
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2018 – 2022

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House Assembly met at the Worthing Corporate Centre, Worthing, Christ Church at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 5, 2021.

PRESENT

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

His Honour N. G. H. ROWE, J.P. (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P. (Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs)

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.), (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, J.P., B. A.

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

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

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

Dr. The Hon. W. F. DUGUID, J.P., B.D.S., F.D.S., F.D.R.C.S., M.Min (Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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)

Ms. T. N. S.-A. MOORE, M.B.A.

Prayers were taken by Reverend Father Mark Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, September, 21 and Tuesday, September 28, 2021.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Honourable the House of Assembly of its meetings of Tuesday, September, 21 and Tuesday, September 28, 2021 have been circulated and taken as read.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the following Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18,

20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's Sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 8 – RESOLUTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 – OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT CAP, 228 TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF THE PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE AT WORKMANS IN THE PARISH OF SAINT GEORGE – IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR PUBLIC USE.

Hon. P. R. PHILLIPS: Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning and I am indeed very delighted to be able to move the passing of this Resolution in this Honourable House and to lead off this debate. It is indeed quite important as we move to create and provide opportunities for our young people and members of various communities across Barbados. Let me first say that since my reassignment, it has been really a pleasure to serve in this capacity. It has been an eye opener as well when you recognise and realise what tremendous work we still have to do as not just a Government, but as a country with respect to housing, land ownership, et cetera, across Barbados.

Let me just state that this Ministry seeks the approval of this Honourable House to acquire a very small portion of land of no more than half of an acre at Workmans in St. George for recreational purpose. This came about from as far back as last year when a site visit was done by the Member of Parliament for the area, The Honourable Member for St. George South and it was determined that this land should be acquired for recreational purposes. Let me pause and talk about what is actually happening in relation to creation of these spaces and facilities for our young people especially.

I always heard when I was growing up, Mr. Speaker, my mother saying, "The devil will find work for idle hands to do." We have a situation in the country even now, Mr. Speaker, that due to this pandemic that has not only struck the world but Barbados as well, a number of persons who have become unemployed not because they want to be but that is just how the situation is. The Government is trying with all means to reverse this. In the meantime, we also have to fill the gap to occupy persons. Even as a result of this pandemic, you recognise that perhaps you have other skills that you did not realise that you had before due to the available time that you have.

You have to create facilities for youngsters to not just work but to play, and to empower themselves. It is to empower themselves in the sense that for this Resolution when we speak to recreational facilities, we are talking about creation of a Resource Centre in that area which would serve places and the Member of Parliament would know better than I do. However, I believe places such as Jericho, Workmans, and the Orange Estate so that the minds of these young people in the area and perhaps older folks as well who are yet sharp can be able to be occupied based on what is being provided for them. A recreational facility; a resource centre in itself, Mr. Speaker, is very meaningful because within that, not only can you be teaching things like information technology where technology has overtaken the world today and is very, very important because without technology and again, as I point to what is happening in Barbados at this point in time, but in the world over at this point in time, the technology has really come to the forefront and those things which we believe we could not do before we are now doing because, as a matter of fact, even in this Parliament, Mr. Speaker, you can now log on and you can now be here via the technology and you can make your contribution. In order to be able to use that technology you obviously have to be trained to do it.

Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the land at Workmans, which is near the Workmans Primary School, it is currently used by the students of that institution as a playground, but it does not belong to the School right now. It belongs to the Government, hence we are acquiring this land to enable for expansion of an adjacent playground and that playground which is used by the Workmans Primary School. Once that is done, Mr. Speaker, we will have a lovely playing field there for the residents, as I indicated, in those districts and so on and that is very, very important. We have many persons out there, Mr. Speaker, who have various skills. We do not know who will be the next Pelé. We may have good footballers there, we are going to have probably good netballers there, you have good basketballers, all in the vicinity but we have to create the environment whereby these persons' skills are honed and whereby these persons can rise, these persons can be spotted by those persons from various disciplines so that they get that opportunity and that is extremely important. Now, it brings, as well, a sense of community empowerment. Land ownership or the Ministry of Housing and Lands does not only see lands as lands being made available for housing inaudible sometimes backyard farming. Again, this is another initiative where the Ministry would be because the Ministry...

Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, I did a tour with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and we saw lands belonging to the National Housing Corporation but these lands cannot really be used for housing because they are so small and where they are located they are so

narrow and so on, but those said lands, which are owned by the Government, can be used as part of small agricultural projects where youngsters in communities... Remember I said, Mr. Speaker, that in a pandemic you have to create opportunities for people to be able to survive. Mr. Speaker, as I did that tour in the Constituency of St. Michael South East I saw these lands which will be available but there is not anything we can do with them but you certainly cannot allow them to remain in bush then to become a health hazard. We already had challenges with health with this pandemic as far as I am concerned so I do not want those lands to remain as they are in bush and so on creating health hazards and problems for the residents nearby.

Mr. Speaker, those are lands I believe which people should be able automatically - and I am sure you have some in St. Michael Central as well - to cultivate and to grow even some food. It might not be lands to grow potatoes or yams but certainly you might be able to grow chives, sweet peppers, hot peppers, parsley and so on, those little condiments that you need Honourable Member for St. Philip North, to be able to put in your food. Mr. Speaker, it is not only just for that because it could be used as a little source of income because if you have the land available for these things and you are able to put them to good use, at the end of the day it gives you that opportunity to get some much needed income for those who may not be working because if you are not working, Mr. Speaker, you still have to feed your children, you still have to certainly to eat food and you still have bills to pay because the State cannot have all of the resources at the end of the day to do this.

Mr. Speaker, in this Ministry, we looked at a holistic approach to life and at a holistic approach to the issues within the society that present themselves from time to time. Mr. Speaker, as you know, this Ministry is responsible for overseeing the lands belonging to the Crown, so if a particular ministry needs to do something it is not like that ministry could go immediately and just take up land and use it, it has to come through this process here where the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance would then acquire that land so that that particular ministry is able to carry out its programmes, and we have a number of programmes as a Government.

Mr. Speaker, we have another programme going as well which we called the Clean and Green Programme, beautifying Barbados, creating those green spaces in various districts to make Barbados better, to make Barbados look beautiful again creating not just ...opportunities but where persons are able to come out and enjoy life and relax and where grandparents at some point in time who might have retired from their daily toils are able to come out and relax.

Over the last two months or so, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central

spoke... As a matter of fact, some work was done in an area called Friendly Hall in my constituency, the wonderful Constituency of St. Lucy, and when that work was done by the Ministry of Transport, Works and Water Resources, I saw an opportunity to be able to do something generally for the residents in Broomfield, Maycock's Terrace, Friendly Hall and Husbands areas. There is a lovely space there but nothing is happening in it and I approached the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and I said through the National Conservation Commission that I would like a park established in that area, a good green space and it was done. It is still a work-in-progress, but you could imagine the number of comments that I get as I go through that area in the constituency where persons are extremely happy to have that park where they can just come out and relax and spend some time with their families on a Sunday or Friday evening. This is what we do across this country now. Mr. Speaker, when you look at that, I am certain that there are other Honourable Members in this Honourable House who would have already benefitted from such and if they have not as yet I am almost certain that it is something possible and they can start looking and if they find a piece of land in their constituency and it is cannot be used for any other purpose, at least they can approach the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance to be sure of who is the landowner, even if the Government is the landowner, so that they are able to create these opportunities and do these things across their constituencies as Members of Parliament because everybody wants to see their constituency uplifted. Mr. Speaker, that is the reason we are here because we came to do better for our country. The country is made up of parishes and the parishes are made up of different constituencies. Well, not every constituency is a complete parish because, for example, St. Michael holds about 11 constituencies.

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that not all lands available in Barbados or land space in Barbados can be used for housing. Mr. Speaker, not all should be used for housing in any event because you have to create those opportunities and you have to create those spaces where members of the various communities can come from work and go to relax and can also play. Mr. Speaker, even our youngsters as well can have that opportunity to better themselves even as we go through this pandemic called COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, there are times we have come to Parliament, and we have to come to Parliament as a ministry, to acquire land as well for the purpose of road construction. I particularly want to talk about this because as you go through some communities there are persons who do not have proper access to their homes in a 21st Century Barbados. Last Saturday while I was out in my constituency the rain fell and I saw first the hazard it is for constituents to get from their homes to the main road. We lived at a time where, years ago, you had persons having to

walk with two pairs of shoes, and the Honourable Member for St. Peter could attest to this because we are from rural constituencies, we are not from constituencies “in town”, so to speak. However, where persons do not have proper access and those persons not having proper access sometimes this ministry has to acquire land to be able to create proper access for such persons in such districts. Sometimes there is a problem, Mr. Speaker, Sir, and this is one of the things that I pointed out as I spoke to constituent on Saturday, where land ownership is an issue because you may have to take off a foot here on one side and a foot there on the other side to be able to create the proper width or space whereby you can do road improvement. Mr. Speaker, Sir, sometimes that becomes a problem.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would want to appeal to land owners [that] in situations like these you have to give consideration to your brothers and sisters. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not know if you have this problem in St. Michael Central, where it is an issue when Government wants to create better for the citizens by constructing a new road, a new pathway, anything of that sort where the land becomes an issue; then Government has to move in because we are interested in improving the lives of our people and do an acquisition.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know that persons have issues with acquisitions because, in some instances, having acquired the land the reimbursement or the payment for that land takes too long. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is an issue which we as a Government aim to address and we are actually dealing with it because you cannot, in all fairness, acquire a person's land for development and improvement of others - and you have to look at it in this way, that while you are doing it for others - you cannot disenfranchise or you cannot -- what people may say, you cannot owe persons forever. If you acquire the land, then the persons must be paid, that is why persons have challenges.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we know there was this problem. This problem has not now started, it would have started a long time ago and this Government is making an effort that once there is land acquisition we have to find the resources. We have to find the money, let me put it that way, then, to be able to reimburse an individual who as a result of the acquisition would have lost the value of that property which they owned. Therefore, the acquisition comes for various reasons. When we do this we have to be forthright, we have to be upfront with persons at the end of the day, and we have to ensure as well that persons are well reimbursed.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, an acquisition is not something that is done willy-nilly because before you acquire any property there has to be a valuation, so that persons do not feel, (as I used to hear my parents or grandparents say), that somebody “juck” out their eyes because persons feel that

