THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2022 – 2026

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 26, 2022

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House Assembly met in a meeting at the Parliament Buildings at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 26, 2022.

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)

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

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

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

Mr. E. G. HINKSON, LL.B. (Hons), L.E.C., LL.M.

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.B.A. (dist.) (Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance)

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons), L.E.C. (Deputy Prime Minister) (Senior Minister) (Minister of Transport, Works and Water Resources)

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

Hon. Ms. C. S. V. HUSBANDS, B.A. (Hons.), M.Sc. (Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Business Development)

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

Hon. A. R. FORFE, Rph. (Minister of Environment and National Beautification)

Hon. C. McD. GRIFFITH, B.Sc. (Minister of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment)

Mr. P. R. PHILLIPS. J.P. (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. G. P. I. GOODING-EDGHILL (Minister of Health and Wellness)

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

Hon. S. E. BROWNE, M.B.B.S (Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Wellness)

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.P.A. (Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs)

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

Ms. M. K.-A. CADDLE, B.A., M.Sc.

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

Hon. Miss K. S. MCCONNEY (Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training)

Dr. R. O. SPRINGER, J.P. Ph.D. (Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Transport, Works and Water Resources)

Hon. D. I. ISHMAEL, M.B.A., M.Sc. (Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology)

Mr. C. D. L. GIBBS

Mr. C. A. LAYNE, J.P. (Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry off People Empowerment and Elder Affairs).

Prayers were taken by Rev. Father Mark Harewood.
Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Wednesday, February 23, 2022; Monday, March 14, 2022; Friday, March 25, 2022 and Tuesday, March 29, 2022.

Hon. Ms. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes be confirmed subject to any omissions and/or corrections and/or observations.

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

ORDER NO. 5 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION – TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225 – THE VESTING – IN A COMMERCIAL SPECIAL SERVICE VEHICLE

IN WHICH THE GOVERNMNET OF BARBADOS WILL HOLD 25% OF THE SHARES AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT

CAVE HILL WILL HOLD THE REMAINING 75%- OF THE PARCEL

OF LAND THE PROPERTY OF THE STATE FORMERLY KNOWN AS

THE ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL SITUATE AT ASHTON HALL IN THE PARISH OF SAINT PETER IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF

A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES (UWI).

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

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Lower Chamber and those who are listening. Sir, I rise in this House to introduce this Resolution to Parliament. This Resolution is in accordance with Section 5 of the Crown Land (Vesting and Disposal) Act. This is a cognate debate, Mr. Speaker, where we will ask Parliament to rescind its permission granted back in the year 2012 to lease the former St. Joseph Hospital to a company called American World Clinics Barbados Limited. Sir, we will speak to this firstly and the second part of the Resolution is to vest the lands....

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you wish us to do Orders No.5 and No.6 as a cognate debate?

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The second part of the Resolution is to vest the lands at the St. Joseph Hospital, some 21.45 acres as articulated in the Resolution, as 8.69 hectares, in a commercial Special Purpose Vehicle or a joint venture between the Government of Barbados and the University of West indies (UWI) at Cave Hill. Mr. Speaker, I know that members of the public are probably asking what is this Special Purpose Vehicle. It is not a Skoda or Mercedes. It is a company. When you hear about a Special Purpose Vehicle; it is a company specifically created to manage the risk of both of the entities. When we create this entity as a Special Purpose Vehicle, we tend to ring-fence the other assets of the University and also Government.

The Special Purpose Vehicle will only treat to the financing of the St. Joseph Hospital and I will speak to that later. I want to begin this debate by focusing firstly on the St. Joseph Hospital and giving a bit of history about the hospital and lands. The lands of the St. Joseph Hospital were owned by the State; having been purchased back in 1988 from Mothers of Sorrows Convent of Milwaukee Inc. This occurred in September 1988. In 1989, Mr. Speaker, the St. Joseph Hospital Act Cap. 54B established the St. Joseph Hospital Board to administer and manage the hospital. We know that it is nothing new regarding the challenges that institution faced in 1991 and subsequently its closure in 1995.

Like I said, the hospital eventually closed in 1995 under a BLP Administration. Why was it closed? We know, Mr. Speaker, that the St. Joseph Hospital came under scrutiny by the public. The people of this country simply asked the Government of the day which was a former Administration, who we know mismanaged the affairs of this country in most areas. I make no apologies when I make that statement. The general public questioned how the St. Joseph Hospital was being run; how it was managed and what were the policy guidelines.

It came under scrutiny by the Public Accounts Committee. When we came to office in 1994, it was evident by the then Prime Minister that the St. Joseph Hospital in its current operation then, was a drain on taxpayers in this country and, of course, on Government funding and it was closed down. This sight situated at Ashton Hall, St. Peter; adjourns our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church and as I said, it contains 8.698 hectares of land, some 21.485 acres. The St. Joseph Hospital, prior to 1995, was at the time a political football and as I said, a drain on Government resources.

Mr. Speaker, I will repeat it and an enquiry of the Committee of Public Accounts was launched due to the

nature of the operations at that time but I go on to June 2011. We closed it in 2008 and the previous Administration came to Office again and they saw to re-open it and again, the same thing happened. In 2011, the then Cabinet of Barbados approved the text of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of Barbados and a company called American World Clinics (Barbados) Limited and I mentioned that in my preamble concerning the lease of the St. Joseph Hospital for the development and the operation of, what they called then, an international healthcare centre to be run by American World Clinics (Barbados) Limited. There were major turns set out in the lease agreement and the lease was to be for a period of 25 years -- but remember, none of this got off of the ground -- with an option to renew for a further 25 years and during that term, the rent to the American World Clinics (Barbados) Limited was supposed to be a $1 000 per annum for the first two years to be increased to $100 000 per annum for the next three years and thereafter, the rents would go at market rates. All of the structures of the newly erected and renovated structures would revert to the State after the lease agreement. In April 2012, Mr. Speaker, parliamentary action was done on the Resolution 12, 2012 to lease the property and those documents were prepared but nothing ever happened.

In 2013, Invest Barbados advised the Government then that the American World Clinics (Barbados) Limited expressed an interest in purchasing the property. Again, nothing ever got off the ground. As a consequence of the request from American World Clinics (Barbados) Limited to purchase rather than lease -- you know we have to value property -- the Barbados Revenue Authority (BRA) then valued the property; the Revenue Commissioner and that valuation in 23 January 2014, to be to be exact, stood at some $26 million but American World Clinics (Barbados) Limited offered pittance for what we had as a 21.485 acres. They did not match BRA valuation so the discussion then of a partnership arrangement with the sale, it failed to bear fruit.

Several things happened, the Government of the day then gave consideration to a long-term lease for a wellness centre; a long term lease for a medical tourism facility and again; a long term lease with options to purchase. This was a political football over the years by the former Administration and I give the sequence of events that occurred from back in 1988 when it was purchased to present but none of these negotiations came to a concluded agreement. While the Government of the day continued to accumulate huge arrears to the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus and we know, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of this Lower Chamber, thousands of Barbadians suffered under the last Administration.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of University of the West Indies (U.W.I.) graduates -- and we often use the term, Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and Honourable Member for Christ Church East -- the last Administration who sat here when we were over there kicked down the ladder they climbed up on to achieve some level of tertiary education in this country. We had, in St. George South, I often hear the Honourable Member for St. John as he speaks to me on how many persons from St. John were deprived of that opportunity to enter those lovely gates that most of us entered. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South, he speaks to me in those terms as well. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North, we know how the eastern zone is. We are very close. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West who has now taken on that mantle of leading the educational development of our people in this country; she speaks to me about it as well. All of my colleagues, the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown; the Honourable Member for St. Michael West; the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and the Honourable Member for St. George North who deals with people daily in her day-to-day running of the affairs of the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU). She had many calls and many sleepless nights addressing these challenges with our people. My good friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South as well and the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Mr. Speaker, we all endured those dark days where our people were challenged by the policies or the lack thereof, we can say, of good policies by the last Administration and this Resolution, particularly this Resolution, brought back the memories of many persons and we need not forget as we seek to build out and develop Barbados on all frontiers. We dare not forget as a people how Barbadians were deprived of educational opportunity at a tertiary level to better themselves. I was the first university graduate in my family of three boys. I had the opportunity to attend the University of the West Indies (U.W.I.), St. Augustine Campus and also Cave Hill Campus and I stand proud of the efforts by this Administration. We cannot say past Administrations back then because they forgot what was done in the 1960s and the 1970s by both Administrations, where our thrust was to empower people to make Barbados the best place to live, work, do business and raise a family and to do that, education was at the forefront of our development but the last Administration forgot about that.

