more problems than the antagonist and the protagonist so as a neophyte at that time I was not sure who were the troublemakers, I was not sure of anything, so I just tried to keep my head down and focus, but I have to say that in everything that was happening, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur never asked me to take a position one way or another. My respect for him has always been high but every time I think back about that I get emotional.

I am going on a little bit long but I am the Member of Parliament for St. Peter now and I am going to speak about a time when I was given 10 minutes to speak and he told me very sharp and very rough: "Don't let nobody mek you talk for ten minutes, talk for as long as you want to talk".

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you know that cannot happen in here.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: No, because I know that you will control things.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that point, so I am just reminding you.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: The major challenge from my recollection was over the handling of the solid waste tax and the party's response to that. Now, where I found myself in a lot of hot water was because that was when I was publicly identified, it was at a branch meeting in St. Joseph - as the person who would handle the St. Peter response. Those who were involved know the issues but I was asked to speak at the public meeting at Carlisle Car Park. Now, when I was asked that question I did not know what to say because I had known of the challenges so I went home and I called Mr. Arthur and I was actually surprised at his response not because I did not recognise his magnanimity but surprised because given what I perceived to be detentions I did not expect the answer and he said to me yes and that is when he said: But not for no ten minutes which I think I was asked to speak for. Even with the challenge that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur had with the other colleagues' approach to the matter he said to me: Yes, go ahead and speak, and he actually spent about half of an hour - that Sunday morning I think he was cooking, no, I think it was before, it was pretty early in the morning - talking me through a number of things: The

dynamics of speaking on the platform at Carlisle Car Park speaking next to the sea as well as how I should frame my speech on that evening. I remember after having spoken a friend coming to me bringing not news... Somebody turned up at the meeting and saw me speaking and it seems as though they started to panic: 'How come he talking at this meeting', not knowing that I have had the blessings of the Right Honourable Owen Arthur. I felt that need, Mr. Speaker, to share that to indicate that the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was the kind of man who in spite of whatever he was dealing with he did not seek in my situation to put me in a situation that would have been difficult for me and have to respect and admire a man like that. He did not put me in any bad situation.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, is that after having left the party I was hearing all kinds of stuff through both ears about the fact... Before that, Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur had more or less said to me you would go to whatever, whatever he was invited to he would send me and that caused a lot of issues too. I went to the reopening of the Marina Brewster Home at Farris and the Constituency Assistant had indicated that I would have been there but the Honourable Prime Minister at the time, the former Honourable Member for St. Michael South, did not know so I turned up and they had taken me to the seat that is reserved for the Member of Parliament so I see all kinds of people turning around looking at me really strange, but he allowed me to find my feet, to be exposed in all kinds of scenarios. When I would say to him maybe you should attend this, he said: "You got to go long" so he helped me to get accustomed to the kind of situation that I found myself in subsequent to May 2018.

Mr. Speaker, after his departure from the party there were lots of voices wondering whether or not firstly if the relationship between him and I would change, if he would have be as accommodating and if he would even support me and I think that history has provided the answers to those questions. I continued to represent him. The relationship continued as though nothing had happened. There were persons who thought that I would have to find a new home but the Right Honourable Owen Arthur allowed me to use his constituency office because it was his, he was a Member of Parliament right up until the 24th of May 2018. That was my home base and it remained my home base throughout those four years, 2014 to 2018. There was no change at all in the relationship and the expectation of a smooth transition is what was intended in 2013 and is what happened in 2018.

Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur was a man who was true to his word, who was constant and consistent, who was principled and who when he gave his word stuck to his word in spite of what was going on around in the environment. That is the man who I know as Professor the Right Honourable Owen Arthur, former