way at times about Government too, that Government “jucks” out your eyes. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are not here to “juck” out anybody's eye, you have to get the valuation done. I see the Honourable Leader of the Opposition casting his eyes over this side, but you have to have the proper valuation done to be able to correctly and properly reimburse those persons. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the truth of the matter is that those persons are making a contribution to society. They are making a contribution by that to their country by allowing or giving up that property or that land which they would have owned, for the improvement or development of the country or in that particular area, across this country Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is one of the important things that we have to continue to do, we have to look out for those persons, and you have to do right by the people. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know persons whose land would have been acquired for years now and they are still awaiting payment. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must say those things are wrong. Some persons I know as well have died and gone on and their estates have not even yet received the payment for what was acquired. Those things, Mr. Speaker, Sir, are wrong. Sir, after you would have had the benefit, or a country would have had the benefit of the acquisition, then I believe we should move with haste to give that or to reimburse or to make payment for that particular acquisition as we move along. We know that sometimes there might be challenges and so on, and there might be some hick-ups as well, but all those things should be taken care of in reasonable time so that it does not become an issue and nobody would feel that they have been “unfair” in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this ministry, as we continue to do the work across Barbados... As I would have indicated, it is not just about housing, it is about development, [it is about] recreational facilities, it is about community empowerment of all our people. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know there will be a more fulsome debate on this or a report on this, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance, we would have had situations where we would have had a freak storm, then a hurricane, we had properties damaged, et cetera, and we are working assiduously through all agencies to make sure that these repairs and rebuilds are done in a very timely manner. We know that some take longer than we would have had anticipated but there are a number of challenges that you meet in some of these instances as you go along but I want to assure this Honourable House that we are doing our best. As I said, a full report will go to Cabinet, then to this Honourable House, to update Barbadians and this Honourable House on the progress that we are making as the ministry and the agencies associated therewith, for example, the National Housing Corporation, the Rural Development Commission, the Urban Development Commission; agencies entrusted to have the responsibility

of doing all the repairs that we have to undertake across this country, and there have been many. I am talking about this as the Minister of Housing, I remember once the hurricane had passed, I know a number of my colleagues would have gone through the length and breadth of their various constituencies and would have seen the tremendous damage that was done by, first the freak storm to some extent because there were very close behind each other, and then the hurricane. Some of the things that I saw caused me to think hard and to wonder or realise what life is like for some of my fellow Barbadians. The conditions in which they lived. Only last Sunday, which is two days ago, I made a visit to a particular area to see the conditions which were drawn to my attention under which a couple lived. This happens from time to time across constituencies, because I am not going to stand here and pretend that I know or I have seen every single situation, or I am aware of every single situation within my constituency. I dare to challenge anybody to say such, because there are things that have to be drawn to your attention. There is nothing wrong with that. What would be wrong is after it has been drawn to your attention and you do nothing about it. However, hurricane Elsa caused us to see and to realise in some instance a lot of the conditions under which people live, how their homes have been constructed, whether they can withstand, or there is no wonder that would not in some instance have that kind of effect or damage that you had, because when you look and you see what has happened. You realise that this would have had to happen at some point in time, because of the conditions under which persons have lived. We as a Government and as a people have to stand up and not just represent these people, but ensure that the conditions under which they live are improve. I visited a house in a situation where just the roof came off, or the roof was damaged, not even necessarily coming off, but when you look at the structure in itself, what are you going to do. Are you just going to put back on a roof and leave it? You have to go beyond that, because in some instances, when you look at the structure in itself, there is a need for a lot of work to be done, and I am sure that we would have seen this across Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, those are some of the things that would have slowed down to some extent the work that we are doing as a Ministry, the work that the various agencies are doing with respect to housing and so on. I know sometimes there are people that will complain, but you now have to do work or do repairs for the future, not just what has happened in the past, you have to do repairs for the future, to ensure that if you have another such occurrence, that these structures are able to withstand at least a category three hurricane. That is what you have to do. While there may be concerns, and while there may be some angst in relation to repairs and such like, we are doing our very best to ensure that what we do is something that is worthwhile, it can withstand the very test at least up to a category three hurricane should we have one, God forbid. That is what we

have to do. This is because the housing stock, as we look at it, we recognise no wonder such would have happened.

Mr. Speaker, I am almost ashamed, and this must now just be a concern of a Government, but we have to seriously address all of these social issues within our country. It is not a work that is going to take three or six months. It is not a work that require just MPs or Ministers. Mr. Speaker, it requires all of us as a people to look out and ensure we do all that we can to make this country a better country in relation now where housing is concern, where the pockets of poverty exist that people are not in a position to take care of themselves as best as would be necessary. With all the agencies that have, it has to be a concerted effort at the end of the day, because we cannot allow persons to fall by the wayside. As Christian person I have a heart to reach out to people, to look out for your brother and your sister in various communities. When you look and see what persons have had to go through or how persons are living, it means that you cannot turn your mind, face or backs on such situations.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I am happy, having come to this Ministry of Housing, I believe that I can be part of the change that is required. We must also have change in attitude, how we deal with people, how we look at the circumstances and seek to transform the lives of people to change those circumstances under which people live.

It is not for the glorification of anyone because when people see you they say, "Man you got 'X' or 'Y' Ministry. That is a top Ministry." It is not about a top Ministry. It is about transformation and change that you want to use the position that you have to impact the lives of people and make those lives better. I have that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, in this important Ministry. Again, I go back to the good book that never puts you wrong. You have to be able to change people's lives. Remember there is a part of the scripture and I know the goodly Bishop would agree with me here. You do not want a situation where the good master tells you, "I was hungry and you did not feed me. I was thirsty and you did not give me drink."

You do not want that situation at all. We want that every case, bar none that we come upon or that is drawn to our attention to be able best as we can, based on the resources that we have. Even if we do not have resources, we have to find them to be able to do something on the behalf of the downtrodden and the less fortunate in our society in Barbados. We are all in this together. We are all part of this. One of the challenges that we have, Mr. Speaker, as we look to execute repairs and rebuild for persons is that the lands they occupy are not theirs. They have been renting for some time and now it is a challenge. If you have to repair the house, it is alright.

I know the Honourable Member for St. George South might have come upon some of these situations. If you have to repair the house, it is alright. However, if you have to rebuild it, it is a problem. This is why it is important that a Government should then own lands that you can move these people and construct something for them. You can rebuild on the Government's land so that these people are not left out there in the cold. Do you know what happens? The persons looking on do not know of the challenges that are being experienced by the Government when it seeks to do right by these people.

You can get a Government getting licks. They say, "You fix Suzie house. You ain't fix Mazie one." However, the Government has to position itself that where there is land available or find land not just for housing development as such, but have lands out there where in emergencies and certain things happen, you have lands or even housing there that you are able respond. One of the things that has been a "pet peeve" of mine, Mr. Speaker, is that sometimes you have a house fire too and persons are then at the mercies of others. The Government should have and one of the things that we look at is that you have some emergency housing available out there for persons.

If it means that there is not sufficient land and we have to acquire some more land, Mr. Speaker, not just for the recreational facilities but these are areas that we have to look at, so that we have certain lots available that we can then assist in cases of emergencies, weather events, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, I am going to wrap up here but I felt compelled to share these thoughts with this House because this is the way that we must go. This Resolution where we are acquiring for recreational facilities and to improve such, it is not just about that. We have to do other things if we need to acquire as well, so that we cover the full gamut of what is necessary in a 21st Century Barbados.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Dr. The Hon. W. F. DUGUID: I beg to second that.

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

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was enquiring of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, Minister of Agriculture as to why he would have chased the Honourable Member for St. Lucy away from that Ministry, so that he finds himself back at the Ministry of Housing.

Dr. The Hon. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It is clearly a misrepresentation of the House as the Honourable Member is obviously misleading the House. The Minister of Agriculture could not chase away

anyone because the only person that appoints and disappoints is the Prime Minister. The Honourable Member knows that better than anybody else in this House. Clearly, he would be misleading because the Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South could not have anything to do with that.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Clearly, I was not misleading the House. I did not make a definitive statement. I simply said that I enquired of the Member of St. Philip South who is not now in his seat, as to why he would have chased....

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is contravening the rules of this House. As you are well aware, no one is allowed to reflect on the presence or absence of another Member and I would ask that that be struck from the record.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: I apologise if that is necessary. I was not reflecting on his absence. I was simply lamenting the fact that he is not here to substantiate what I was trying to say. I was not attempting to mislead the House at all. I simply asked of the Honourable Member, who cannot now in this moment speak for himself, ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have heard. There is no need to repeat. I have heard.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Okay. Interestingly enough and contrary to what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West said, the Member of St. Philip South never said to me that it was the Prime Minister that moved him. He said otherwise and that is not the name he called.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, speak on the debate. Please continue.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: I plan to speak on the debate if I can do so without interruption, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: From myself or the Honourable Member?

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: From the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. You are entitled to interrupt me anytime.

Mr. SPEAKER: Exactly. I just want to put it into perspective.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: I do not feel interrupted when you intervene, Mr. Speaker. You are here to give us guidance, but I would want to go on because I was told that it was not the Honourable Prime Minister that caused him to flee.

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy did not flee and for the Honourable Member for St. Michael West to suggest that the Honourable Member fled is clearly misleading the House. The Honourable Member is an Honourable Member and went where he was asked to move to and for the Honourable Member for St. Michael West to suggest that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy fled is a clear, clear misrepresentation of the situation and I would ask that it be struck from the recorded.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your point of order has been noted, Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: If necessary, I would take that back. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy did not flee. I would go back to what I originally said, he was chased.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Michael West I would wish to implore you to refrain from the language that you are currently using.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: I have gone pass that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please refrain from the language that you are using.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, who last spoke, obviously has a passion for housing because he spoke at length about housing and I thought that we were on a land acquisition Resolution with reference to a recreational and sporting facility, but there was a lengthy dissertation on the matter of housing so, obviously, he is now happy where he is, Mr. Speaker.