Sir, they were busy meddling in the affairs of many things other than what we call developmental and people focus. I know my good friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South his slogan is "people above politics" and he could say "people before politics" too because politics is about people so, thank you, Honourable Member for Christ Church East. It is a lovely slogan because in all we do in these Honourable Chambers and in all we do on a daily

basis, the focus is on enfranchising and empowering people and that is why the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU); the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) and all of the unions, we respect them and we have embraced them into the Barbados Labour Party's vision and its mandate to build out a better Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, in 2018 when we assumed Office, we recognised that the Government had owed some over $220 million to the University of the West Indies and having done debt restructuring, we treated the University of the West Indies the same way that we treated all lenders; whereby they were all given a 37 per cent haircut. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we recognised that if we were to carry out our developmental mandate as articulated in our Manifesto, where we said that education was at the core of our development and that it was our commitment to reform Barbados' system of education and training, that we had to do something different with the University of the West Indies. It could not be the same-old, same-old funding every year to the tune of $100 million.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Members for St. Michael East and St. Philip West can recall, they understanding numbers probably better than I do; they were and are there dealing with the day-to-day basis running of that very important Ministry. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we recognised that with a $220 million debt by the last administration; its failure to pay tuition fees for working-class people and all Barbadians. Then this financial year 2022-2023, for example, we will provide some $99.2 million to the University of the West Indies, so the vesting of this 21.485 acres we said that we would give the University of the West Indies the opportunity to create a balance sheet profile. When we do that that several things would happen; the University of the West Indies can begin to go out to the world to look for financing for their own development.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, all West Indian governments -- a little humour is always good at time when you are engaging in serious debate because if we get too serious we then want to tell the public really in some terms that are not Parliamentary, what the last administration did to the University of the West Indies and to its students -- have embarked on policies to ensure that not only tertiary education but education at all levels remain the core of the country's development. Presently at the University of the West Indies, all lands are vested in the Government of Barbados and no rental is being charged by the Government. Sir, that is testimony to how we treat the University of the West Indies; how we treat education. Mr. Speaker, the last Government under this administration made commitment to vest the lands at the Lazaretto to the University of the West Indies. These are all state lands and was agreed to by the last Barbados Labour Party Government Administration but was never followed through by the last administration. We are here now in another term of Government, seeking to create a profile for the University of the West Indies as it relates to their balance sheet; where we will create this Special Purpose Vehicle where the Government will own 25 per cent shares of this company, with the Cave Hill Campus owning 75 per cent. This company as was mentioned earlier, seeks to minimize financial risks to the other assets but it will ensure that the University of the West Indies is given the opportunity to go to market; that they can float bonds; build their balance sheet so that someone would be willing to finance them; give them a level of independence as well and take that strain off Government's annual resources. Mr. Speaker, Sir, when they float a bond and at the end of it they are able to sell those bonds to be to some needed capital to invest, that speaks to development.

Mr. Speaker, vesting of lands to the University of the West Indies is nothing new. As was said, currently the lands at Cave Hill are leased to the University of the West Indies for a term ending 2066. We are now in the year 2022. I spoke about West Indian Governments across the Caribbean and can speak to three countries: Trinidad and Tobago has allocated lands to the University of the West Indies for the building of a hospital; Grenada has also donated significant land resources for the University of the West Indies and Antigua and Barbuda are in the process of also allocating significant lands to the University of the West Indies. This is a regional wide approach to putting the University of the West Indies on a self-sustaining financial model to secure the social and economic future of our region for years to come. Sir, I would want to applaud the Honourable Prime Minister for having the foresight to come up with this financial model where we can seek to give the University an independent profile; rather than they continuously relying upon Government's annual resources.

I am not saying that we will resource the University of the West Indies; the first thing we did upon coming to office in 2018 was that we settled the debt of $220 million from the past Government, despite the 37 per cent haircut across the board. Mr. Speaker, this land is not about settling any debt with the University of the West Indies (because you can see the approach across the Caribbean). I am sure that the former Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training, present Minister, along with my colleagues are all anxious to speak on these Resolutions but I want to say that it gladdens my heart to see the Government and the UWI, combining to widen the frontiers of teaching and research in Barbados in such a manner.

Sir, I am not here to tell the University what to do with this land but I know there were talks before on medical research back in 2020. I know that this land will be used for developmental purposes. According to the University of the West Indies, they have several options

and I can read from that newspaper article of 14 March, 2020, printed by Barbados Today, "The new university vision".

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, is that article authenticated?

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Yes, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it is coming from a newspaper, it is an article. It is not authentic at all.

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, therefore, if it is not authentic, then it cannot be made a document of this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you can refer to it but you cannot make it a document of this Honourable House since there is no authenticity to it.

Hon. D. G. SUTHERLAND: Noted, Mr. Speaker, Sir, but I will still reference it, only to show the public and the Lower House the work that the University of the West Indies is doing. They spoke about not only financing healthcare but they spoke about after-school care for children, for the many employees and students with a student body of 6 160 and a staff complement of 953. It says Cave Hill was overdue for a daycare or evening care centre and that was quoted by Professor the Most Honourable Eudine Barriteau. The facility, she said, would service the Campus and neighbouring communities for daycare and provide after-school care for children of many students. This could also serve as a built-in lab for students studying early childhood education, she said. Now this is developmental.

We are taking an asset that was mismanaged and then left sitting idly by the last Administration and I do not think any person in their right senses would have objections to us vesting into the University of the West Indies 21.485 acres of land -- 8.698 hectares -- of the St. Joseph Hospital that was mismanaged by the last Administration, when the former principal, Professor the Most Honourable Eudine Barriteau, spoke glowingly about development coming at the University of the West Indies. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central also spoke about climate change and addressing that in a meaningful way. Should we not partner with an institution like that, for the betterment of our country and our people?

Mr. Speaker, the land to be vested was toured by both this Government and the University of the West Indies before any talks came about regarding a Special Purpose Vehicle. Very often we speak about things but this Government, we do not make pronouncements that will not come to fruition like the last Administration. In speaking to the former and present principals, they are happy that we are vesting this land in the University of the West Indies. I want to say before I take my seat that this type of planned partnership that we have entered into with the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, is completely in sync with our proposals and our desire to see derelict and disused properties in Barbados refurbished to the mutual benefit of the owners, Government and the country at large.

Mr. Speaker, Members of this Chamber and the public, it is counterproductive and disheartening to see so many assets going to waste in this country or sitting idly by. I say so knowing full well that the Government has been guilty -- not this Government -- over the years of allowing many of its properties to remain idle for far too long. We have started that journey of addressing derelict and vacant lots in this country. We can speak to the St. Joseph Hospital as a derelict Government property that we are putting to good use and, as you know, when we came to office, we recognised several Government buildings that were in a state of disrepair; that were not being used. We have started a programme to refurbish and rejuvenate a number of them; state properties, beginning with those in and around Bridgetown. The Honourable Member for The City should be very happy. There are properties such as the old Supreme Court and Town Hall that are being renovated right now. Then we went to the Barbados Water Authority's gatehouse; then we went to the Welfare Department's building on Country Road and soon we will go to the old Town and Country Planning building, Block C, at the Garrison, among others.

Mr. Speaker, we have come to this House and Members of this Chamber many times before, during the last three-plus years, for permission to enter into long-term developmental leases of Government properties with persons who have agreed to restore and maintain them at a rental rate affordable to them. Our policy is that in this country of our tiny physical size, we cannot afford the luxury of lands remaining idle for long; lands and derelict properties. It is why we refer to joint hands; we prefer to join hands with interested partners and utilise our lands in ways that promote development across the landscape, Mr. Speaker. Restoration of derelict residential properties is also a key aim of this Administration. The Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance has already drafted a Cabinet Paper. I have not yet taken it to Cabinet but the goal is to create a win-win partnership with citizens in this country in an environment where resources, including land and finances, are scarce.

Sir, when we see idle land that can be leased by the State to assist young entrepreneurs, this is something we would want to get into. When we see idle lands and derelict properties where we have sites and services already

installed. When we say "sites and services", we are speaking about roads and access to water and electricity. When we see those sites and services not only for the young entrepreneurs but we have told this country not only in this term -- five years -- that we will build 10 000-plus houses. If we have some 35 000 derelict and vacant lots in this country, this task of building 10 000 houses -- I agree with the Prime Minister -- is a task that we can achieve. I want you to know that as we go on this journey which we call the silent revolution within the Ministry and we stumble upon Government buildings; we have created an audit of all Government buildings and derelict properties across the country and we can put these to good use.

We have been meeting with investors, persons we believe can come up with the capital without creating an SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle). By the way, we only do that so that the University which does not have any major assets or lands would become well-endowed with lands and its balance sheet would look good and it can go on to procure financing and have a level of independence. When we come across these properties and derelict buildings, we engage investors in a way to help develop Barbados and to build something on these properties. If it is not a house for persons to own a home in this country or if it is not a property where we can empower and enfranchise small businesses and entrepreneurship, then we can engage in a rejuvenation project to reduce our rental bill as a Government. Clean and green, beautifying.