Prime Minister Arthur. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, and I have never been in life or death been able to call him Owen. It just feels very very strange to me, I always called him Prime Minister, or if I am speaking about him, I would say “Mr. Arthur”. However, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, Sir, (I do not want to be much longer) but there are a couple of things I want to mention. The idea of a sense of self, which has been before mentioned but I want to speak to it again. Mr. Arthur was a very confident man. I am not talking about being very stubborn, holding to convictions. It was not willy-nilly as we would say, he would interrogate himself. That interrogation of his own views, I think, based on what he said to me, came from a situation where former Prime Minister “Tom” Adams had put him “through the wringer” and he had to fight to get Prime Minister Adams to hear him out. However once he was able to explain himself and defend the Paper that he wrote, he grew in the estimation of Prime Minister Adams, and that was the kind of person that Mr. Arthur became -- somebody who would insist on the interrogation of views, so you could not just put a view on the table, you had to be able to support that view, you had to be able to defend that perspective, because he wanted to understand that you were thinking.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that kind of self-examination made him quite confident in his own ability but he sought to share that sense of self with others and so the whole matter of the Pan African Commission, the Celebration of National Heroes, the assignment of a National Heroes Day, Emancipation Day, the Season of Emancipation, the Day of National Significance, these were all parts of a view that Mr. Arthur held, that he had a responsibility to help us to understand ourselves; that he had a responsibility to help us to be able to hold our heads up high, so that when he stood up to big countries, big trading blocs, it was because he recognised that he is equal with any of them and that he wanted us to have that same confidence in ourselves, and so the matter of celebrating our African heritage, celebrating the fact that our heroes are not Nelson, Sir Francis Drake, Walter Raleigh and all those people who we read about in books, but that our heroes, one of whom is another St. Peter man, the Right Excellent Sir Frank Leslie Walcott, our heroes are the people who fought for us. He wanted us to understand that, and so that sense of self, I think, is a very important contribution that he has made to the development of the country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it says to me (and I think it should say to this Honourable Chamber and to the country) -- and I am not going to use the term “even as an economist”, I am going to say, “as an economist” he recognised that economics did not stand alone; economics was but a part of a system of development. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know that he was a democratic socialist but I know he held a principle that I understand to be a Marxist principle, it is that the social and political superstructure is based on solid

infrastructure. He saw that infrastructure as the economic base and so for him, putting that base together was important, but it was not the end-all, the base was important, only so that it could support social, political and normal human development. He saw a good economy, a strong economy as the basis for developing people. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that, for me, is what made former Prime Minister, Professor, late Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur, a great man in this country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, he would say to me that Government is difficult, but he would also say that if at the end of a day that he was able to move Barbados forward one inch, that he felt that he had achieved something on that day.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that helped to prepare me (because I recognised in Government that you cannot move a meter or kilometer very easily) and so his counsel about at least trying to move an inch, in other words, just keep moving forward, do not be sidetracked, do not be disappointed if the movement is not [in] leaps and bounds, but try to move forward every day.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, July 27th of this year was not a good day for me, [it was] not a good day for a whole lot of people. I felt as though a void had been created and I really could not understand it because... Prime Minister Arthur and did not speak every day, our relationship was mentor/mentee, as opposed to friendship. However a friend of mine from Geneva sent me a message to say that part of what I was going through could have been the fact that I was now realising that the baton had fully [been] passed [onto me]. I realised in that explanation, that in my first two years, as the Honourable Member for St. Peter, that even though it was not in the front of my mind, the fact that he was around was providing emotional support for me, because he was there, so [that] he was available if I had a question. However, July 27th, changed that.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was happy, though, that in February of this year we were able to have honoured him in St. Peter during our Month Celebration of “We Gatherin’”. He participated in the church service. I asked the Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Sir Hillary, to give a lecture in his honour: “From Kofi to Owen”, recognising the struggle that Mr. Arthur was a part of and that he recognised that he was a part of -- this struggle to come out of poverty, to come out of a situation where you have been down-pressed and suppressed, to take leadership of yourself (of your destiny) but also leadership of your country and, in many respects, leadership of a region. Mr. Speaker, Sir, those of us on our Committees still share photos. He was obviously very happy to have been a part of that Celebration. The only thing he said to me was: “You put me to read a lesson but if he had a chance to talk, I would have said that you invited me to the church service but you have not invited me to the shop ‘limes’.” However, he was evidently very happy to be among his people, and

the response of the people to the man demonstrated that that love continued (that love continued.)... I was honoured to have been asked to coordinate the funeral and I want at this point to thank all those who were involved in the planning and in the execution of the funeral service. I am moving away now from St. Peter because those who were involved were from across the country, but you sensed from all those who were involved the desire to execute a service that they and all of us felt was befitting a man of the stature and a man who made the kind of contribution that Owen Seymour Arthur made to this country. All of those involved pulled out all the stops to make sure that the service was one befitting him, and I thank them. I have written to them already but I thank them sincerely from the bottom of my heart. I also know that the family -- his widow Julie and daughters Sabrina and Leah and other relatives -- are equally happy with the dedication of those who were part of the planning process as well as those who helped to execute the actual service.