I want to raise a question and maybe since the Honourable Member for Christ Church West feels so energised today perhaps he could provide me with the answer or maybe the answer lies with the Honourable Member for St. George South who is the Minister responsible for sports at this time, but I know that not long ago it was a declared policy that recreational facilities, especially at the community level would be managed by persons who are resident in the community. I do not know that that policy having been declared is being pursued. If it is certainly it would be interesting to be brought up to date as to what is happening with reference to house pavilions and sporting facilities are managed. Are we doing it centrally still from the sports council or over some other Government entity. Or are we doing it centrally from the Ministry of Sports. I think it is very worthwhile that we go in a direction that would employ, and when I say employ I use that in a broad sense, I am not necessarily talking about

any monetary remuneration, but certainly that we utilise and employ community persons to help to manage and run these facilities. I think that if we go in that direction, we are talking about perhaps a better and easier access to use and proper use of the facilities, a lot less perhaps down time and it gives a sense of empowerment to people at the level of the community. This belongs to Workmans and this team here are Workmans is responsible for managing this facility. I am wondering where we are with that, if it is a policy that has been abandoned or if it is still on the cards. The second thing I want to say, Mr. Speaker, is that I believe that when we acquire land and when, as a Government, we construct these facilities or make them available to communities that we do so always with a view towards incorporating a commercial opportunity element around these facilities. If you build a sports pavilion at Workmans or if you build it at Haynesville or if you build it at Waterford, Mr. Speaker, it is a place where a lot of activity is going to be centred, hopefully, and, I believe, it establishes clearly the opportunity for some level of commerce especially by those who live in the community. You cannot just go and drop a pavilion, drop a sports club, drop a resource centre and not see the opportunity to provide for commercial activity especially in these days when Government is talking about having a spirit of business, when Government is talking about the decriminalisation of vending. There is tremendous opportunity attaching to the potential around these sporting facilities. I wonder if that is part and parcel of the construction plans of the Ministry of Housing and Lands and if they are the ones engaging in the construction the construction of these facilities or the Ministry of Sports, if they are the ones under whose purview it falls whether or not, a lot of thought or any thought at all is being given to providing for serious commercial, not just a bar that you can drink some liquor, but serious commercial activity, in perhaps a small level that it can help people to feed a child or two at home.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked this question before and I do not know that it has been answered thoroughly. Mr. Speaker, how do we determine where we put these facilities? Is it a question of the Honourable Member for St. George South being the Minister of Sports say to the Minister of Housing and Lands: "Look, I need a sports facility at Workmans?". What is the basis upon which a decision is made as to where we locate these facilities? Is it the demographics? Is it the unemployment situation? Is it some other dynamic of importance that is taken on board in consideration when we determine where we want? What would have determined that this facility is to be established at Workmans? Why Workmans? Why not Work Hall in this instance? I have asked those questions before and I do not know that I have properly received an answer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say this again and I have said this before too, but persons must be reminded because they

are apt to easily forget. It was the intention to establish a resource centre at Country Road. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West us aware of that Minister of Housing and Lands and, in fact, that effort had started an extension had been made to the building, refurbishments were taking place and the idea was to established a technology, community resources centre that would serve Hindsbury Road and Country, parts of Passage Road because there was no such facility there at the time and the Administration of the day was in the business of establishing those things. The project started and then the party in Office at the time, went out of Office as the Government and the former Opposition then assumed the reins of Government and that project went into abeyance. Now, the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands was kind enough and courteous enough to invite me down to a Press Briefing that he had at the precincts of that same facility. It is the old Welfare Department building. Mr. Speaker, you would be aware of that, and he was kind enough because the building now is again under some refurbishment efforts, but it is being used alternatively and not for a resource centre. I am still asking, what is the basis on which we determine where we locate these things and when in the world on somebody's time schedule we will revisit the possibility of constructing? Are you building it next year? Are you building it next door? I am happy to hear that because I had suggested that it can perhaps be ... Hindsbury Road is a large area and Country Road and Passage Road. It connects with The City constituency Greenfields. You know these areas, Mr. Speaker, you are an urban man. These are large areas with lots of people and lots of young people and lots of potential for trouble too and it would be good if we could have a facility like that down there. Now, Mr. Speaker, in my way of looking at things, sports and sporting activity is a builder of character. Much of your character formation, I would want to assume, resulted from your involvement in sports, I would want to assume. I am assuming two things that there is strong character formation and that it resulted from your involvement in sports. As a young boy, Mr. Speaker, I ran all over the Waterford Plantation area. You use to have a playing field there and it has now become an area occupied by a lot of people who are squatting out of necessity and driven to that type of existence, but that was a sugarcane field, but there was enough space around that boys could find to play some cricket and what we used to call the Cart Hill. I spent a lot of my days running around the Combermere School pasture playing cricket and football and in District A Police Station when District A Police Station had a pasture area on the inside, it is all now concreted and buildings, the guys used to run around and play in there and all I am saying is we grew up as young boys, Mr. Speaker, engaging in sporting activities formally and informally and I would like to think that has helped significantly to make you what you are, to make the Honourable Member for St. Lucy what he is and to make me in part who I am. It is a builder of character. It is also a

counter, Mr. Speaker, to social conflict which is on the rise among young people. It certainly facilitates and helps to gender community cohesion, we are losing a lot of that, and what we are seeing in its place is community scaring and community erosion. There was a time when sporting activity brought communities together. Of course, there is the health related advantage as well.

We say now we have a young child with a health profile which speaks significantly of obesity and all that that brings in its way and perhaps children today even at school and in the informal arena are not playing enough together. I am saying sports is a really important thing so this is not for me and I would not begrudge any district that gets a recreational facility. I certainly would not begrudge Workmans and I certainly would not begrudge the Honourable Member for St. George South because this sporting thing is important. It seems to me that we are losing the impulse for it among our young people and our children today. Perhaps it is the presence of the technology or it is the dynamics operating in the community that create that disposition that you want to stay away from certain situations, but this sporting thing is very, very important.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, you are a humble man and you have learned the virtue and value of humility in ascendancy in sports. You win the game; you are in ascendancy but you learn humility. I think what we learn from the outside world in much of what we see in media sports is that the swell-headedness is there. I think in my time and in your time, which I think is the same era, give or take a few years, advantage being on my side, that you learned a sense of humility in ascendancy. When you are on top you do not kick a man because he is down because you have ascended. Mr. Speaker, because you come out on top you do not see that as being such an advantage that you ride on that wave and you care nothing about the other fellow.

Mr. Speaker, you learn also resilience and what I called bounce back ability in sports. You get beat badly but you are back the next day to challenge and to compete and to contest and perhaps to win. You learn that spirit of resilience. We need that in life. In all of life's situations we need that. Some of my colleagues here will lose their seat in the next General Election and hopefully out of that experience they would find that spirit of resilience, that bounce back ability that would bring them back to the polls again to offer themselves.

Asides.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: I have lost already and here I am again. I know what resilience is with respect to that. I know of the bounce back ability. I am talking, through you, Mr. Speaker, to those who are new and here for the first time and in a short time from now they would

lose and they have to find in themselves the spirit of resilience, the ability to bounce back and to win and that when you win you take it in your stride and you do not get carried off and become all swell-headed.

Mr. Speaker, you learn a sense of team in sports. Are these things important for our young people? Are these things important for our children? Are these things important for our community? Conflict resolutions: we got guys now who want to be very hostile and violent with each other. In our day, Mr. Speaker, we had our little spits and spats but we were not this hostile and not that violent and not that expressive in terms of the anger that we demonstrated. The worst we perhaps would have done was take up the ball that belonged to us and go along home or pulled the stumps because they are ours and go home. Nowadays the conflict is rife and the way it expresses itself... Sports therefore to me helps significantly with respect to that.

Mr. Speaker, you learn to optimise your available resources. I am talking about building character. You are not just dropping down a pavilion in Fustic, I am talking about building character. You learn to maximise the use of what limited resources are available to you. The things we played football and cricket with of yesteryear, Mr. Speaker, the fellows today will not play cricket and football with those things. We had a bare minimum and we made do. In life sometimes you have just the barest minimum, so what do you do. You do not throw up your hand and give up. No, no, no. You learn the value of what you have, you cherish what you have and you optimise or maximise the use. You learn to share that which is yours. It is a counter that is a spirit of selfishness of self-centredness out of which a lot of our problems come.

You learn, Mr. Speaker, that reward does not properly come without effort. The tendency now, the disposition and the mind-set now is to take short cuts at every level of society: How fast can I get there, what shortcut can I take? You learn in sports that reward does not properly come without the effort that you put into what you are doing and that talent is not everything, temperament is also important. Mr. Speaker, a lot of us as adults would do well to learn that it is not only about skill and talent but temperament, the disposition, the mind-set and the attitude that you bring to life's situations and a sense of community.

Mr. Speaker, I did not plan to speak this long. All I am saying here is that we need to allow our people to manage these facilities, we need to properly locate them for the right reasons, we need to remember St. Michael West in our agenda and in our planning and we need to recognise the value of sports. It builds character, it helps to resolve some of the conflicts and tensions out there and it creates community cohesion. These are very positive things so I do

not know that anybody in here will begrudge the effort at Workmans.

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

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me join this debate that speaks directly to acquiring land for a wonderful village and the wonderful people of Workmans in that wonderful parish of St. George and that wonderful constituency that I represent so dearly, St. George South.

I also want to start by thanking the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and also the Honourable Member for Christ Church West who journeyed with me to St. George over a year or so ago. Mr. Speaker, I want to set the record straight that this acquisition predates us as a Government and indeed studies were done to determine the suitability and the placement of this, what I called not a recreational facility but a resource facility because we are siting or acquiring half acre of land.

Mr. Speaker, to bring some perspective into it so that we understand certain aspects. To put a playing field on .5 acres to play a cricket game or a football game - I see the Speaker smiling - you need at least 2.5 acres for cricket minimum sometimes 4 acres and you need a minimum of 1.5 acres for football.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to go back into history by saying that the last Administration, even though I would be telling the truth, pooh-poohed upon this acquisition. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to focus there because we are looking into the future and this Government is about building communities, building a sense of self identification and caring for each other and that is where it all starts within communities, social identification within communities. This resource facility, and I hope I have cleared up the fact that it is not playing field, but it a community center that will have a hardcourt attached to it, and that hardcourt would cater to various sporting disciplines of netball, football, volleyball and road tennis. These are some of the sporting disciplines that it will care to.

However, when you look at the mandate of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment, the vision is to build a cohesive society and I agree with the Member for St. Michael West, in his few words, build a cohesive society through the empowerment and full involvement of youth and communities in social and economic development of this country. That is vision for the Ministry of Youth Sports and Community Empowerment, and the mission is to increase youth empowerment through development of programs and projects that increase youth engagement. We all mention

reducing crime and violence, enhancing skills development in communities and boost employability and employment. That is the mission. I articulated both the vision and mission.

This community centre at Workmans, and I will answer the questions posed by the Member for St. Michael West as I speak during my time on my feet. We looked at the facility and this is what Government does. We look at every single jurisdiction. We look at the densely populated nature of the facilities in an effort to come up with what is best solution within communities to empower our people, not only the young people, and the Member for St. Lucy mentioned it, but we have seniors who need to recreate and engage themselves. Seniors who also suffer from mental health challenges, and I heard the Member for St. Michael West, eluding to some of these challenges and the need to have facilities. I will pause here to let him know that, not pause, but I will reference St. Michael West and to let you know that the Minister of Housing, the Member Christ Church West and also the Member for St. Lucy, we have started looking at the Country Road facility where the welfare presently occupies and next to that is the Prison Fellowship building, and we can talk with you as the Parliamentary Representative, because we are not leaving any person behind. We are not certain if within two years you will still be carrying that portfolio of Parliamentary Representative for St. Michael West, but, nonetheless, we will give you the opportunity to sit with us to let us discuss what is the best option, or what is the best what I call policy or the best implementation plan for that facility, whether it is a resource centre or hardcourt, when we are looking at the commercial aspect of the city, entrepreneurship, and all of these things we will discuss with you. However, more importantly, or most importantly, the whole aspect of the densely populated nature, and how many young people are situated in that area. You have the answers and I know the Member for Christ Church West has the answers as well, and probably the Member for St. Michael North East and St. Michael West Central. Therefore, we will sit with you. we are not leaving anyone behind and you have been elected by the people of St. Michael West to serve them and we have a duty to ensure that the people from St. Michael West gets its fair share of development within this country.