Asides.

Hon. D.G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you, Member for Christ Church West Central. We know this Honourable Member is on a mission. Just like we are on a silent revolution, his is not so silent. He has been out there on the highways and the byways beautifying Barbados; bringing back some respectability to the environment; that is what he is doing. I do not want to get into the environment but when we came to office, if there is one thing that every single person in this country said was Barbados looks atrocious, it is dirty and it needs cleaning. I want to thank the Member for St. Michael East who sits directly opposite me now, eyeballing me. He did good work in that Ministry of Environment and my good friend from Christ Church West Central has taken that baton and he is running with it. This is all part of the developmental trust in this country to keep Barbados clean, not only clean but to improve our infrastructure but not just only improve our infrastructure but to put it to good use, so that our citizens will be proud and take care of buildings we put in their hands and properties we put in their hands, to be of good use for our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I wish to state categorically that I as Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance, I support the vesting of the St. Joseph Hospital in the proposed commercial special vehicles for the redevelopment of the site by the Government of Barbados and the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill. I know that the University of the West Indies, they have always been on a developmental thrust and pushing new frontiers as I read earlier in an article from the then Professor the Most Honorable Eudine Barriteau and she has passed on the baton to Professor Clive Landis as well with whom I have good communication with very often; whether it was in sports; whether it was in education; whether it is in infrastructure and he understands and he has supported this vesting of 21.485 acres of land in the University of the West Indies. We will be back here soon as instructed by our leader the Prime Minister of this country, to vest the lands of the Lazaretto in the University of the West Indies as well, so they can create a lovely balance sheet and they can go to the market to secure financing and stop the drain on the public resources. Not that we have a difficulty giving the University of the West Indies funding because we cleared the funding of $220 million when we came to office in 2018. There is nothing better than self-help if you can help yourself and that 25 per cent share ownership by the government, is to ensure that the policies as articulated by us in the educational trust are at the forefront and that we have an interest, an ownership interest in this SPV that will be created by the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when the wider University bounces back to financial health and vitality and cements its place among the top echelons of the wider centers of educational excellence in the world. We were once there and we will get back there despite the 10 years of a lost decade we call it, by the challenges of the last administration that took them from the pinnacle and place them not at the bottom but declining status in the world as one of the top universities or what I call educational excellent institutions, known worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I again speak to the rescission of the permission granted in 2012 to lease the former St. Joseph Hospital to the American World Clinic of Barbados which did not get off the ground; that is here with you to rescind that decision and secondly, to vest the St. Joseph Hospital in a commercial Special Purpose Vehicle or joint venture between the Government of Barbados and the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus of land 21.485 acres with Government of Barbados having 25 per cent share ownership and the University of the West Indies 75 per cent share ownership. With those words, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged. I beg to move that this resolution do now pass. Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. I rise to support the resolution before this Honourable Chamber to vest the property at the St. Joseph

Hospital in the Commercial Special Purpose Vehicle as very clearly enunciated just now by the Honourable Member for St. George South. Mr. Speaker, I rise for two reasons. One has to do with my connection with education and that is more of a familial connection with education but also as the Member of Parliament for the constituency of St. Peter. You see Mr. Speaker; the St. Joseph Hospital evokes emotional response to quite a number of persons of the north including persons from the constituency that I have the honour to represent. As recently as about a month ago, I was with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and we were celebrating the recommissioning of the jetty at Speightstown; the jetty that is now in full operation for the use of the people of Speightstown, as well as for those who will want to visit Speightstown and I am very clear about the order in which I speak. The jetty is for the benefit of the people of Speightstown, as well as for the benefit of those who will visit Speightstown.

One of the persons who worked hard on the refurbishment of that jetty, in the conversations afterward recounted the fond memories of growing up and hearing that they were born; that gentleman's mother gave birth to him at the St. Joseph Hospital and that is a story Mr. Speaker, that you hear across the constituency. Not just as you may be tempted to think from persons of means but from persons across the constituency; from persons across the north. Any mention of the St. Joseph Hospital evokes that kind of a response; an emotional response and so any action to see positive development at that location, is action that is welcomed by the people of the north and particularly by the people I have the absolute honour to represent in this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, education and supporting education are something that we in St. Peter hold very dearly to because most of us, almost all of us are where we are because of education. We are very proud of the institutions we have within the parish. We have the Elliot Belgrave Primary which is in the process of being refurbished; we have the Coleridge and Parry School which is also being refurbished; we have the Alexandra School; we have the Roland Edwards Primary. We have the All Saints Primary and St. Luke's Academy.

Mr. Speaker, we have around us a plethora of educational institutions. We have day nurseries. The people of St. Peter value education. We value also relationships with educational institutions and at this point it is not yet in operation but I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, as well as the Prime Minister and the Government generally, for the work in bringing back that important institution in Speightstown; the Alma Parris School. We expect as education is reformed in this country; it will cater to persons who too often are left on the periphery of national development.

This Government recognises that everyone, particularly all of our young people, have a role to play in national development. All of our young people have the potential to contribute. All of our young people have to be given the tools appropriate to their individuality that will allow them to make meaningful contributions to this society but also that will allow them to feel that they are meaningful contributors. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that makes a person disconnected as much as feeling that you are not wanted; not a part of or integral to what is taking place around you. Those persons become disconnected and then we want to build institutions to restrict what we refer to as anti-social activity which in many cases is activity that is engendered by our lack of respect of their individuality and need to be approached and equipped in a manner that is suitable to them. Not in a manner that has been prescribed by the person who made the cookie-cutter.

Mr. Speaker, education is important. Healthcare is important. As the Honourable Member for St. George South indicated; we are not at this point fully aware of the direction in which this Special Purpose Vehicle will take the use of the property. I want to say at this point, beyond where we go in terms of use of the property, the fact that we are partnering with our University in the West Indies and the Cave Hill campus in particular is of tremendous significance to me. Our educational institutions need our support and as a Government and as a party in Government, we have also been of the view that we come together as a country, to facilitate the education of our young people. In other words, we do not leave it up to parents to decide, "I can only afford Fifth Standard. I can only afford CAPE. I can only afford university undergraduate."

Our approach to equipping our young people is that as a society, we come together, pool our resources and

allow our young people to benefit from the pooling of the resources. Education is not free. We understand that and those who would want to may be "poo-poo" our approach, ought to understand that this party in Government does not come to policymaking in an immature way. We know that education costs but our position is that we pool our resources.

We treat to education as our foreparents treated when they put together the "susus" and the meeting turns. We pool our resources and send our children to school. As a country and society, we pay for the education of our young people. When Government then takes a decision that it will partner with our university, I think we ought to understand this particular vesting. This vesting is not one of simply handing over the property to the UWI. The structure of this vehicle gives the distinct impression of partnership. It understands that the UWI will drive the

partnership. They are the educational institution. They are the ones providing the education for young people.

They are the ones who envision how to earn revenue and strengthen balance sheets, as the Honourable Member for St. George South indicated and leverage assets so that the institution can be more effective in delivering on its mandate. Its mandate being to educate the young people of our region and this country. This vehicle speaks and exudes partnership at 75 percent with the UWI and 25 percent with Government; so that through this Resolution and Commercial Special Purpose Vehicle, we say not just the University and to ourselves as a Government but we say to the public, that the delivery of education in this country is a matter of team effort.

Sir, it is a matter of all of us coming together; pooling our resources and delivering on raising the level of competency, ability and skill levels of all of our people. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for workers and workers' welfare in this country, I am happy for any and every legitimate opportunity to better equip the people of this country. We have said over many decades that our people are our resource but we do not often act as though we are serious about the fact that our people have been and will continue to be our greatest resource. Just as the University will leverage its participation in this Commercial Special Purpose Vehicle, our country has been leveraging the ability, skills, aptitude and attitudes of our people for decades.

This is how we are able to stand head and shoulders above countries and states that are much larger than ourselves because we have understood what it is to leverage the ability, education and capacity of our people. This Resolution speaks to the University leveraging but also to the country continuing that process of equipping our people and then leveraging that improved human being so that as a country, we are able to rise even higher as we pursue our developmental path.

Mr. Speaker, the reinvigoration, refurbishment and whatever reinvestment takes place at the St. Joseph Hospital site will also be important to the people of St. Peter and the North because it will bring additional activity to the area. Additional activity and additional persons moving around mean additional economic opportunities for persons who will be earning their living by economic activity in the north, in St. Peter and in the nearby Town called Speightstown and I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that for whatever takes place at the St. Joseph Hospital site, Speightstown, we expect, will be that commercial hub which will act as the service point for that development. It will assist as we continue to bring more and more life and economic activity into Speightstown.