On behalf of my family and on behalf of the people of St. Peter, we recognise the contribution of a great man. We recognise the contribution of maybe the only hero that many of us know. We also -- my family and my constituents -- would want to and actually extend to his widow Julie, Sabrina and Leah our thanks for allowing him to be the kind of Member of Parliament that he was, for being an inspiration to us even as he was an inspiration to his family. There was one thing which he spoke about that I did not have to go through, at least not yet. One night he said to me, "Colin, my daughter gone away and I crying all the time." I think she was preparing to go away, and he was.... I do not know. Do you know when you see a man "striding like a colossus", which is a term we heard today? A man whom you know to be a colossus almost behaving like a child and does not know what to do because his daughter is about to go away. That was the kind of man he was, and that is the kind of man whom my family and the people of St. Peter would want to recognise, would want to emulate and would want to thank his family for providing to us and allowing us to have the benefit and to be able to move forward.

He saw life as a continuum. He recognised that he was standing on the shoulders of those who went before. He always recognised that people before him had done work. He had a responsibility to do work. He has left us now to continue on the journey of doing the unfinished business that is still there to be done, Mr. Speaker. I therefore would want to end by using his terms: We in St. Peter promise not to settle for bronze, we promise not to settle for silver, we will go for the gold. I am obliged to you.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you read the Resolution or ask for the Resolution to be adopted, I do believe it is incumbent upon me to speak for just about two minutes in relation to Owen Arthur. I believe that I am in a unique position. Myself and the Honourable Member for St. James South are in a unique position in this Chamber, having studied at the feet of Owen Arthur between 1981 and 1982 at the Cave Hill Campus, having gone through Dr. Wendell Samuel and Wendell McClean doing macro-economics and micro-economics. In my second year, there was a new course being offered entitled Caribbean Economic Affairs. Having gone through both Wendells with all of these theoretical constructs, all the mathematical formulae, GNP, GDP, NMP, oligopoly, monopoly and duopoly and other theoretical constructs, we heard of this new course called Caribbean Economic Affairs. We were told it was being taught by Owen Arthur. We did not know who this man was. He was just another person coming to lecture.

I can vividly recall that the class was from seven to eight o' clock on mornings -- I will never forget -- and I remember seeing this young man clad in shirt-jac suit with pointy-tipped black shoes and carrying a brown bag. He strode into the class with no books. Owen Arthur hardly ever taught from any books. He would compile notes, comprehensive notes. I can guarantee you that I still have some of those notes from 1981 to 1982 in my collection at home. Such was the nature of those notes. He had a Caribbean philosophy. I brought one of the books that he taught from, and he transformed his teaching of economics into his political life. He believed in the political economy, and one of his books which he used all the time was 'Readings in the Political Economy of the Caribbean' edited by Norman Girvan and Owen Jefferson. He would have used extracts from Professor Clive Tomas, George Beckford and the like. The concepts which he brought into political life as they related to the concepts for full employment and so on were garnered out of these collections. He also did a lot of work in relation to Professor Alister McIntyre. These concepts which he brought to the political sphere were nothing new to me, because I understood them. When he taught, he made these things seem so simplistic and he made me develop a love for economics. After being taught by Owen, I taught economics for 15 years. However, these things were simplified, as I said, it became too easy. He walked to class on mornings, so do not think that he drove anything.

What made this man even more amazing, is that he was the first lecturer at the University in Social Sciences, I can guarantee that. When we did the exam, he took us over to his home after the exam and had a reception. That was Owen Arthur and he did not change. As humanistic as possible.