I just want to clarify or to bring a little bit of clarity to the statement that you made on what we are doing with building and to let you know whenever you are ready, I am speaking on behalf of the Member because we had a little caucus and he is not speaking in this debate, but he said whenever you are ready we can sit to discuss the best use of that building to empower the people within St. Michael West.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in my view as Parliamentary Representative, Workmans, Jordans, Orange Estate,

Jericho, Fair View, Middleton and the surrounding districts, there is no training facility or community facility within that jurisdiction in St. George. It is an area that I can easily say occupies over 1,000 young people, and the nearest recreational facility is within two miles from the persons within Jordans in the catchment area. This predates us because the last administration recognised that there was a need to build some form of recreational facility or community centre there, even though I wonder why they chose that area to put a playing on 0.5 acres of land, whether we are playing miniature cricket or miniature golf there it is no problem. However, for us to have a proper recreational facility we need 2.5 acres, and the people of Workmans need a proper recreational facility, and they also need a training facility, which we are focusing on. The Member for St. George North knows very well that the students at Workmans do not have any recreational facility. They have to journey to St. George Parish Church to use the recreational facility there and of course that is a cost to the school or whoever, and sometimes it is a cost to us, because we facilitate certain things, both the Member for St. George North and myself. The school is on our borders. Actually the school is in St. George North, it is on my border St. George South, but we spend a lot of time with the school discussing several issues with respect to how we can make that facility one where people are engage, where we look at entrepreneurial opportunities, where we look at the commercial aspect. When we speak of the commercial aspect, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment, started a building blocks program, where we went into communities, and again I heard the Member for St. Michael West. However, we started this program back in 2018, and to date we have built some 15 kiosks across Barbados at five locations, and only this morning I was speaking to the Member for St. Michael North West, and to tell him that his plans that he has agreed upon are on their way to Town and Country Planning for the construction of five kiosk at Free Hill in St. Michael, where we can truly speak about empowering the young people on the block, in terms of entrepreneurship and small businesses. The Member for St. Michael South drawings are already with Town and Country Planning and also the Member for Christ Church East and the Member for the City of Bridgetown. I can go on and on and on to let you know that this year we will start six more blocks and that will give close to 20 entrepreneurs the opportunity to engage in commercial activity. To answer yet another question from the Member for St. Michael West, we are engaged in empowering our guys on the block with a view to solve some of the social challenges that we have. That alone might not solve all of them, but I know that we have some of the programs and the policies as articulated in this manifesto that can solve some of the problems. They will not be solved overnight, but it is a work in progress and when people see that you as a Government care about them, this is a caring Government, that we can take the average man on the block, some of whom are disengaged,

some of whom left school without any certification, and we can give them the opportunity to become businessmen and businesswomen in this country, that speaks a lot. We are leaving no one behind.

I just wanted to answer your second question there. I am not going to spend my whole time answering your questions, but sports are another discussion, but at the end of the day we are here to allow ... I agree with you about the whole aspect of sports being an avenue to address some of the challenges and leadership issues that we have, and also to solve some of our social ills.

I was a cricket captain at that great institution in St. John, the best secondary institution in this country. Some in this room may argue but it is not an argument. At the end of the day, being the cricket captain- and the Member of St. Philip West just sat on the edge of his seat and wanted to jump but this is not the place for that, Sir- gave me the opportunity to develop teamwork skills, leadership skills to deal with difficult situations and conflict resolution. When a bowler is telling you, "I need two more". You are

saying to yourself, "No man, I need to try something different." When you change that bowler, he gets upset with you and you have to manage him with a view to make sure that he is not sulking on the field.

I agree with you, Member for St. Michael West that sports are a powerful tool. Nelson Mandela said that sports have the potential to unite the world but it also has the potential to solve a lot of our problems in this country. We as a Government recognise that as articulated in our manifesto and have set about on a path to address some of these issues. Workmans' facility may not be able to hold a football or cricket field, but I as the parliamentary representative for St. George South am looking presently to acquire some land so we can have a field to play football, cricket and have some more sporting disciplines to capture most of our young people, and also those who are not so young.

We believe that the time is now for us to do most of our infrastructural improvement projects. I want to thank the Member for St. Michael West Central who just joined us. I want to thank you and I am blowing your trumpet for the work that you are doing for the people of St. George. They knew the Member for Christ Church West but I think you came and stole the cake. You know what I am talking about. It does not mean that they do not love the Member for Christ Church West. However, we are seeing some development within St. George South and Workmans must get its fair share of development whether through a Resource Centre or the acquisition of land for a playing field which I am working on.

There are some other communities within St. George. There is the Todds community. We do not have any recreational facilities there. We have close to 200 to 300 young people within Todds. What are parents going to do with these young people at a time like now when we all are battling with the COVID-19 challenges? As parents, citizens and guardians, we need some place for our children to recreate and I am cognizant of the fact that this Government recognises that. We are swiftly moving to engage in Capital Works Programmes whether it is in St. Joseph, St. Michael, St. Philip or St. George to ensure that we do not lose our people to some of these mental health challenges and obesity challenges that we are confronted with in this world, not only in Barbados.

I rise today to support this Resolution but also to put things in perspective because the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment have engaged over the years in a number of training programmes. Recently, we started this programme called Pathways where our young people who are unattached, disengaged and left school without any form of certification have the opportunity to become employable. We have engaged in a programme called Pathways where we take our young people over a five-week period. The first week we treat with personal development training, psycho-social evaluation and partner with the private sector because of our aim after we have done the personal development training with these young people. We engage the private sector in a Get-Into Get-Hired Programme where they are taken through an interview process and learning through an internship programme the skills needed to survive in the world of work.

These are all disengaged unattached persons who have left school. Why are we focusing on community centres? Why are we spending our time going around Barbados looking at areas where we can build community centres? We have the Youth Achieving Results Programme where we partner with the Ministry of Culture in performing arts programme, drama, dance and voice training. We have the Youth Achieving Results Visual Arts Programme where we do calabash art, painting, drawing, leather craft, wood carving and garment construction. I could go on and on. There is the Next Step Training Initiative where we provide the second chance training opportunities to unemployed youth where we are looking at persons in renewable energy, maintenance and installation of renewable energy.

They do robotics coding and 3D printing. The National Cultural Training Programme is training persons in the cultural arts across Barbados. Someone asked, "Where are we going to execute these programmes?" We are going to execute these programmes at community centres. Why? We have partnered with the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI) with the

Next Step Training Initiative. This year we have enrolled over 100 boys and girls in renewable energy training and maintenance and installation of renewable energy systems. Do you realise that the capacity of SJPI if we are truly to empower the 60 000 young persons we have in this country under the age of 35 or truly to empower and make the 4 000 school leavers that we have in this country annually employable? We have to engage in satellite stations across Barbados?

I call them satellite stations but let us say satellite facilities. Where we can partner with the Barbados Vocational Training Board and SJPI to give our young people a second chance and the opportunity to become employable. We can give them the opportunity to learn a skill so that they can become entrepreneurs and innovative so that we can move this country from focusing only on a labour market where we look at low-end jobs to a design and innovative market here. We then shift the focus. I am not saying to leave out the labour market focus. I am saying that the time has come that we have to shift our thinking and create some young millionaires in this country.

This entire design and innovative shift for our young people, we have to give them those skills within those assets that we call community centres. We do not have all of the space at SJPI. Let me pause here to say that SJPI and the Barbados Vocational Training Board are both doing an excellent job in rolling out some young people who are taking this world by storm. We just had some young men and women who came out of SJPI who performed within the Visual Arts Programme in community training and were able to start their own business in automotive painting. The other group was able to start their own business in providing signs across Barbados.

They partner with the Ministry of Transport and Works to provide signage in St. Peter. Recently, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment engaged that same grouping to provide signage at Sky Mall and these are signage stating "Parking allocated for the Permanent Secretary and the Administration Officer. Unauthorised vehicles should not be parked here".

That is a business that was started through the partnership between the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment and the Ministry of Education. We are doing whatever it takes to capture the imagination and to capture the attention of our young people in this country to make them global citizens and we believe that young people in this country, they have the energy and the creativity to solve most of our problems and to make Barbados the best place to live, work, to do business, raise a family and as we would say a place of good vibes, but some of the naysayers, we have to stop talking about we have lost a generation and that young people are this and young people are that. I find when we engage the youth

you get ideas, you get problem solving ideas, you get persons who are interested in leadership. We just performed a week of activities called Youth Week and we ended off with a church service on Sunday. Those of you who witnessed it, Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (C.B.C.) carried it live, every single aspect of the planning of that church service was done by young officers within the Ministry all under the age of 25. The Minister did not get involved, the Permanent Secretary did not get involved, I showed up and I was asked to say a few words and so I did, but it was an exceptional performance by the young people and that is why I will repeat that young people have the creativity and the energy to solve some of these problems, most of the problems within this country, but we have to give them the avenues and the facilities where they can engage in meaningful activity.

Mr. Speaker, we engaged a National Summer Camp Programme annually, but the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted it. We provide some 45 camps to accommodate over 3 500 to 4 000 campers annually and we spent, as a Government, and I must make this clear. Before coming to Office, summer camps costed millions of dollars by the last Administration to host summer camps, but we brought back the spirit of volunteerism by communities, Honourable Member for St. Michael West, where persons within the communities were empowered to come and run the camps. That is what we are talking about and I agree with you, Honourable Member for St. Michael West. We were able to run the summer camps through a process called volunteerism that left this country for some 10 years whereby people were disengaged. They did not want to be a part of any process because everything was about money and the fatted calf; wastage, and we were able to reduce millions of dollars to turn our summer camp programme into a \$250 000 budget with some 45 camps, but I am proud to say to the people of Workmans. Whenever the Government -- and I am hoping we have acquired the land -- but I am hoping that we will be able to build that facility sometime soon because then you can become one of the facilities that can host a summer camp and as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West said, persons from the community will run the camp and that is what we have done since we came to Office. We have engaged community leaders and community-minded persons to create the programmes, peer-to-peer mentorship where we take young people within the communities, the leaders. We trained some over 120 youth leaders within communities and community groups annually, so Workmans, once this facility is built -- and I am asking my Honourable colleagues to ensure that Workmans gets this facility soonest, the Honourable Minister of Finance and I know wherever she is and she hears me, Workmans is a place that she frequents as well and she is loved by the people of Workmans so I am not putting in a plug to have this facility built in the next financial, the year 2022-2023.