Any kind of development that takes place around the Town, in the environs of the Town, will be of benefit to the Town. We see the person in Speightstown who we refer to as the Major of the Town asked me twice in the last two weeks which is really the capital of Barbados because he says at night he drives through Bridgetown; sees a couple of cats; a dog and maybe a few people walking towards the bus stand but by the time he gets to Speightstown, there is all kinds of life; all kinds of activity; all kinds of music; all kinds of entertainment going on in Speightstown.

Sir, that is not exactly an advertisement but I am just letting you know, Mr. Speaker because I know you spend a lot of your time in the southern parts and you may not be fully familiar with the fact that Speightstown is really where it is happening and to invite you to spend some time in Speightstown. We have been in preparing for the development that we expect to take place around Speightstown, in the north generally; have been working assiduously to make sure that Speightstown is a location that will provide, not just commercial services but entertainment services. That will provide the heritage assets that will allow any activity in the north of the country, to have a meaningful anchor in that location.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier that we have just recommissioned the Speightstown Jetty. We are also close to completing the drainage in the Speightstown area. We would remember that whenever rain fell too long or too hard, those of us in St. Peter would start to get a little bit nervous because it was almost considered inevitable that Speightstown would flood. I am happy that through the efforts of Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. (B.T.I.) and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central who lead in the effort, that we are close to completing the drainage in the Speightstown area. Some work is now being done in the feeder so just south of The Whim Gully the water course that connects the The Whim Gully to the Salt Pond is now being packed with boulders because we are preparing and we are continuing to prepare Speightstown for whatever development takes place at the St. Joseph Hospital site and whatever development takes place in the north, generally.

We have also, in addition to the physical infrastructure, we have done some tidying up at the bus terminal in terms of how the public service vehicles operate. They are now operating from the Speightstown Bus Terminal that was designed to accommodate them from the beginning and they are now operating from there. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South has indicated to me that some work will be done to address the condition of the market at the traffic lights so that is work that is to be done as well. Outside of hard infrastructure; we have started the process, Mr. Speaker, of twinning Speightstown with Cape Coast in Ghana and with Bristol in the United Kingdom (UK).

Sir, we already have a twinning arrangement with Charleston in South Carolina. Charleston is the City in The Carolinas generally but Charleston and The Carolinas were developed and colonised, not by us but by those who were in charge at the time but out of Speightstown. We already have a twinning agreement with them and we are working towards establishing a sister city relationship. We have reached out to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already reached out to its counterparts in Ghana and in the United Kingdom (UK) and we have been sharing the information and we expect those twinning arrangements to become a reality very soon.

Mr. Speaker, those twinning relationships, Mr. Speaker, help us to recognise our historical development; help us to understand where we have come from; those things that have impacted the development so that when we visit Speightstown, we need to have an idea of how did it come to be. I must also indicate to this Honourable Chamber that we have just a week and a half ago or so launched the Speightstown Global Freedom Festival in honour of the hero Cuffee who struck that first blow that resulted in us being able, as the descendants of African traded across the Atlantic, to be standing and sitting in this Honourable Chamber. That first blow was struck by Cuffee and we have started the Speightstown Global Freedom Festival because we believe that just as Speightstown exported colonialism; just as Speightstown exported racism to southern United States of America (USA), we have a responsibility to export now, freedom and thoughts of freedom and self-determination to the world and that we intend, Mr. Speaker, to do.

(A rousing round of applause)

Hon. C. E. JORDAN: You may be aware, since it is a part of the Season of Emancipation Calendar, that on 12 June, that day when Cuffee was to be enstooled in a grand Akan ceremony in Speightstown as King of Barbados, we will be celebrating that day. We are beginning this year. It is in the National Season of Emancipation Calendar. it shall continue until and we will be celebrating his contribution to democracy; his contribution to self-determination; that contribution that allows people of African descent to realise that we can be masters of our fate. We can determine our destiny.

Mr. Speaker, I did not really stand to speak a lot about Speightstown, except that Speightstown will be that hub to service whatever development takes place at the St. Joseph Hospital site. We are committed to the partnership with our educational institutions and we will continue to support that partnership.

Before I take my seat, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say one thing. The history of this country is a tortured history and I spoke to the fact that our foreparents did a lot of hard work unpaid against their will. There is a mill wall on the St. Joseph Hospital property and -- I am saying this publicly because some of these things need to be said publicly -- we in St. Peter expect that that mill wall will remain in its location and will be preserved as a monument. It is one of the 22 mill walls in St. Peter that are standing -- I believe we may be the parish with the most mill walls that are standing -- and we expect that when the story of sugar and rum is written; when the application is made to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for a world heritage site status; that St. Peter will feature prominently and that the St. Joseph Hospital site will be one of those monuments to the hard work; the forced labour of our foreparents. We expect that that mill-wall will be preserved.

There are a number of mill-walls in St. Peter, about 22, and I will say that about out of the 22 maybe only about three or four of them could be considered derelict, even though they are all still standing but I believe that we have to build a consciousness around those mill-walls. They were erected to enlarge the coffers of the white planter-class. They also served (and this happened in the St. Peter context) to enlarge the coffers of the white merchant-class. Mr. Speaker, I believe that even as we reclaim our Atlantic destiny, that we have to repurpose these instruments of torture, really or instruments of tortured existence, to remind us and to remind those who come after us, that our foreparents are really the ones who have built this country. That our foreparents are really the ones who built Europe and the colonial powers of Europe, through the labour that they put in at the sites of these mill-walls. We expect that the mill-wall at the St. Joseph Hospital site will be preserved and will be used as a monument, to the contribution of the African and African descend people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, St. Peter and the people whom I am here to represent do support the partnership with the University of the West Indies. We look forward to what will be done at that site. We expect that it will enhance education, either directly on the site or by its contribution to the overall performance and delivery of education of the University of the West Indies generally. We support the partnership and so Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation in supporting this Resolution before this Honourable Chamber. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James Central, you have the Floor.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating the Honourable Member for St. Philip South who piloted this particular Resolution and did so quite eruditely. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think this debate provides us with an opportunity to reflect on a few

fundamentals which are at their core developmental and if we take our position in this Honourable Chamber seriously. We have to reflect not only on the misfortunes that befell this country as a result of the past activities of those who have held office. We must also lift the gaze of the nation into the future and to create a perspective for our people, as to some of the benefits that can be derived from an undertaking such as that which is now contemplated by this particular Resolution.

Sir, I want to say that obviously it was and is necessary for us never to lose sight of the fact that the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother had a functioning hospital in Barbados that did wonderful good work, primarily for the people of the north but quite frankly for people all across this country. I did not grow up in the parish of St. Peter nor indeed in the parish of St. James but I do recall well on a night on 1 November, (I will not date the age of my younger brother) but when he was rushed to the St. Joseph Hospital because he had had a severe accident at home and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was unable to treat to him immediately. It was felt by the doctors who looked after him that that intervention medically, may have saved his life.

Mr. Speaker, I think obviously this country, after the hospital was closed, felt a certain sense of loss and it was important for us to recognise that even as we continue to evolve the improvement of medical care in Barbados. The question of the geographical access to quality care; equality of access across this nation, irrespective of where you come from, the ease and equality of access will continue and must in my view, continue to be on the front burner of national discussion and development. Obviously Mr. Speaker, especially for an Administration like this which has set its face like flint, against the tyranny, cruelty and abuse of the public purse, by way of corrupt practice and maladministration, then Mr. Speaker, Sir, again the fact and the story of the St. Joseph Hospital is going to be constantly be in our minds.

Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is not about that tortured experience. As I stand here, I reflect on those Public Accounts Committee meetings (that hearing). I reflect on the agony of the people at the time. I reflect on the shock that persons held in high esteem were, shall we say (for want of a better way of putting it) exposed to be participating in ways and in manner that dragged them, their reputation and their public image into the mud. Sir, it is again correct to say and I must say that the Honourable Member who piloted this Bill did justice in making the point that a country cannot lose sight of that aspect of its past. There are some who to this day, even though that conduct was replicated by a subsequent Administration under the same party banner, who sat in their midst who will not raise a voice of apology and will say to this country, that an apology means nothing.

We are dealing and treating to an issue which is on the one hand developmental but on the other hand it is also an issue about which this country still has opened wounds. It is connected to a form of activity about which this country still has opened wounds. Perhaps though it is more useful to reflect on the way forward. As I think about the way forward, Sir, I am pleased that at the core of this particular Resolution, is an opportunity for Barbados to be at the centerpiece of a developmental effort with an institution which is absolutely critical to this nation's growth. The University of the West Indies will now at its disposal by way of the vesting of land, an asset that can be monetized. The University of the West Indies is now in a position where it can enhance its independence to a certain extent, in order to leverage that asset; in order to make sure that that land can be used as collateral and as part of a journey which allows them to finance their way; their independent growth; their independent development; without constant reference to the public purse.