I also remember vividly some of his adventures in the political arena. He was a nightmare for detail to security. If he believed that the present Prime Minister give her personal security bodyguards nightmare, trust me. I remember vividly I think in 1998 at a Crop Over event on Spring Garden, myself and another youngster were there having a good time in a bar. My friend had just bought his favourite stuff, something to drink obviously and you know he loved a pork chop. The guy had just bought a pork chop, when the Prime Minister at the time was with his personal bodyguard, Station Sergeant Phillips. When he came he shouted me and the chap. He took away the pork chop and started to eat it, a bottle was on the table and he poured a drink and that was it. He was through the crowd and gone. That was the nature of the man. A level of humanity. He was striking.

I remember in 2008, election was called. I was overseas with my wife on a cruise, I think it was in Mexico. My phone rang, because obviously I am a lawyer and his number is still in my phone as the Prime Minister I can tell you that. The name Prime Minister came up and I told my wife, now what Owen Arthur could want at this kind of time. Honestly, I told her that. He said he called election and asked me where am I at. I said, sir I am overseas on a cruise with my wife. He said, well when you come back I want you to come and speak on platforms, and that was it and he hung up.

That is the nature that is Owen Seymour Arthur. You cannot in anyway say anything but good of this man. He had Barbados at heart. He wanted transformation for Barbados. That is why all of his teachings related to transforming society, to ensure that the wide gap is brought closer. We must get away from the have nots. All of us should be haves. That is how he was. The eradication of poverty was first and foremost on his mind. He understand and understood poverty. He knew what hard life was. He wanted a betterment for Barbadian society and he worked extensively, feverously to ensure that he brought about transformational change in the landscape of this country.

I am indebted to his knowledge for having imparted this knowledge and the appreciation of what society is all about.

On behalf of my family, my wife and I and the entire St. Michael Central constituency wish to express sincerest condolences to you his beloved widow, his two children and all of his extended family and may God continue to bless you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you have the Resolution Sir?

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: Yes Sir.

“WHEREAS Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur and one of Her Majesty’s Council, passed this life on July 27, 2020;

AND WHEREAS Professor Arthur was a Member of this House from 1984 to 2018, a Member of the Honourable the Senate from 1983 to 1984, Leader of the Opposition from 1993 to 1994 and 2010 to 2013, Prime Minister of Barbados from 1994 to 2008 and Independent Member of Parliament from 2014 to 2018;

AND WHEREAS this distinguished economist, longest serving and highly successful Prime Minister achieved unprecedented success in transforming the socio and economic landscape of Barbados;

AND WHEREAS this brilliant economist presided over the longest period of economic stability the country has experience, evidence by record levels of foreign reserves, substantial tax breaks and wage increases, coupled with massive foreign and local investments;

AND WHEREAS that brilliance shown on the tapestry of the political economy where he sought to address the toughest issues facing the country, one such issue was a vexing one of unemployment, which stood at 24 per cent when he took office and by the time he left it had been wrestled down to a new low of 7.4 per cent prompting scholars to ask what was the natural rate of unemployment in Barbados;

AND WHEREAS this strident regionalist in his relentless pursuit and advocacy for the advancement of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy would be propelled into the role of chief architect an intellectual guide of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy in 2006 and champion of its cause with vigor, clarity and determination;

AND WHEREAS the father of the House having served those 34 years as the constituency representative of his beloved parish of St. Peter- boasting of being the only Prime Minister to represent the constituency of his birth, that constituency would also feel his transformative touch as the son of a carpenter and a plantation labourer, would go on to transform his northern parish from the proverbial backwater to a modern hub of architectural heritage and tourism with improved public services and improved quality of life that would thereafter be the exemplar of constituency politics;

AND WHEREAS this son of humble origins brought to the political stage, the quintessential intellectual mix of economics and politics which represented a shift from the traditional law and politics and to a lesser extent medicine and politics, a unique mix of skills that would serve him well in the period into which he was to be immediately

thrust consequent upon the 1994 election campaign and for which he would thereafter receive extraordinary regional and international acclaim for his management of the economy;

AND WHEREAS the nature of the late Professor Arthur's service in his several endeavours was characterised by the generous employment of his prodigious gifts of a transcendent intellect, ebullient charm, remarkable leadership elevated by the ability to motivate and inspire by example wedded to economic proficiency;

AND WHEREAS his service was an amalgam of these skills with visionary ideas, clarity of purpose, pragmatism, meticulous preparation and sheer hard work along with a Barbadian aesthetic and Caribbean ideal to forge unimaginable and unprecedented success for Barbados giving it an all-together new luster in the world;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House shares the sorrow felt by a grateful nation and extends its deepest sympathies to his widow, Julie, children Sabrina and Leah, his siblings Valmay, Richard and Patricia, and relatives of the Late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur and expresses its wish that they be comforted by the memory of a life lived selflessly and in the service of his Nation and his people."