Mr. Speaker, on a broader theme, the whole aspect of addressing mental health challenges in this country, we have a number of young persons who are at home doing what I call, zooming. My son and I call it zooming. We have fun. He zooms too, but I had to find a way -- and I speak as a parent -- to motivate that young man, that 13-year-old son that I have and I can use myself as an example. It was challenging working as a parent, with both parents working and having to call on help, sometimes the little boy wants to see his parents there with him. He is zoom schooling and he said to us, one morning he woke up and he dressed for school, in the St. Michael's School uniform and I asked him: "Where are you going?" He said: "I am going to school. I am going to sit down at that computer. Daddy this is driving me crazy." I am using myself as an example and I only have one child. I am saying to you, through you, Mr. Speaker, that parents need places where they can let off the steam, where they can recreate, where they can deal with some of these mental health challenges and I know, Honourable Member for St. Michael West, that you signed this Manifesto and you know that is why you spoke so glowingly with respect to the role of community centres and the role of sports. I know that you know everything that is in here with respect to our social programmes and our policies with respect to solving some of the mental health challenges. I agree with everything you said in here this morning. Our community centres ...

Asides.

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: That was struck from the record so I cannot agree it was something that was not a part of the debate. I am reference what you said in relation to the debate because that was struck from the record. We have, within us, over 37 community centres and that is not enough. When we look across Barbados there is a dearth of facilities where we can engage in information technology training. That has taken over the world now. We have a computer technology programme that has gone as far as North Africa, South Sudan. We engage in online computer technology last year.

Mr. Speaker, let me back. When we came to Office in 2018, the computer technology programme attracted 1 300 between the ages of 15 and 50. In 2019, it attracted 2 000. The COVID-19 pandemic came and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its mitigating measures forced us to have the computer technology training programme administered online, but still at community centres, but when we advertised online the programme, I do not want one, I used the word "oversubscribed", but we were able to attract over 5 000 persons and as I said three persons from North Africa, South Sudan, came online with this programme and they also congratulated the Government of Barbados and they sent a video recording to the Government thanking them for bringing this programme.

Mr. Speaker, it gets more challenging because we have a number of young persons with mental health issues as a result of COVID-19. Persons have lost their jobs, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy alluded to it in his speech, parents' electricity bills skyrocketing, one month they cannot pay, they are juggling between water, electricity and other bills, some persons who are below the line with respect to earnings have had their electricity cut off and their children... I know parents will go hungry for days but what would challenge parents and what would get to parents and would have mental health challenges among the parents is if their children go hungry for days. Thanks to this Government we have intervened and we continue to intervene. The parliamentary representatives, including the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, this is not political now, this is real, have all intervened in solving some of the social problems within households to keep families together because families begin to crack, the whole fragment begins to tear apart when there are financial issues among not only those from a lower socio economic background but from the wealthy too. When financial issues creep into families you see the cracking within that fabric in the family and we have had to intervene but we are seeing a number of young boys and girls in this country... Presently I am driving around with three tablets. This evening I have to journey to certain places in St. George North to distribute these three tablets because some young people and parents do not have the wherewithal to purchase tablets. Mr. Speaker, it gets worse.

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

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you have the tablets and your electricity gets cut off, what happens to your child in the home environment. Mr. Speaker, we believe that the community centres at this time even more so than ever should be a place where our young people could go and log on and get online on google classroom. Yes, we have to make sure that we do not have it crowded, we have to social distance, but we still believe that is the place now that we have to rescue some of our young people so that they can have the opportunity to have a decent education in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I endorse this Resolution for my people in Workmans. I support it wholeheartedly and I am asking that the powers that be would see it fit in the next financial year to have this state-of-the-art facility built where we can engage in robotics, 3D printing renewable energy and coding, all of the new frontiers that can give us the opportunity that our persons can be more innovative and become true global citizens. I am not throwing out the needlework and the cake making and the icing and stuff for the cakes and the canning for the chairs but I am saying that within the whole labour market concept we have done well but we now need to push the envelope to the design

market concept and the innovation market concept for jobs worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I want to thank the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy for bringing this important Resolution for the people of Workmans, Jordans, Fairview, Jericho and the surrounding districts. It is with God's blessings on us that we can build this facility in the next financial year.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. R. A. THORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. Speaker, admittedly Your Honour when I came here today I was expecting to speak on a different matter so that if you find me a little unprepared it is because on my way to a more comfortable seat the Honourable Member for St. George South intercepted me and told me that he is insisting that I should speak in support of a matter of great importance to his constituency. This is sometimes a brotherhood and I do not object to speaking as requested and suggested by my colleague on a matter that pertains to his constituency. One may think that it is parochial but there is an aspect to this Resolution that is not so parochial after all which relates itself to the question of an acquisition of a small area of land for the purpose of recreation.

Mr. Speaker, I will begin anecdotally and say to you Your Honour that when I first went to primary school, apart from the classes and the rigours of those classes, sometimes on Friday afternoons they would take us out into the playground and tell us this is a games afternoon and that activity was disjoined from the more rigorous classroom activity and it was only when I went to secondary school that the language changed, they were no longer calling it a games afternoon they were calling it Physical Education, and that terminology was a reminder to us then the recreation was to be considered a part of the Curriculum of education. Mr. Speaker, that is important. That is rooted in certain Romano Greek traditions in that when the Greeks spoke to you of education they spoke to you similarly as did my secondary school. You did your tuition, the traditional subjects in the classroom, but then when you retire to the recreational area still it was considered a part of education and that is in keeping with the Romano Greek tradition of education, education embracing not only the strict curriculum of Mathematics and English but that it extended itself to the physical aspects of a child's development, and that is important.

Mr. Speaker, when this matter found expression in the English Grammar schools, if we may call them that - I say this because we whether we like it or not we are a part of that tradition that finds itself historically connected to those parts of the world, to those parts of the beginning of what we call western civilisation - a similar practice was carried out in that physical activity and physical education and physical expression was considered as important as the classroom idea of education. Indeed, in the British Grammar Schools as we called them, there was a language which emerged and admittedly that language associated itself with the snobbery that existed in that society. When poorer persons in Britain expressed themselves physically, who played in the streets, they referred to those games as street games but when that activity was expressed within the British Grammar Schools they called it a sport and so the language reflected the snobbery that existed in that society, still the English in keeping with the Greeks and Romans considered physical activity to be a part of the entire process of education. When young men became adults and expressed themselves on the field of sport, there was again that class snobbery that was associated with games and sport; there were some men who did it for a living, they called themselves professionals, and those better-off persons who played games and perhaps played them as well, they called themselves amateurs, and there was a certain snobbery associated with the two term: the amateurs looked down on the professionals. As I said before, amateurs were really saying: I do this because I am good at it. You do this because you want to make a living. Indeed, there was a time in which I think it was golf played where there was a separate competition for amateurs and there was a separate competition for professionals and here was the amateur saying to the professional again: I do this because I am good at it, I wish to do it. Mr. Speaker, Sir, not only was he saying that he did it because he was good at it, he was saying that he was doing it as an expression of the evolution of the idea of character and there was the recognition that sport related itself to character building. I think I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West referred to the element of character building within sport. Therefore, if one derived any positive from that history, it is a recognition that sport, games or whichever term you used, is related to character building. That is why these Resolutions are so important, that is why it is important for a Government to reserve spaces not only for housing, not only for other areas of social activities but importantly, to reserve areas for recreation, even in a pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I may become parochial at the Honourable Member for St. George South. When I am driving home on afternoons sometimes I choose the more picturesque route. I do not know if Mapp Hill is a part of the Honourable Member's constituency but when I am driving along Mapp Hill there is this large playing field and pavilion and I see something that is quite rare in Barbados these days; I see children on the playing field playing. I say

this is not usual, the more usual activity now is to see empty playing fields, and to imagine that the children are indoors playing computer games, et cetera. I pause to remind Your Honour of the trauma that visited Barbados yesterday when they lost Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. That seemed to have traumatised the world. I do not know if the children do Facebook, WhatsApp and the other things as well but the world became traumatised yesterday afternoon when there was no longer any access to this technological phenomenon and that is a reminder again of the importance of outdoor recreation; having young people come into contact with each other; having young people come into wholesome social intercourse. The English used to say in their schools it builds character, it leads us to the concept of team; sport teaches children to associate with each other as a collective and with the concept of team and that is important. In fact, if one wishes to say one may also say that sport moulds -- and it sounds cliché but it is true -- sport moulds a person's character so that he appreciates the importance of the other person, he appreciates that the other person is as important as he or she is. Indeed, if we can transfigure that into what we do, the concept of team leads to a concept of democracy, equal participation. This is the importance of recreation; this is the importance of sport.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, of course, in my brief intervention here I will say, as Plato said while on the subject of democracy: "Show me a democracy and I will show you a tyranny in the making". Now, whoever is the minister with responsibility (I think it is my friend from St. Lucy and my colleague from Christ Church West) I do not think you are tyrants, I have heard my friend the Honourable Member for St. George South boasting that he was able to do these tours with you and therefore this Resolution finds real expression today, and since there is no tyranny in the making in this democracy I want to recommend to you a visit to a part of Barbados called Carter's Gap, Christ Church. This is not to intimidate you, but I have spoken to the Chairman of your Cabinet, the Honourable Prime Minister, and informed her that there is a place called Carter's Gap, Christ Church. Now, the east of my constituency is not well-blessed with many recreational areas and that Carter's Gap area contains a large tract of land and I have proposed to the Honourable Prime Minister that this area be acquired, not only for young men to play football, not only for men a little older to play cricket, but for old persons to recreate. I foresee that in the future all recreational areas will embrace older persons because when we think of recreation we tend to think only of persons 35 years of age and under. I think that is the United Nations designation of youth. Let us extend our recreational areas to embrace the older folk, even if they come out and play dominoes, Warri or even sit under a tree at midday or 3 o'clock in the afternoon and engage in wholesome social intercourse. Carter's Gap offers that ideal location, to change the lives of those persons who live therein.

Incidentally it is in my constituency (I think I may have said that) and so I thought I would seize the opportunity, while supporting the Resolution for my good friend, the Honourable Member for St. George South. Those people in St. George South are so well-represented. I am happy that the Honourable Member has intercepted me and asked me to support it. The Honourable Member reminded me that in 2013 when the Honourable Member had his first meeting (I am really not supposed to be this brazenly partisan here, but forgive me Your Honour) the Honourable Member reminds me that the first meeting he had I was the first speaker in a place called Jordan, St. George, and all Christians love a journey to Jordan. I have had the pleasure of immersing myself in the other Jordan, in the east, in Israel but it was a pleasure to come to Jordan that night -- I got lost after I did not know where I was going. However, all that gives me pleasure to support this Resolution and gives me the confidence that these ministers, these good ministers, all two of them, urged on by their Honourable Prime Minister, will find their way to the constituency of Christ Church South and come to Carter's Gap and they, I and all of us will do a survey of that land -- not a survey like the professionals do, but a visual survey of the land -- and they will find that it is so fit for recreational development.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with those few words, I support the Resolution. I support this Government in its initiative to do good by the people of Barbados. I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, you have the Floor.