Again, that is also part of this country's tortured past because your constituents, much like mine, are anxious to know that there will be some way; some place found in the annual budget of the Government; in the annual Estimates of Expenditure and Revenue more money for better roads; more money for care of the elderly; more money for us to better look after our little children. The fact of the matter is that the University of the West Indies and properly so, makes a call on the public purse well in excess of $100 million every year in order to operate its finances and properly so.

Mr. Speaker, this Administration, again properly so, stood in the breach when others were prepared to turn away from the University. We understood that that could not happen and it is to the undying credit of she who leads this Government, that she stood in the breach and said that it could not be that a mother or father must choose between two or three children, which one of them gets the benefit of higher education and which one of them does not.

That, Sir, is part of the journey that we have had to take in order to right-size the ship and correct some of the things that went horribly wrong in the past. As we look to the future, Sir, we are also looking at a world-class University; a world-class University that brings to this country an element of cultural diversity. That is important. Sir, it is a University that goes beyond just the cultural diversity but it forces us to come on a daily basis face-to-face with a reality.

Let me speak openly here now that I too have a constituency because while this particular Resolution speaks to St. Peter, Sir, the land at the Lazaretto falls well within the constituency of St. James Central. I am indebted, and I will say so here on the Floor of this House, to Professor Sir Hilary Beckles because when the Usain Bolt

Complex was being created, the issue in the Lazaretto; the issue in Prospect was that the people -- working class, humble folk down there -- grew up generation after generation after blessed generation, looking across at an idle piece of land on which there were three antennae that were reserved for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. It was as though there was nothing on this earth that was more important than the antennae. I have no doubt that those who planned the development of the West Coast of Barbados may have at some stage meant well but they were woefully shortsighted, so there was no provision made in terms of the recreational opportunity for a community of people. You got houses but no provision was made for recreation. There are houses but what of the young people who should be playing a sport coming out of the community, Sir?

Sir, that is true, not only for Prospect. If you begin a journey on foot, as I have had to do by way of canvassing. You start in Prospect and you walk all the way down to Holetown, you will not pass more than one playing field, Mr. Speaker, Sir and that playing field is located down in Holetown. The Good Shepherd School has a little field, Sir, but you have to go out of your way to get there if you are walking along the main road. Those two little dots service communities. Those two little areas, Sir, have historically been expected to serve the interest of over 8 000 to 10 000 people. This is a form of madness. Then we ask ourselves why it is that in that same catchment area, some of our youngest people in Barbados have fallen through the cracks in the floorboards, Sir. Some of our youngest people, Sir, have been wrapped up in narcotics; wrapped up in areas of crime and criminal activity, Sir. What is the outlet? What is the benefit that goes towards lifting these young people up socially? The planners did not have that in mind. Along comes the University of the West Indies and I say, Sir, I am indebted to Professor Sir Hilary Beckles with whom I had a conversation.

I went as the Member of Parliament and I said, "Professor, this development here that you are proposing, this development, the Usain Bolt Complex, in my judgement should be a complex which is not just to serve the narrow purposes of the University but I want to urge you and invite you to be part of a thinking that allows us to open the doors to the public for some element of participation; some element of access. I do not expect that all and sundry will be able to walk through and have everything to do with the university because ultimately that is not what the university is about." He understood very easily the point that was being made because Mr. Speaker, we are talking about symbiotic benefits. The Government, as I said, on one hand invests over $100 million towards the financing of the operation of the University every year but the University in turn must be part of the community. That is true not only in Barbados but it is true as a concept of how a university should and, I think, must function. It must be part of that society in which it is located.

Sir, I say this in all seriousness. Students who come here or students from here will sojourn for a period of time at the University but every single one of those students come with a lifestyle interest. Every single one of us who has been a student had a lifestyle interest. Some of those interests may have been in sports; some of those interests may have been in music; some of those interests may have been cultural and creative activities and entertainment, Sir but every single one who is able to fall within the University setting; whether local or whether foreign coming to live here for a period time, has an interest. To the extent that that interest can be meshed by the services, can be matched and married to the services that are created in a community where the University exists. Then it is for the betterment financially; it is for the economic upliftment of that community; it is for the improvement of the opportunities for us to have cultural diversity in that community.

Sir, if you have to take it out of the realm of theory and bring it straight into the pockets of people, it is also an opportunity for those people who have a little bar to get some money. It is an opportunity for those people who may be hairdressers, to get a little money; to engage in cosmetology; nail technician work, et cetera, to get a little money, Mr. Speaker. It is a blessing for those who are involved in the ground transportation sector, so that they too have an access and a window of opportunity financially but for the University in the community, they would not have and certainly would not have in equal measure. That is why I believe, that it is vitally important for us to do what we are doing, by way of opening now another window for activity in the north of the island which is associated with the educational effort. At the same time, will redound to the benefit of the people of the north by way of the economic opportunity that must flow logically from the effort.

Mr. Speaker, I also feel that as we talk about symbiotic benefits, it is understood that the University is really a public good. I use the example of the lands at the Lazaretto. I think that if we look at the elderly population whom we have been able to see taking a stroll across the Usain Bolt Complex to get a little exercise on mornings in circumstances of safety, that is a good thing. I invite anybody to tell me that that is not desirable but above and beyond the narrow, parochial interests that I must have as a Member of Parliament, I want to say to this country at this time, Sir, that when the National Stadium could not function and has not been able to function, largely again because of shortsightedness and in some cases mismanagement of a previous Administration. This Administration cannot do everything on Planet Earth in the space of four or five short years. We have not even got to

five years yet. In total, we have not gotten there yet but, Mr. Speaker, the young people of Barbados were able to use and have access to a stadium, as a result of the role that the University is playing in the context of providing symbiotic relationships in this country, so that our young people can benefit.

Sir, we must build out this capacity and we must make this type of investment and show this type of support to the University of the West Indies, Mr. Speaker because it has been there on our side in times of great national turmoil and difficulty. Lest we forget, during the course of the last two years when COVID would have been the major headache in this country, many of the issues involving healthcare would have been issues that we partnered and tackled with the same said University of the West Indies. I need not tell you, Sir, because you, like I, have practiced law in this country and you know the role that the University of the West Indies plays, in the support of the legal profession and all that is related to its work.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is through a wider social policy; it is through the agricultural sector and I say, as Minister responsible for business development, that a lot of good work is being done by the Cave Hill Campus School of Business reaching into the community; partnering with the community on matters relating to financial literacy or matters relating to incubation in starting up a business; the education of those people who want to be entrepreneurs and as I constantly say helping hold the hands with entrepreneurs so that they can navigate pitfalls of that journey.

Sir, that role that the University has played widely in Barbados is something that we have to be very thankful for but equally very supportive of. This particular resolution demonstrates a commitment of Government to the ongoing nature of this process of collaboration; to the ongoing nature of partnership and that word has been used very often today and as I said to you Mr. Speaker, I take the perspective that it is for us now as we mature and develop that spirit of partnership to be focusing on how we can take, the Prime Minister uses the term, long stay visitors.

Mr. Speaker, it is through of Ross University but how do we take what they call the lifestyle interests of every individual student; a campus that has in excess of 5,000 students. How do you take the lifestyle interest and the lifestyle requirements of each of those individuals and find a way that the community now, not just the country but the community; the ordinary people that I represent; the ordinary people that the Member for St. Peter represents; Sir the people who are represented by those of the West and North Coasts of this island.

How do we monetise the opportunities, Sir, which are presented by the lifestyle interests of these people? Mr. Speaker, Sir, I feel that as I said, the presence of the University is an opportunity for us now to take that next step where we build out in a true sense, the concept of University townships that in the parish of St. Peter, to the extent that the land used and what was found in the St. Joseph Hospital, vested in the University of the West Indies, is to give the university a degree of independence and allow it to leverage that land for its own development.

Equally Sir, we must now also see it as an opportunity to leverage the financial opportunities of the people of the north; that the people of the north know because they are at the foot of that University or that campus; that spare activity that was no longer there, but will come, that now Mr. Speaker must be an opportunity for our people to have the benefit of, as I said, the range of services that can be provided. Whatever it is, because there is still a lack of specificity as to the full range of activities that will take place on that side but whatever it is Mr. Speaker Sir, whatever they are, our people must be plugged in. Equally, I feel that the next step at places like the Lazaretto and at Cave Hill is to now seriously bring the logical conclusion to this journey of development by making sure Sir, that the benefits to be derived and that are being derived.

Housing, landlords in the constituency of St. James South have made a tidy living, as a result of being foreclosed in the University of the West Indies. It has been a boon to them; it has been a benefit to them in hard times and it has been of assistance to them in good times; it has helped people who were of comparatively humble origins to take another step up the ladder. I know of people Sir, who have moved out of their houses in some parts of St. James and gone elsewhere so that the whole house can be dedicated to the service of providing housing accommodation for students. That is the kind of economic opportunity that I am talking about Sir.