Dated this 22nd day of September, 2020.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us stand to observe a minute's silence in passing of the Resolution.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY HIS HONOUR

THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am in receipt of a letter from the Honourable Gline A. Clarke, Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly.

21st September 2020

His Honour Arthur E. Holder, M.P.

Speaker of the House of Assembly

Parliament of Barbados

Worthing Corporate Centre

Worthing

Christ Church

Your Honour

Resignation as Member of Parliament of St. George-North

"In accordance with Section 45(1)(b) of the Constitution of Barbados, I hereby give notice that I shall resign my seat as Member of Parliament for the constituency of St. George-North with effect from 30th September, 2020 at 4.30 p.m.

Please be guided accordingly.

Yours faithfully

Gline A. Clarke

Member of Parliament- St. George North

Mr. SPEAKER: I am satisfied that this letter is authentic and in accordance with Standing Order 73, I direct that this matter shall be placed and called as the first Order of the Day at the next meeting of this Honourable House of Assembly.

RECOMMITTAL

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that it be resolved by this Honourable House that a humble address be presented to thank Her Excellency for the most gracious speech which it has pleased Her Excellency to deliver to the Parliament last Tuesday 15th day of September.

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAM: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before we close proceedings for the day, I wish to thank all those persons who were responsible for ensuring the successful commencement of the Second Session of Parliament which included the Throne Speech which recently concluded. I wish to acknowledge the Clerk of Parliament, Deputy Clerks of Parliament, Marshals Office and all other Parliament staff. Also, I would like to acknowledge Cabinet Office, all technicians associated with the event, the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPf) and the Barbados Defence Force (BDF). Last but by no means least, the management and staff of the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre (LESC).

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of Government Business.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hour is late and we have come to the end of today's Sitting; the first Sitting for this Second Session of the House Assembly. We had the fortune of having the

wife of the late Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur and his beautiful daughters, Sabrina and Leah along with all of the family members, and certainly extended friends of the family here with us today. I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the entire Parliament of Barbados to again say “thank you” for giving of Mr. Arthur to this country, certainly to the BLP and the region.

We want to assure that you continue to be in our prayers and that we will forever ensure that the legacy of Mr. Arthur continues in this country. Thank you and certainly travel safely, Leah as you move on to pursue your studies in the United Kingdom (UK). We wish you every success from all of the Members of Parliament here today as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, we have come to the end of the session and I beg to move that

the House be adjourned until September 29, 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY HIS HONOUR

THE SPEAKER

RECOMMITTAL

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

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BOSTIC, Lt. Col the Hon. J. D.
BRADSHAW, Hon. Miss S. J. O.
CLARKE, His Honour G. A.
FORDE, Hon. Miss C.Y.
GOODING-EDGHILL, Hon. I. G. P.
GRIFFITH, Hon. C. R.
HINKSON, Mr. E. G.
HUMPHREY, Hon. K. D. M.
HUSBANDS, Hon. Ms. C. S. V.
JORDAN, Hon. C. E.
MARSHALL, Hon. D.D.
MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A.
PAYNE, Hon. G. W.
PHILLIPS, Hon. P.R.
PRESCOD, Hon. T. A.
ROWE, Mr. N. G. H.
SPEAKER, Mr.
STRAUGHN, Hon. R.R.
SUTHERLAND, Hon. D. G.
SYMMONDS, Hon. K. D.
THORNE, Mr. R. A.
TOPPIN, Hon. R. ST.C

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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. Obituary speeches, Mr. R. A. Thorne. Mr. Thorne's quotation of Martin Carter's 'Death of a Comrade' is set in the source as a run of procedural lines, so it prints in italics, and one line opens a bracket that is never closed ('[Now, from the mourning vanguard moving on]'). Printed as in the source.