His Honour Mr. N. G. H. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take this opportunity to give my support and to endorse this Resolution that was laid in this Honourable House by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when people do not have anything to do with their time, they are more likely to get involved in trouble and crime. How do we as a Government intervene, Mr. Speaker, Sir? We intervene by increasing the number of resource centres across this island to benefit the youth across the various communities. Sir, having more resource centres will allow this Government to create more opportunities for our young people and people in general to embrace.

Sir, I can say that I am fortunate and blessed to have a resource centre situated in my constituency, and I have utilised the Deacons Resource Centre to execute various programs since being elected to office to benefit my constituents.

Sir, in 2019, I had joined hands with the Ministry of Youth and Community Empowerment in association with the Northwest Alliance Foundation and we executed a cosmetology program at the Deacons Resource Centre. Sir, to mention, it was a successful program that benefitted

around 20 to 25 young aspiring cosmetologist between the ages of 16 to 29 years old, who had the opportunity to learn a skill in nail technology and make up. Presently, I have an educational program at the Deacons Resource Centre, the Northwest Alliance Foundation literacy afterschool program, presently benefits those children who attend primary and secondary schools, providing assistance and various subject areas, such as composition, comprehension, reading and mathematics. These are being offered at the resource centre.

Sir, these are just some of the ways how more resource centres across this island can benefit the good people of this country. I also wish to take this opportunity to ask the goodly Minister, the Honourable Member for St. George South to make good use of the Deacons Development Centre that sits idle, which I do not agree. I need to see the Deacons Development Centre benefiting the sporting community within my constituency. Sir, my constituency consist of a lot of sportsmen and sportswomen, from football to cricket, to road tennis to table tennis, just to mention a few of the sports. I need to see the Deacons Development Centre become the home of sports in St. Michael North West. I need it active and not idle. I will like to ask the present Minister of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment to kindly transform the Deacons Development Centre for me.

Asides.

His Hon. N. G. H. ROWE: Thank you Sir. On the behalf of my beloved constituents. Sir, I fully support this Resolution and I really hope that this good Government with the good leadership of our good Prime Minister will continue to really create more opportunities to really benefit the youth and the people in this country. I thank you Sir.

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

Dr. S. E. BROWNE: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Before I begin to support the Resolution, I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West. He proved to me today that you really do have to keep a lot of noise too often to be getting work done, and I congratulate you. I am proud of you.

His Hon. N. G. H. ROWE: Thank you.

Dr. S. E. BROWNE: I do obviously support the Resolution. One cannot help but to support the Resolution, and I congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and Christ Church West. However, like many of the Members here, I am begging for consideration of the youth, the young people to the eastern side of the island, the rural areas, and it is not necessarily my constituency here. Often

times we see adequate sporting facilities and the one coming to mind is the Aquatic Centre. Now, Mr. Speaker, the schools and the members of the urban areas have benefits, they have it on their school curriculum with respect to using the Aquatic Centre for learning to swim. The Honourable Prime Minister said, even during the campaign that she would love to see every child in Barbados being able to swim. The residents and children of the rural areas find it difficult to be a part of this program at the Aquatic Centre. The truth is that the time it takes for a school in my constituency for the children to travel from, St. Catherine's, and St. Mark's, St. Phillip to the Aquatic centre, load in a bus, travel down there, get a chance to settle, swim and get back, as a result, almost the whole school day is gone.

We were asked at some point to propose ideas for our constituencies. It is big dreams and there is nothing wrong with dreaming big, but one of the things is the establishment of a recreational facility, a large enough area where we can incorporate a pool, facilities for dancing, and I am thinking big here. The talk is on health and NCDs, but one of the devices that the physiotherapist may use is actually exercise in a pool. I think it is about time that whether it be in St. Philip, St. John or St. Joseph, all of these areas are close to St. Philip, even St. George, whereas a big enough facility be constructed to include these things which are badly needed.

For a while I was looking around trying to figure out where on earth the children of St. Philip North can participate in dancing. Inaudible that we have somebody on board that is willing and ready to start, but we do not have the facilities. "We were blessed" with the St. Mark's Resource Centre. Mr. Speaker, to be truthful, it is really not fit for purpose. I do not know if you have visited the building. There is a platform in place, but most of the ends of community centre you cannot even visually access the platform of the community centre. There are dance groups that work there, but there is no space, you pass and see people spilling onto the verandah into the yard. This is not good enough, and I know this Administration was not responsible for the building of that, but it is really not fit for purpose.

For a little while, and the Honourable Member for St. George would have heard me on this, as well as my partner in crime here, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West. There has been the beginning of a hardcourt at the same St. Mark's Resource Centre in Three Houses Hill. I have been begging for the completion of the hardcourt. It has gotten to a point where you can barely find it. It had been started and I am begging for the completion of the hardcourt. Everybody speaks about pastures for cricket and football. The truth is that women do not participate in these areas very often. Yes, we have a cricket team and so on, but women do not participate, it will be helpful to have at

least a netball court on board, where you play basketball, netball, and road tennis as one of the Member mentioned earlier. To be honest we need the facility, we need space, and we need to be counted in this whole game of providing recreational facilities for rural parishes and districts. While I spoke about the Aquatic Centre, I am going to put a plug, I see other Members veered away a little bit from the topic and I will do so now. I am putting a plug for the Aquatic Centre, I am very concerned about the Aquatic Centre being opened during this COVID time, the children huddle in the pool and I am very worried. I spoke to at least one of the coaches there who is very worried about keeping the Aquatic Centre open during this time and I am asking for this area to be reviewed with respect to temporary closing or finding some way for distancing to happen at the Aquatic Centre. It is worrying me, and I use this opportunity to say that now.

Now, yes you often complain, but I like to offer ideas, which I have just done with respect to how we can develop St. Philip for one, and in turn the other rural parishes. As I was saying, I put forward mission in terms of how to develop out this thing. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East proudly announced the acquisition or the oncoming acquisition of land for the St. Mark's Primary School, which is over two acres. Many do not know that, but I was at the forefront of actually speaking to the people who were willing to volunteer. I am going to pat myself on the back. It took a lot of doing and they have graciously agreed to do so. This is one of the areas if we get it started that we can use two-plus acres of land. This is one of the areas that we can actually see some of these things developing. Sports are important, as every Member in here has already said. We need to start thinking like countries such as Jamaica with respect to developing our sports programme to the end that people can make a living off of them. Jamaica takes it seriously. Why have we not gotten there as yet?

It is coming and I congratulate the Honourable Member for St. George South, but it needs to get here quickly. We have people that are getting into universities but just do not have the funding. With respect to culture, as I said last week there is a young man in my constituency who got into a university in New York for Arts but cannot get the funding to get there, yet we sit here every week or however long and tout how sports is developing, but we cannot get the funding. You can get the funding for someone that has done well in physics, mathematics and the scholarships, but where is the accessible funding for arts programmes? Where is the funding that we know about and sports programmes?

These things we need to look at. As I said, it is now a time where sports need to be taken seriously. We are still at the stage in our schools where teachers actually punish children by telling them that they cannot participate in

games for whatever reason. It is used as a source of punishment. This would not happen where someone would use mathematics as a source of punishment, English or science. We have to go beyond that and realise that physical education is just as important as any other subject in this island, especially where we stand on the NCDs.

We need to look seriously at physical education as a source of punishment. I listen to some of the Members. I am proud of some of your programmes that involve cooking, art and craft but although we need those, it is now time to bring the community centres a bit more forward in terms of introducing more current and sexy programmes into the system. Women do not only want to know about icing cakes at this point in time. Women do not only want to know about making dollies for the center tables. We want to know about Information Tecnology, courses on investing what little money we have, how banking works, how to apply for jobs and save money. We need instruction on budgeting and how to be good parents.

We need to get these things incorporated. The days of learning how to ice cakes are still relevant but these things have been taken over by the bigger companies that are now moving in such as the bakeries. We have to be realistic in what we need to teach our young people here. I encourage us to bring these things onboard and include people. The elderly people need to be included. You would be surprised walking around communities that people over 67 years old are eager to get out, dance, attend drama classes and join a folk group. We have to include them.

They are part of the community. It is not only young people. The elderly is part of our communities that we need to fight for and include. Communities as I understand it or at least those private ones are responsible for maintaining their facilities, for example, the parks. I want that looked at. We have some governmental developments where people bought the properties, for example, Parish land and the people in that area are begging and requesting for an area where a park could be set up. I pass through there on a weekly basis and children of olden days are playing cricket in the streets, and the balls are coming at your car.

People speed through the district. We need dedicated areas in some of these developments that are cordoned off for children to play and people to walk around safely without risk of injury. I cannot help but comment on seeing what I thought was a beautiful idea. I am not sure if it is Sir Charles Williams that did it but in St. George there is almost a walking path constructed through an area that traditionally was a cane ground but I thought that was such a beautiful initiative. It is barber greene and people can walk safely off the road. May be we can think of that with respect to other parishes. We do not have the sidewalks and I know it would be costly. It is called the Train Line Cycle

Path. I really do not care what you call it because it would not apply to every parish.

We need dedicated areas like this where people can walk safely. Presently with the lockdowns that we had and the limited use of the roads, people are scared of walking the streets. I felt safe in St. Philip because at the time the population was not as large as it is now. Everyone is driving a car and even from 5'o clock in the morning, the traffic is out there. You have the exhaust fumes to deal with. We need to think about areas like this and to set up trails where you can walk safely and freely. We need lit areas where you can walk safely and freely because exercise is no longer a daytime activity but with the crime situation that might be another story.

Mr. Speaker, I will not take any more of your time, but these are issues which I think are relevant and that we need to work on. I thank all of the Members in here. I think everyone had something good to say today including my good friend sitting in front of me, the Leader of the Opposition. We need to study it and make some strides towards getting these areas fixed.

Thank you so much.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard some of the contributions while I was on my way here and I was inspired by them. Most of them were a reflection of all that we have had over the last few years. People spoke about the intention to increase the amount of sporting facilities across Barbados in specific areas and other persons lamented that they do not have facilities in specific areas, and asked that they be accommodated in the circumstances. I want to look at the Resolution in a different manner. Although initially it was about the acquisition of land for sporting activities, it is the acquisition of land in order to provide options for my people to be able to moralize their leisure time and to go outside of the traditional options that are available to them.

In some cases, options are not so wholesome. The reality is that based on both external and internal dynamics that are influencing the youth in this country, there is a necessity for us to step back. Do not even attempt to use traditional terminology because you get captured by the traditional terminologies. I just heard a specific Member of the House speaking and he has special language required for description. However, if we are really creative thinkers we can say the same thing without using the same words because you become more of a parrot or like a mechanical entity when you have to be guided by those traditions.