I made reference to the ground transportation. The University there in constituency of the Honourable Member of St. Michael East, Ross University. What Ross University has done has presented unprecedented opportunity for people in this country who engaged in transportation. There is a Co-operative, providing transport to those young people from Coverley where they are living in large majorities if not all, to the University and back, every single day. At one point it was every 15 minutes and therefore Sir you had private entrepreneurs coming in providing that experience. When the Honourable Member for St. George South was the Minister responsible for small business and commerce in this country, that was unfolded. Not true?

Asides.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: We are talking here about using the University and the investment. This is where the politics comes in because Sir what we had before was an Administration that was prepared to turn away from the university; turn away from the investment that was being made historically from the very get go and the consequences of that was that you had a diminution; a reduction; a falling off in those people who would have been attending. Things became harder. Now we are saying Sir the exact opposite. You ride out the attrition but Sir, you want to make sure that you broaden the base of participation and that the more people you can have coming to Cave Hill Campus; the wider you can make the base of activities of the Campus; the more you can strengthen the spawn and spread of the campuses wings. More people fall under that umbrella that allow for them to benefit by way of rental income; provision of services; provision of food; provision of beverages of all types; transportation; cosmetology and everything; the whole gamut of opportunities financially to help lift up poor working class people in various parishes of Barbados, who otherwise would not have that opportunity. Mr. Speaker, that at its core is the developmental trajectory that this resolution sets us upon.

Sir, I, like the Honourable Member for St. George South, make no apology for saying that because Sir, the contrast is clear. It is not an Administration here who is going to associate itself with opportunity for personal wellbeing and personal financial benefit; dragging the Administration's name as a whole and individuals within the Administration into scurrilous relationships that cause the Public Accounts Committee to have to wait and do work that otherwise should not have to do. That is not what it is about. This is about national development Mr. Speaker and I feel very privileged to be part of this opportunity to have this discussion in the house today.

Mr. Speaker, as I said to you, whether you look at it broadly from the perspective of the role that University plays in terms of that what they call a symbiotic relationship with the wider Barbados; the wider aims of the government. I identified a few sectors already where we have benefited tremendously from that work and continue to benefit from that partnership or whether so you see it through the lens as I suggest you should as the MP of how the university help your working class people stop from being so poor and give them an opportunity that they would not otherwise have had.

Mr. Speaker, or whether we see it just as another opportunity for Barbadians to get into another field of endeavour and get a little bit more educational opportunity. However, you play it out Sir, this resolution is vitally important because it wakes from the dead or the seeming dead a piece of land. How many hectares? Eight hectares; 21 acres of opportunity that but for this Administration, had been wrapped up in bush; no economic activity; no developmental opportunity; no access to the people of the north for betterment and improvement. Wrapped up and shrouded in scandal; packaged in mystery, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Sir, a political disgrace; a hospital that saved lives and this country had to sit and stomach that for years and years. Mr. Speaker, yes, we are now at a stage where we have gotten behind that but as I said, this is now for me about lifting the gaze of the opportunity to the future. The Honourable Member is 100 percent right. If we do not go there, then the rest of the Caribbean will do it for us. We must understand that the world is out there and is interested in taking on business opportunities like this. When in Trinidad and Tobago, lands are allocated for the University to have a hospital, can Barbados seriously remain with 26 acres there in bush?

Mr. Speaker, when in Grenada significant land resources are dedicated to UWI for developmental opportunity; can Barbados keep eight acres in the pristine parish of St. Peter in bush? Mr. Speaker, when in Antigua and Barbuda, they are going to do the same thing, Barbados is to be content that for 20 long miserable years, this golden opportunity and nest egg is to be kept in bush? This is what it is about for those people who come "ah" calling every five years, saying that in spite of region-wide approaches, to putting the University on a self-sustaining financial model, they are to be taken on because they have nothing to show; done nothing; made no public comment on any of these issues or part of the way forward? We just called a general election and none of these things were discussed on the DLP platform; none of it.

Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be a difficult thing. As I said, I want to commend the Honourable Minister of Housing who has hit the ground running. I am very pleased, Sir, by this particular Resolution. I want to support the idea of a Special Purpose Vehicle set up by the Solicitor General and the arrangements which are before the House that the Government of Barbados will hold 25 percent of the shares and the University will hold 75 percent. We are not looking at a charitable organization, Sir but an operation designed to function as a company which can drive a profit; leverage its assets and in so doing create more economic, financial, business and commercial opportunity for the well-being of the people of this country. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Menmber for St. Michael South Central.

Ms. M. K.-A. CADDLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief in my remarks on this Resolution. I find that the purpose, intent and the objectives of the Resolution to vest these lands in a Special Purpose Vehicle of which the

Government of Barbados would have 25 percent ownership and the UWI 75 percent, very noble. I find that they can hardly any dispute that this is an honourable endeavour. I must confess that the specifics of the endeavour or even the broad framework of it, I do think we would have benefitted from hearing a bit more it.

This is not to suggest that I do not trust implicitly the goals; community spiritedness and the drive for growth of the UWI. I absolutely do. I think that our UWI in this country and region, has been one of the institutions and continue to be one that shows the unique Caribbean quality; spirit of innovation and of integration with its community. I see that the University is always striving to integrate more with the community to be able to bring solutions and ideas, and for that we are grateful. I think this partnership is an important one. I think the potential in this activity is there. I hope to hear and see more about what is contemplated under this Special Purpose Vehicle, especially since the Government will retain a stake.

Sir, to the extent that you are a shareholder in a venture; you take on the assets along with the liabilities. I think that we have to make sure that we bring some transparency to whatever that endeavour will be. The Honourable Member who led this Resolution made reference to the issues of investment and of leveraging the particular skills and knowledge of the entity that will be responsible for the management of this property. I want to go beyond that, Sir, to say that what is being contemplated here by vesting this property in a Special Purpose Vehicle by seeking to manage it as a key asset of the Government of Barbados, needs to be done with every single asset of this country because what happens in cases like this. The people of Barbados are asked to agree to a Resolution, a vesting or some activity that is being applied to some asset of theirs as taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, as taxpayers, we are responsible for these assets. They are ours, as they belong to the State. From time to time, we come to this Honourable place and ask through you, Sir, for agreement on matters such as this. We, the country, must believe and trust that whatever is contemplated for this particular property is the best possible use of that asset or resource. Sir, for some time we have talked about the issue of a Sovereign Wealth Fund for the country. For some time, we have talked about it and the Honourable Member for St. George South made reference to having a register of the assets, under his Ministry, which I think is useful. What the country needs to be able to do, is to be able to see and show very clearly to the citizens, what are the country's assets.

In our public financial management system, we tend to have across the world, not only in Barbados, a cash-based system. The only things that we are concerned with are liquidity, revenue and expenditure. We are watching what we are spending and making. We have no idea, I dare say, what our assets are. What are the real estate assets that we have? What are is our stake in utilities and any utility companies such as the Barbados Water Authority (BWA). What is that valued at? What are our transportation assets? What are the transportation systems, transportation infrastructure and the fleets of vehicles? What are they worth?

What are they worth not just in terms of the dollar value but why is asset management important? What are they worth in terms of their potential to generate revenue for the country? What are they worth in terms of their potential to generate other kinds of value for the citizens of the country? I do not want to be crass about it, Sir but I do not think that in 2022 we should be coming to this place; pulling out of a bag a piece of property and asking the people of Barbados to let us vest this in a particular entity.

Sir, not that there is anything wrong with what we are asking to be done here today but we need to do the work of being able to picture and make visible, all of our assets and I will tell you why. We have a lot of conversation about the issue of debt and the sustainability of that debt and every time we take on a loan and I would know well, Sir because in my last dispensation, I was leading that charge and had to shoulder a lot of the conversation and narrative around this issue of debt accumulation so everybody is concerned about debt accumulation. International financial institutions also look at your debt accumulation as a liability but who is looking at the fact that as you are accumulating that debt, presumably, you are also accumulating assets from the debt.

I will say what I mean. When we take on a loan to buy electric buses or to build a sewerage treatment plant. That loan, that debt, that liability on one side is generating those assets on the other side. Nobody is asking the question when all the international institutions come here to cross examine us about our levels of debt; nobody is looking on the other side to see what is that debt giving us. What are those assets that we are accumulating? My point, Sir, is that we need to move to the place where we go beyond having a vague idea about what the Government owns and looking at how these assets, if they are properly managed, properly maintained and put to good use, can create revenue in a planned and predictable way; can create income earning and investment opportunities in a planned and predictable way for the people of Barbados and our future generations.

Sir, this is a question of intergenerational social justice because we hear all of the time, my children are going to have to pay back that debt. Yes, but if we do our job right; your children will have to pay back that debt; my children will have to pay back that debt but they should

also benefit from the assets; the public goods that that debt has created. It is a question of intergenerational social and economic justice and I think that we, for too long, have spoken about this issue of a Sovereign Wealth Fund.