Q3. Obituary speeches, Mr. R. A. Thorne. Mr. Thorne condoles with 'Mrs. July Arthur'; the Resolution and other speakers name the widow as Julie. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Recommittal, Government Business. Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw's motion for a humble address thanking Her Excellency for the speech of 15th September is seconded, but the source does not record the question being put on it, nor on the Resolution of condolence, which is followed only by a minute's silence. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Speech labels. Some Members appear under two forms: 'Mr. T. A. PRESCOD' and 'Hon. T. A. PRESCOD'; 'Hon. G. W. PAYNE' and 'Mr. G. W. PAYNE'; 'Hon. C. R. GRIFFITH' and 'Hon. C. McD. GRIFFITH'. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at the Worthing Corporate Centre on Tuesday, 22nd September, 2020 at 10 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour A. E. Holder, in the Chair; prayers were taken by the Reverend Mark Harewood. The Minutes of August 4, August 7 and September 15, 2020 were confirmed. The Speaker announced the Annual Reports of the Ombudsman for 2007 to 2019 and read a Proclamation of the Governor General, Dame Sandra Prunella Mason, appointing the Worthing Corporate Centre as the place at which the Session of Parliament would continue. Hon. R. R. Straughn laid two Securities (Exemption) Orders, 2020, and Hon. W. A. Abrahams the Annual Report of the National Council on Substance Abuse for 2019.

The day was given to obituary speeches for Professor the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur, in the presence of his family. The Prime Minister, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, said he had sat in the House for 34 years and that the concept of representation of those who entered public life after 1990 was largely shaped by him, recalling his pride in the restoration of Arlington House in Speightstown. The Leader of the Opposition, Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, recalled meeting him at a BLP conference in late 1992. Hon. G. W. Payne remarked that he had been dismissed from the Cabinet by two Prime Ministers, Owen Arthur among them.

After the luncheon suspension, Mr. R. A. Thorne traced Owen Arthur's life through the 'day' of his generation, from the Trade Union Act of 1940 to the cricket of 1950, recalled Tom Adams's prediction in 1984 that he would become Prime Minister, and quoted Laurence Binyon and Martin Carter. Tributes followed from Mr. T. A. Prescod; Hon. R. St. C. Toppin, who recalled the Opposition of three MPs known as the 'three blind mice'; the Deputy Speaker, His Honour G. A. Clarke; and Hon. K. D. Symmonds, who spoke of a genuine friendship.

After a further suspension, Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw gave notice of the Public Service Appointments Bill, 2020, which was read a first time. The tributes resumed with Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde, Hon. D. G. Sutherland, Hon. W. A. Abrahams, Hon. R. R. Straughn, Hon. Ms. C. S. V. Husbands and Mr. E. G. Hinkson, who said 20 per cent of his constituency lay in St. Peter. After a suspension until 8.55 p.m., Hon. K. D. M. Humphrey, Hon. D. D. Marshall, Lt. Col the Hon. J. D. Bostic, Hon. I. G. P. Gooding-Edghill, Mr. N. G. H. Rowe, Hon. C. R. Griffith, Hon. P. R. Phillips and Hon. C. E. Jordan also spoke.

Before the Resolution was read, the Speaker recalled being taught by Owen Arthur at Cave Hill in 1981 and 1982. Mr. Jordan then read the Resolution, which recorded that Professor Arthur died on July 27, 2020, served in the House from 1984 to 2018 and as Prime Minister from 1994 to 2008, and saw unemployment fall from 24 per cent to 7.4 per cent; it extended the sympathy of the House to his widow, Julie, his children Sabrina and Leah and his siblings. The House stood for a minute's silence.

The Speaker then read a letter from the Deputy Speaker, Hon. Gline A. Clarke, giving notice under Section 45(1)(b) of the Constitution that he would resign his seat for St. George North with effect from 30th September, 2020, and directed that the matter be the first Order of the Day at the next meeting. Miss Bradshaw moved a humble address of thanks for the Governor General's speech of

15th September, and the Speaker thanked the staff for the

start of the Second Session. The House was adjourned until Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

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