All that is happening around us now with climate change, with the COVID-19 pandemic and all of these things tell us that we have to look at creating a new physical environment in every space that is available to us

in order to suit the dynamics of the changes that we are experiencing. I personally believe that we have not had an equitable distribution and it is no fault of any specific persons because most of the sporting across Barbados and in some cases we limit the understand of these facilities because again of the words that we use "sporting facilities" and things of that nature. It is not about sporting facilities alone. It is about those facilities being able to facilitate all of the activities that we normally and spontaneously would be concerned about, but also about activities that other people believe that are not a part of our culture and so I want to say this because up to the 1950s we were running about behind balls in cricket. When other people were playing cricket across Barbados all that we could do was to run around the playing field and throw it back on so we had all of these things all around Barbados and you know I am coming there. You had cricket clubs such as Spartan, Carlton, Wanderers, Pickwick and all of these institutions around Barbados and black men then felt that the sports itself they were no part of the integral part of the activity so they stood, not only on the mental periphery, but also on the physical periphery on the boundaries catching balls and pelting them back in for other people to enjoy these things and the mindset was so damaged that we had black men going into South Africa calling themselves honorary whites. Now we are not at that stage. We are talking about a republican form of Government. We are saying that even at 1966 we did not go far enough and that we will never get there to the extreme point, the ultimate point, is always going to be a battle generation after generation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about that cricket because I want to make reference to golf. Black boys playing caddies -- I did not even know the name, it is so uncommon in my culture -- down on the West Coast and across Barbados. People have acres of land when people cannot get food or cannot get anywhere to live, rolling it out and got the grass and everything well-groomed and a suffering population see that sport itself as unique and exclusive. I want the Minister of Sports to understand when we are talking about creativity, we are debarred from participating in that because you all already fell victim into believing that is the norm. Only a few blacks who believe that they have made some form of vertical, cultural and social mobility believe that they belong so they want to preserve the stratification because they become somebody. The Minister of Sports must break that up. He is not doing business as usual. You have to break it up. Give the caddie boys the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity by being able to -- if they cannot buy a golf stick ...

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Clubs, oh God. This thing is an alien culture to me, but I am just trying to untangle all of this rubbish that is going on in Barbados. Give the Caddie boy an opportunity to be able to, if you cannot play on the

people private grounds, let the State provide a private ground. I have seen and heard these men saying to me that they are teaching people that have not reach their standards in the area of golf, but they have no opportunity to make money. If you are talking about understanding the innovation and the creativity of our own people, let the State now be the facilitator, create the opportunities so that they etch their name in history. That is what I am saying to you, etch your name in history by doing something complete different from what some of the people who went there with fixed views in their head of what this institution called community development, sports, because they have fragmented a lot of these things with Senior Games, Junior Games and who are up to age 35 and all of that. Come fresh. Open up opportunities for our people. In 1958 and those years so, we produced the first great black West Indian Cricketer. If you go to Jamaica, if you go to the University of the West Indies (U.W.I.) you will be able to see a bust up there of Sir Frank Worrell. People heard about George Headley, black men that in a part of the 1950s could not take up a bat or a ball and the society accepted it, but since then we saw Garfield "Gary" Sobers now the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers not only in Barbados, we saw Brian Lara, we have seen all kinds of the great batsmen and bowlers across the entire Caribbean and even in the African continent. England was considered then as the king of the sporting activity called cricket. Even young cricketers need to be inspired to be able to be enriched with a philosophy and an understanding of our history about how we have evolved in sporting activities.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard all kinds of things being said about things that we boast about every day. Give people the opportunity. Sir, I just wanted to throw out that in a genuine way, but I also wanted to say, do not be restricted by something called a community centre. It is more than a community centre. These community centres are how hijacked by churches on Sundays. In reality, I do not know if they pay rent to the State or not, but most of the time when the young people that you are condemning as being delinquent will love to have an opportunity to utilise the facilities, whether you call it a resource centre or a community centre. There are people long before the COVID-19 pandemic occupying a big building, hundreds of square feet big and have one body in the church beside the man who call himself a priest and he would be hollering hard. The one in The Ivy, the man hollers hard, sometimes you can hear him all down by Kensington Oval and young men all around the centre want access to come in and play tennis, dominoes, all kinds of indoor activities in the centres. On evenings, the public servant going home at 5 o'clock when the young men and women now coming home at 5 o'clock. All the community/resource centre is to the people of the community is a monument. If you go to any of those community centres across Barbados between 8 o'clock and 4'clock during the day, you cannot see five people inside there unless the National Training Board

(N.T.B.) is holding a programme, and that is very seldom, or some other private person holding something in the centres. The State has to recognise the realities that we are facing. We will have to make some kind of arrangements that some officer must be present in the community centres when the young men and women who are working or who are at school come home and would like to use the centres for wholesome activity. If you do not have those, the church in there talking to one person and 150 persons below cannot use the facility that helps to impart the required values to make them the kind of civil persons that we all want them to be. This is madness. We have to find a way of dealing with these things. There needs to be some fundamental changes. I know Minister that you would love to do these things because privately we have those kinds of discussions but I am not sure if everybody else would embrace them because they might even believe that my expressions on these things are even the reflection of a madman too, but that is what we are dealing with, so you have to have the collective support.

Sir, it is most unfortunate that you as the Speaker cannot speak. Sir, you have facilities just above Her Majesty's "Glendairy" Prison. That is a prison now that they are going to give to the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., so these people have a strange understanding of how a developer must go. I would like to read what is the mission of the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. in relation to dealing with this prison. The only thing they could tell me is that they are going to put it in a museum. Mr. Speaker, we would be grateful for that facility if there is a community-oriented approach to making use of that morbid place called Her Majesty's "Glendairy" Prison. It destroyed the lives of so many and almost exclusively so many people that look like us. These people cannot not even get an ordinary job as a gardener after leaving those places because somebody says they want a Police Certificate of Character for a man to cut grass. Officers in Government as well are telling them they cannot get this job working within Government because they got locs. I am telling you that is so. This is not creative imagination, this is experiences. You send a man for a job but he cannot get the job because somebody believes that because the man got locs he is only capable of pulling weed and cutting grass. In some cases, Ministers are telling them they will give them a job but they got to go and get a hoe. Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the youth. You are telling a youth to go and get a hoe and a cutlass and shades and walk down the road for a job, but if he comes down the road and he gets angry and chopped off a man's hand, you do not know what role you played in encouraging foolishness in the society. Mr. Speaker, we have to sit and think about these things. Opportunities must be provided for the youth in Barbados so that when I come to a community centre on evenings and I have an interest not in table tennis or dominoes... There is a whole cadre of persons who would love to see the centres well equipped so that you could have theatrical

activities within the centres. I am sure the Minister of Culture would be very supportive of this. If we at least have four or five major centres across Barbados, well-equipped with lights for lighting purposes, for cultural activities, proper sound systems and people being trained in videography assigned to these strategic locations across Barbados, for a start people who could write not just to produce novels but plays, scripts and movies... It has nothing to do with the size of the country. I am hearing the argument about the credibility of the country on the basis of its size, yes, but it also relates to the creativity of lots of young people as well. They can become filmmakers and the State could facilitate that, that is not too costly. Private people, if they got a genuine interest in being philanthropic, could also help to inject money in that. We are building an entire community so help us, if you want to be so nice, to put some money in the hands of the ministry.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the ministry has the legal capacity to be able to accept major grants. The State does not always have to give grants to unworthy people. There are lots of unworthy people who end up getting grants from the State but the State can also receive funding to help especially at a time like this because if we are trying to take our people out of poverty and allow people to give an explosion of freedom to the creative talent of the youth across Barbados. Rather than corporate Barbados just milking the State all of the time opportunities must be given for them to demonstrate and get the goodwill sanctioned by the people of Barbados for contributing.

We got big problems. We got young people now whose houses do not have in electricity and during these difficult times the Minister of Education got to be out there asking for help with a, iPad or with a laptop. Mr. Speaker, you want to tell me that the private sector that claims that they are so genuine and really want to help the society develop cannot make meaningful contributions and help us in the circumstance. You buy laptops and give to people but when they get home there is nothing to plug it into. These are the harsh realities in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we have talented people. They can play golf and they can make movies. Jamaicans are making movies and, Ghana is making movies but it has nothing to do with minerals or the size of anybody head. The State got to have a policy in place. You do not work off impulses, you have to have a policy in place for guidance, and I am going to touch on these too. These things are just jumping out.

The Minister just introduced this Resolution about land but up to now we have not have any clear policy guidelines coming from the Ministry as to how they are going to allocate land, why they select land in a specific area or what portion of the land is going to be allocated to the people directly in the community. Once I used to hear

philosophical concepts that the society is densely populated.

Sir, I do not want to make the point over and over again but you and I got sandwiched in recent times with people who want land but what input does a Speaker or a Backbencher have in identifying the land for the constituents that he represents. We all have to come here and hear the Minister say I am buying piece of land in such and such a place. They do not even have the common courtesy of carrying the representative into the area and saying tell me is there any available land up here, can we make any approach. We do not have that option. Mr. Speaker, when the houses are allocated to be constructed on the specific land the Minister could build two million houses and give the parliamentary representative two. I had that experience in here already. I built a whole set of houses, they were about eight or something, and the original Minister belonging to the same Government told me look based on the social problems that I have in my community, I am going to give you these houses. Then, the other Minister came and told me she is selling all. I said let us carry the Minister and show the Minister the land to help people in my community that do not have anywhere to live, sleeping in cars. That is where we are, so who is blind to all of these things I am sorry. I do not mind anybody talking about having facilities in anyplace, because I agree that sporting facilities are necessary and I agree that housing is necessary. You cannot house sporting facilities if you do not have land, so I can understand that, but I do not understand how a policy can be structured from within and sometimes the Parliamentary Representatives come in here and have to ask questions in terms of what is the policy. You probably have to use too many words to ask what the policy is. I am not supportive of any Minister or any Government who builds anything in my community after I got the word as Parliamentary Representative and the tick or the 'x' from the people in my community, and then I standing like a buffoon and cannot represent the interest of the community and then I going out there talking making people believe that I am a big boy in the House of Assembly. I am not in that game.