A Sovereign Wealth Fund, just so that I am sure that I am being understood and I am making myself clear; usually looks at managing and reinvesting reserve assets; reserve liquidity. When people talk about having a sovereign wealth fund, most of the time what they mean is that they are looking at taking government's foreign reserves, government's liquidity and re-investing it to earn money and we should absolutely be doing that. We should not find ourselves on this 26 day of April, 2022, without that entity. I really sincerely trust and hope that if it is not yet established; that it is coming to these good people of the Cabinet of Barbados very soon. I am sure it will find its way here for us to discuss, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, apart from a Sovereign Wealth Fund that tends to look mostly at liquidity; what we also need within that or attached to that is a public wealth fund and we have seen in places like Singapore, New Zealand and other countries, that being able to bring together all of your assets and have them managed just as we would manage any other kinds of equity or other investments, have them, quite frankly, Sir, by people who know what they are doing. We have found that this is a way to be able to make sure you are in a better position to recover from economic shocks.

Sir, you would have something backing your liabilities. You bring these assets on your balance sheet and you say to the international community, this is the true picture of what Barbados owns. This is the true income earning potential of this country. You can take some of those assets and have the finances generated therefrom; fund a particular social good; fund a particular part of your education reform; fund a particular part of your social potential reform. We are undermanaging our assets. We have only a vague idea of what it is worth and worse than that, not only do we not have a good idea of the revenue earning potential; so forecasting what you can earn and what citizens can benefit from. We also do not have the best idea of what the actually value is today because a lot of these valuations are based on these historical notions of what these things were used for. Well it was used as a public good so we are not going to assign any particular value to it. We are undervaluing ourselves and we are missing so much potential and capacity to make the things that we own work for us. In many cases, when you have a true picture of the assets that you own; you may make a different borrowing decision. That picture of your assets will actually affect your interest rate because when you go to the market with stronger balance sheet, you will get a better interest rate, you have better negotiating power in the market.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say something else quickly before I take my seat, Sir and it is that this issue of creating a clear valuation; a clear inventory of what we have that is of value, does not just apply to real estate and the Barbados Transport Board fleet or other physical assets. I am involved in some work now, Sir, that looks at valuing and I know the former Minister of Maritime Affairs, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, was also very keen on this when he led the Ministry. Valuing natural capital assets. What is the value of the coral reef? What is the value of the ocean? What is the value of the mangroves? These are real conversations that people are having today because they paint the picture of how we will be able to adapt to climate change. What is our negotiating power in the climate market? That we can go to countries who are polluters and say listen, this is the value of what we have that you are destroying and you need to be held to account for that.

Beyond that, I think it is also a matter of public trust. I think that one of the attributes of public wealth and asset funds is that they promote transparency. People know what we have; people know how we propose to use to generate wealth and income and prosperity and value in their names and how they can be a part of that but, they also build, in so doing, the public trust so that those responsible must come to the public to report on the maintenance of those assets and the performance of those assets.

If we had such a system in place, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. James Central made reference in his intervention to the Committee of Public Accounts. If we had that kind of system; principle; ideology and approach to asset management in place, Sir, I dare say we would not have spent so many hours labouring over this case of this disappearing Barbados Transport Board bus from the last Administration because we would have had a system where people responsible for the maintenance and management of that fleet; were systematically called to account before any Auditor General's Report came out to tell us and show us, what revenue and what value was being generated from those fleets, in the name of the people of Barbados.

Public trust, Sir, also matters when it comes to the need to combat this culture of deliberate misinformation that sometimes takes hold and we saw it, regrettably during the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was -- and I know for the former Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown -- one of the most hurtful things to have occurred in the public narrative of this country. The notion that people sworn to protect the health and secure the survival of their fellow Barbadians - and having lived all their lives -- the notion that they would put their fellow Barbadians at risk in the COVID-19 pandemic response. This was a very hurtful piece of misinformation.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was going to say that that was allowed to take hold but I do not think it was not, I think that rightfully the people who started that misinformation became embarrassed and that it did not perhaps spread as far as it might have. I believe that such things can fester in a context or culture where people begin to lose public trust. That is why I feel gratified and I congratulate the Honourable Prime Minister; this Cabinet and that of the former Cabinet, for the spirit. They did not always come with a set of perfect answers, but for the spirit of transparency that obtained during the last Administration and that I believe will continue, that trust will continue.

Sir, I think that has to be applied to more things than COVID-19 pandemic. I think it has to be applied through more media and Press conferences. I think that having a clear register of public assets that go on balance sheet to the extent that that is feasible or that go into Special Purpose Vehicles to the extent that that may be desirable, I think that is another way to garner that public trust.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do think that such approaches to governance do contribute to the kind of trust that would have meant that those people who contributed to this notion, that healthcare providers and administrators in this country would seek to do harm to people who were recovering from COVID-19 pandemic; that that those kinds of ideas would not take hold.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know that there are further congratulations and honours planned but I think that sometimes it is just in words and saying to people "thank you" that you show your appreciation. Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is this song that I like. I am always quoting lyrics when I stand in this place, if you will forgive me, it is called "Strongest Soldier". It says that the strongest soldier gets the hardest fight and when I think of the former Minister of Health and Wellness, that is the song that comes to mind because the Honourable Member has proven himself in more ways than one, both literally and physically. To have been among one of the strongest soldiers among us; who had a very difficult fight in responding to COVID-19 pandemic and I again take this opportunity to publicly salute him and also to publicly salute the team that was able to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with him and worked with him.

Sir, some of them will be honoured this week but in particular, the former Board of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I believe could never had imagined that they would ever have not just to deal with the business of the hospital but also standing up all of the isolation and quarantine facilities at that time. I dare say they were called upon to do more than we would normally think or believe that a board would have to do and at the same time, being able to begin the process of transformation of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital by starting up the 24-hour clinics, as well as a new Accident and Emergency Department. I hope I am not speaking out of turn, although I have been noted, when I say that I do believe that because people have moved on, it does not mean that we should not make them a part of the acknowledgement or the way forward.

Mr. Speaker, I do know there was not a formal opening of the expanded Accident and Emergency Department which every day in fact had to be dynamic, nimble and switch up how they were treating to COVID-19 pandemic as they treated other emergencies coming into that department, in an expanded environment. I know it has not been officially opened. I do not know if there is any attempt for that to happen officially but I would not mind as the Member of Parliament [who lives] opposite that fine institution attending a ceremony in which the former he Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown be invited to come back and formally open that department, alongside the present Minister who is now benefiting from some of the tremendous work his colleague did in that place.

Sir, I think that these kinds of gesture -- beyond standing on ceremonies and in official ways that these things tend to be done -- go a long way to put your money where your mouth is and to show -- not just say -- that you appreciate a person's contribution. This is not in any way to take anything away from the current Minister of Health and Wellness and the extent to which the Honourable Member has hit the ground running. I do understand the Honourable Member is making quite an impression in a very short space of time but I do believe that legacy matters and the legacy of that place is one that I think matters very much to Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I sought to use this opportunity to speak, not in academic terms, I hope but to speak to something that I think are missing in our arsenal of public financial management. We need to be able to make visible, the assets that we have. We need to be able to use them; govern them; management them to make money for regular Barbadians, to bring value to their lives. The longer that we sleep on that, is the longer we go without getting the full benefit of those things which our ancestors would have helped to create.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support this Resolution in so far as I expect to see further information and exactly what the nature of this investment would look like and what it would bring to the people of Barbados. I have full confidence in the University of the West Indies to be able to agree with stakeholders; the Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training and the Government of Barbados on what that should look like and how it should be managed but beyond that, I would like to see this approach brought to all of the assets in this country. That they are valued; that they are put on balance sheets, where possible; that they are shown to the people; that they are shown to the

international world, this is what Barbados has going for it. We are not simply a high debt jurisdiction. We are causing those things that we own; those physical and otherwise assets that we have, to work for us and to work for people. Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I commend this Resolution.

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

Hon. Miss K. S. MCCONNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support this Resolution because I know that it will contribute to the sustainability, as well as to financial independence of the University of the West Indies. These matter at this time to us. Sir, I remember over the last few weeks, sitting in meetings where we as a Caribbean region looked at what were the priorities for the University of the West Indies and how we were going to contribute in terms of funding and what was important for us to understand was that whatever monies we as Caribbean governments were going to put towards the University and whatever assets we were going to make available to the University of the West Indies; it really and truly had to be linked with where the University was going at the point in time. Many of us would know that the University was formed back in what was called the "golden age of universities"; that was back around 1945-1967 where there was a rapid expansion of universities and increased investment in research. The University of the West Indies is one such "golden age" university. We had started as a regional institution but because of the contribution of Barbados and other governments in this region, we have been able to move this regional institution into a globally recognised university.