I am asking for an opportunity or a new approach to governance that we must be included. You do not get 3,000 and 4,000 votes in a constituency and then because someone with the ascendancy of power and centralisation push everybody else on the periphery. Hence, the legislation and change must respond to the reality that Parliamentarians, based on what they are saying here, or what some cowards do not want to say here or anywhere, but suffer stress and heart problems, I saying it, because I know when you say things that are true and you wrestle with the values, and I heard someone talking about attitudes, but you are rushing with the values of people where they will feel you are a good Parliamentarian and I will really love to have you in here, and when you get in

here no one wants to see you. When you express yourself and you tell the truth, people want to get you out of here quick. Sir I am still trying to stick to the relevant, but they have business people across Barbados who rather demonstrate to the Barbadian people after raping the State and accumulating wealth, they want to go behind the scene and dictate the pace. They want to pull strings, call shots and make Parliamentarians look like nincompoops. Sir, sorry about that one. My apology, I do not know if it is in any of the dictionaries. Sir this is what we are dealing with. We can carry this country forward if people begin to respect honesty. I might write things on a piece of paper, but I do not want to look at it, I just do that because I am trying to shape some of the facts that I want to highlight and create some framework for what it is I want to say. I personally believe that the Ministry of Housing that introduced this Bill must learn to appreciate other people's opinions. They must also recognise that there are doing something within a constituency and that the Parliamentary Representative of the constituency ought to have more say than the Minister who is responsible for it. You know no one do not see a blueprint of what it is that the Minister have plan. If I ask some people to come and show me where the land space is, even the Parliamentary Representative for the area do not know, he have to ask the Minister after this Resolution has passed. Come and show me which part this piece of land is, let me see what size centre that you plan to build in my constituency. These are realities. I am not in an Opposition, now you have an Opposition to respond to, because the Opposition is my friend and formerly the friend of the institution as Government. Therefore, I do not know. I just got an imaginary person that I hope will be able to appreciate my views on this important Resolution to the people of St. George. I strongly believe that the Minister who represents sports will do his best and will take suggestions from whosoever that are positive suggestions. He was not around in the 1950s to create an opening for Frank Worrell. People like C. L. R. James and those people were talking at that time. It brought great pride to black people including C. L. R. James and Sir Eric Williams, who in one of his political presentations said clearly, the victory of Frank Worrell is a victory for the PMN. You do not divorce sports from politics. You do not divorce a writer from politics or a government. Some people will say you should not call politics in here, you also have all kinds of strange people in politics.

However, you have to be able to appreciate vision. As a Minister of Parliament in these times, you have to be able to understand when somebody tells you, Sir, you cannot build a house with a flat roof and put in two six penny nails and believe that when the wind blow that it is still going to be on. As long as the person can substantiate what they are saying, it is worthy of listening to, and if you are the Minister for Housing, it is worthy of you listening to, and if you are the Minister of Sports you have to be able

to understand what is happening at the community centres. I have one of the biggest pastures in the whole island, which is Blenheim Playing Field, the people named it after the estate of Sir Winston Churchill. These people are strange people. I would like to get that name from in my community. It is just like how people gets out here and say they are the Rhode scholar, what Rhode scholar. A racist, a white supremacist and black people shout at you because you are a Rhode scholar. If you go to that university, you are a more educated person than if you went to a university in Puerto Rico, because you do not understand the history of Puerto Rico.

There is mindset that we have to deal with now because everything is changing around us. I am going to say this now without any way offending anyone. If there is one thing that the Ministry of Education did in the last regime, is when it introduced sixth forms. I was of the opinion that there should never be a sixth in a secondary school, and all sixth forms should go to the community college, because you were producing greater damage when you were reserving the sixth form for specific schools. I live to see in less than two years, a school that many people felt should not have a sixth form, got a sixth form, which is Springer Memorial School, and performed better than the traditional secondary schools because black people are very good at divisiveness. You hear it in here regularly.

Even people who got a school because of Drax who is the biggest criminal family that ever walked on this sovereignty. You have people who boast about that. Sir, we have to sit back. I am going to say this. When the last party, not that specific group, and I am not calling them bandits or nothing like that. In the 1960s and to your credit, people such as Wynter Crawford were talking about creative ideas. However, by 1961 with the fusion between the Congress Party and the Democratic Labour Party, you had the introduction of free secondary education, whether it was universal or not. However, I am talking about creative thoughts.

As simple as this might look, when we are speaking about land acquisition, it gives us an opportunity to help the Ministers. Let me make this point. There is a caveat I have to put in.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You know how it is.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: I am trying hard, Sir. I am coming down.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are trying hard to come down?

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: I am coming down just now.

Mr. SPEAKER: Okay.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: I just want the Ministers and Members of Parliament to learn and appreciate that if people do not express themselves freely on public issues, when you think you are going forward you end up going backward. You have to allow people to express themselves because we have a view. The view must be respected. We have to be able to etch our name as a Government in the contemporary political history of Barbados. When we look back at the 1960s we are going to talk about the NIS and its importance.

We will always talk about it. We will always wrestle with free secondary education. We will always have a debate on what is independence, just as we will have a debate on what is adult suffrage. Every Member of Parliament is a political student, no experts including me. We have only an opportunity on Tuesdays but I should say I only have that opportunity on Tuesdays. I believe that nobody does not want to give me the second opportunity or do I want it to express my views on public issues. You do not have to listen to me if you do not want to you can plug your ears.

If you listen, you do not have to understand. Everyone does not like comprehension. I do not want any praise. I accept any negative term because I still know who I am. I do not speak on any issue with any malice because what is the sense of having contempt in my heart for anyone in here or outside? However, I am speaking though. I really would love to see the changes. I believe that the Minister of Sports is one of the best we have had.

I know that he is malleable. I know he has good intention and I know if he is given the opportunity he will make the kind of fundamental changes that are so important that could give new breath, new life and rebirth to the youth of Barbados through sports and cultural activities within the Ministry. I just hope that he will expand it beyond 35 years old so that it can be inter-generational. Rather than holding senior sports as a peripheral activity by just trying to play with the seniors in Barbados to make them believe that they can walk and run fast, bring them into the mainstream of sports.

Bring them into the sports department. When we speak about sports, the disabled must be included. Senior citizens must be included. Nobody must be seen as outliving their usefulness. There is no monopoly on life. Nobody does not have any specific time to be worthy in life. You know when you are worthy when you listen to things he says and the way he behaves. Sir, I want to tell you how much I appreciate you for ensuring that you give me the adequate amount of time I deserve.

I came here just now, Sir, and heard the debate. I felt that I had a few things to say. I would hope that Barbados would allow us to produce an Arthur Ashe or some great boxers. The United States of America produce boxers every day coming out of prison. There is no stigma. People that we hail as the greatest boxer in the world come out of prisons. There is nothing unique about that. It is a policy and having the people with right minds believing that this is where we could go.

Sir, on another occasion I may beg you for extra time so that I could....

Mr. SPEAKER: You probably had extra time, Honourable Member.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you very much, Sir. I hope I have made some positive suggestions.

Hon. P. R. PHILIPS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to wrap up this debate. There is not much more to be said. We have had some very eloquent contributions from all Members. They were very thought provoking. We had suggestions we can work with and take onboard with relation to particular comments made by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition which I find to be very important and echoed by the other Members as well, in terms of character building and community cohesion which is very crucial in a day and age like this. We have heard some various requests being made and this Ministry will respond accordingly.

The Honourable Members for Christ Church South and St. Philip North, we are here to work and continue to work as a team. I am intrigued always to be honest by the contributions made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East. He has a passion for what he believes in. He makes some very good contributions. I want to thank him for his support. I want to thank all Members, as a matter of fact, for their support of this Resolution and participation.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. I. A. WEIR: I beg to second that.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Ms. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: I beg to second that.

The question that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW.....	1
Hon. C. E. Jordan, 1.	

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW.....	1
Hon. C. E. Jordan, 2.	

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 8 – RESOLUTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 – OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT CAP, 228 TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF THE PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE AT WORKMANS IN THE PARISH OF SAINT GEORGE – IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR PUBLIC USE.	2
--	---

Hon. P. R. Phillips, 2; Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, 6, 7;
Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, 6, 7, 8; Hon. D. G. Sutherland, 9,
13; Mr. R. A. Thorne, 14; His Hon. N. G. H. Rowe, 15,
16; Dr. S. E. Browne, 16; Mr. T. A. Prescod, 18, 21, 22;
Hon. P. R. Philips, 22; Hon. I. A. Weir, 22.

ADJOURNMENT.....	22
Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, 22; Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, 22.	

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

ATHERLEY, Bishop J. J. S.
BRADSHAW, Hon. Miss S. J. O.
BROWNE, Dr. S. E.
DUGUID, Dr. the Hon. W. F.
JORDAN, Hon. C. E.
PHILIPS, Hon. P. R.
PHILLIPS, Hon. P. R.
PRESCOD, Mr. T. A.
ROWE, His Hon. N. G. H.
SUTHERLAND, Hon. D. G.
THORNE, Mr. R. A.
WEIR, Hon. I. A.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Order No. 8, after Hon. P. R. Phillips's opening speech. The source records 'The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.' straight after the mover's opening speech and its seconding, although the debate then continues and the question is put again after the Minister's reply. Printed as in the source; the first sentence may be misplaced.

Q3. Order No. 8, speech labels. The Minister's reply is labelled 'Hon. P. R. PHILIPS' (elsewhere 'Hon. P. R. PHILLIPS'). The Deputy Speaker's speech is labelled 'His Honour Mr. N. G. H. ROWE' and then 'His Hon. N. G. H. ROWE'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 8, Bishop J. J. S. Atherley's speech. Bishop Atherley addresses the 'Honourable Member for St. Philip South, Minister of Agriculture'; the points of order in reply come from Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, whom the Speaker and other Members call the Member for Christ Church West. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at the Worthing Corporate Centre, Worthing, Christ Church at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 5th October, 2021, with Mr. Speaker, His Honour A. E. Holder, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Father Mark Harewood. On the motion of Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, seconded by Hon. C. E. Jordan, the Minutes of September 21 and September 28, 2021 were confirmed and Standing Orders were suspended for the day.

The only business was Order No. 8, a Resolution under Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228 to

approve the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of a parcel of land at Workmans, St. George for recreational facilities for public use. The Minister of Housing, Hon. P. R. Phillips, said the land was no more than half an acre near the Workmans Primary School, used by its students as a playground, and would allow the adjacent playground to be expanded and a Resource Centre to be created. He spoke of young people left idle by the pandemic and of the need for the Government to hold small parcels for agriculture and for rebuilding the homes of the less fortunate after emergencies. Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid seconded.

The Leader of the Opposition, Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, opened by asking why the Member for St. Lucy had been moved from the Ministry of Agriculture back to Housing, drawing points of order from Dr. Duguid; the Speaker asked him to keep to the debate and refrain from the language he was using. He then asked how the sites of recreational facilities were decided and what had become of the declared policy on such facilities, and spoke of resilience after electoral defeat.

The Minister responsible for sports and Member for the area, Hon. D. G. Sutherland, said the acquisition predated the Government and that a playing field needed at least 2.5 acres for cricket and 1.5 acres for football; he said there were over 37 community centres and that this was not enough, and spoke of children whose electricity was cut off. Mr. R. A. Thorne said he had come expecting another matter but spoke in support. The Deputy Speaker, His Honour N. G. H. Rowe, said idle people were more likely to become involved in crime. Dr. S. E. Browne asked for consideration for the young people of the eastern and rural parishes and proposed a large recreational facility with a pool. Mr. T. A. Prescod spoke of caddies and access to golf and of letting people express themselves freely on public issues.

Replying, Mr. Phillips thanked Members, including the Leader of the Opposition, for their suggestions and moved that the Resolution pass; seconded by Hon. I. A. Weir, it was agreed to without division.

On the motion of Hon. Ms. S. J. O. Bradshaw, seconded by Dr. Duguid, the House was adjourned until Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 10.00 a.m.