If we look at some of the rankings, there are many but among those top three are the Times Higher Education rankings and in those rankings, you would notice that the University of the West Indies is ranked four in the top four per cent of the world. You would also notice that it is ranked in the top two per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean and of course among those golden age universities it is among the top one per cent.

Sir, I share that because it is important for us to understand that what started out as a little board shop back in Jamaica way back when we started the University of the West Indies, has now grown globally. It is because of the investment of assets, whether they be financial or the kind of land that is the subject of this Resolution, that we have been able to grow it. At the time when we started the University of the West Indies, the dream was that of light, liberty and learning. That was what it was set up to do and we need to understand that if we are to make sure that it is sustainable and that it becomes financially independent; we have to make sure that it is done with the light and the liberty and the learning at the forefront.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the land which will be vested in the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies.... I differentiate because there is the vesting of the University of the West Indies which is the entire region and it goes into the centre, the University Centre and then there is the vesting in Cave Hill which is also an entity within Barbados that is part of the University of the West Indies. This vesting is meant to be for Cave Hill as part of the University of the West Indies' family.

Sir, the point that I started out making is that we have to ensure that whatever investments we make in the University of the West Indies, would continue to take us to where we are going next. The University of the West Indies has made it very clear that where it wants to go is towards what it is calling a revenue revolution. Where it is moving from its dependence on Government for the most part for financing and it wants to take the institution over the next several years to a place where it can become more revenue-generating and more self-sufficient and financially independent.

The vesting of this land contributes to that great and strategic vision for the University of the West Indies, Sir. You would have heard the Member for St. George South say that part of that contribution to helping it to remain sustainable is that right now, the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus in particular, right here in Barbados, sits on a number of properties that belong to the Government, including this one.

Mr. Speaker, now once they are sitting on Government lands -- not that Government would ever do it -- Government can always say, "Get off our land!" Not that this Barbados Labour Party Government would ever do it because we are committed to education in a significant way and that commitment continues. In the vesting of this land in Cave Hill, it ensures that this land becomes part of their asset base. You would have heard other Members in here explain how having that as an asset that belongs to the University, can certainly boost its ability to raise the revenue it is seeking, which it is on a path to doing as it relates to moving the University into a more sustainable place.

In addition to being able to be more financially sustainable, these strategic efforts that are being made by the University of the West Indies are to monetise its ideas. Sir, monetising its ideas mean making money from the things which the University produces; from the knowledge that it produces; from its products; from the research that it does. In this way, research would not just sit and become dusty paper on shelves but really and truly would become the kind of work that could be put to use for the people of the region and also could be applied to global issues and solve global problems. The effort is that we look for the major areas of growth and expansion for the University and

the University is well advanced in its effort to identify what these specific areas are and then to be able to exploit these areas so as to generate more revenue for the University which would then enable it to do more for the people of the region, as well as to better position itself in the globe. The monetising of ideas is a second part of that strategic vision which this vesting of land helps to expand and to support at this time.

Thirdly, there is the internationalisation of the University and that is a big, long word. Basically, it is making the university more international and with that, it is about the education export; it is about the foreign students who -- just as Barbadian students would go to school in England, Canada, China, the United States and other places -- we are able also to attract to Barbados. Part of that internationalisation gives us access to the cultures of the world. It helps to broaden our worldview; it helps to expand our thinking; it helps us to be able to advance the whole effort we are making towards having a second language. There are many benefits in our seeking to internationalise the University of the West Indies that will redound to the benefit of the Caribbean region and, in truth, improve our footprint globally.

Mr. Speaker, the support that I am giving to this Resolution speaks to the sustainability; the financial independence; the monetising of the ideas of the University and the internationalisation of the University. These are all strategic goals within the University of the West Indies that will be justly served by this.

Sir, I will be short because I believe that many of my colleagues have explored a number of the other areas that make this Resolution so significant and so worthy of support at this time. I cannot close without saying that this Barbados Labour Party Government; this Administration; this and the next, has continued to demonstrate that by providing opportunities for more persons; more of our young people; more of our older persons as well, to be able to get an education. We are indeed on the rise again in terms of meeting our objectives of ensuring that we have at least one University graduate in each household, that is contributing and living a viable life and financing their families in a meaningful way.

You would have heard the Honourable Member for St. James Central speak earlier about the fact that we had returned the financing of tuition to students of the University of the West Indies. Many people say that is a big deal and you talk about that all the time but let me share with you a little bit of the numbers that can let you see the impact which the policy of this Barbados Labour Party Administration to pay tuition fees has had just in the short period of time.

Mr. Speaker, in the year 2013-2014, remember the refusal to pay tuition by the former Democratic Labour Party which was started, I believe, in 2014. In that 2013-2014 year, Sir, the University of the West Indies here had 8 634 students here in Barbados. By 2017/2018, that had dropped to 5,161 more than 3,000. Since this Barbados Labour Party government returned the payment of tuition to the University of the West Indies for students, we now in 2021-2022 have moved that number back up to 6,735 and it is anticipated that if we continue on our current level of intake 2022-2023, will indeed be a much bigger year.

This is why this University of the West Indies is so deserving of the support of the people of Barbados. Why it is so serving of the investment of land that is a part of this resolution because we are expanding; we are opening that gateway; we are open an opportunity for more people to be able to use education; to empower them. It is an opportunity for us then to deliberately partner as a government, where we say we are not just giving money but we are prepared to partner in a special vehicle, Special Purpose Vehicle at a 25 per cent/75 per cent seeing that we are vested in education. It is not just something we contribute to financially but it is something in which we intend to stay vested and invested on behalf of the people of Barbados. It is with these few words Mr. Speaker, that I lend my full support to this Resolution for the vesting of lands for the St. Joseph Hospital. Thank you.

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

Dr. S. E. BROWNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to lend my support to the Resolution but of course as it is only natural, I need to put in a plug for the Ministry of Health and Wellness. It is a pleasure as well to see that finally after many years in addition to the other buildings that were mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. George South, that this derelict building/site, will now be put to good use by the University of the West Indies.

Sir, whether it be, I do not know the reasons for it; I do not know what their plans are but I do remember that we still maintain 25 per cent of the share. With that, I am asking that the building be considered, this is just my wish and this is just my hope but be considered to play a part within the Ministry of Health; air board the health of the nation of Barbados whether it be by health tourism which is fine but I want the University of the West Indies to remember that the most affected in a negative way by the Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs); inavailability of health services and lack of medical insurance, all of these lie the poor black individual; the poor black Barbadian that occupies the majority of the healthcare sector in terms of public healthcare sector.

This initiative, I am sure they will put it to good use, will not only provided employment as the Member for St. Peter has suggested and wished for as well but I am hoping that it would be considered as part of the plan to make the University of the West Indies; although we do we do medicine now along with Guyana and Trinidad in terms of a medical faculty. I would like to see it built out such that efforts are put into the teaching of the individuals at the hospital. Whether it be the nurses at the hospital and the other healthcare institutions. We are badly in need of specialised medical services; specialised nursing in almost every area; specialisation of the doctors and by this I mean the funding or providing the courses wherever necessary.

Mr. Speaker, the hospital now is inundated as we all know and I have to speak on it because of where I stand now especially - inundated with NCDs. The bed capacity is almost abysmal. I would like to see the University of the West Indies in this effort do something to aid this with respect to health. Whether it be by putting funding into the hospital; whether it be by lending extra beds to the hospital; whether it be by supporting initiatives that we already have. I know the Chronic Disease Research Centre is part of the University of the West Indies, and it has been, I do not want to use the word dormant, but information coming out of it largely because of COVID, was a bit lacking. I want to see efforts like this increased. I want to see internship post expanded. I believe maybe after my time, for several years the placement of interns within the island of Barbados has been always under strain. We were having to apply to other jurisdictions, Bahamas; Trinidad; Jamaica for placement with respect to internship.

Sir, the number of medical students we are seeing and I assume it is in almost every area outside of medicine but we are seeing to some extent a lack of experience. One reason being the numbers of medical students and interns are large, so where we would like to put the education properly because of the numbers it is hard. Let me put it a different way. When I was there we had maybe two medical students per bed on rounds, now you could get excessive 7-8, so obviously learning in those areas would be affected.

I would like to see the University of the West Indies bringing out courses or lending to the funding of courses for the laboratory technicians. This is an area that is badly needed. Laboratory technicians; engineering technicians in all these areas need help. I remember my first hip replacement I witnessed in the theaters of the St. Joseph Hospital at the time. Obviously, it would have been fascinating at that point in time as it still is now but we have lost that extra spacing where we can do these large time consuming operations in another place, whether it be for private or public individuals in the community.

Mr. Speaker, these are the things I would like to see, whether it be building out a hospital there. If not, whatever it is put there some of it be put into to the realm of healthcare in Barbados, if not only for tradition.

Right now and funny enough NCDs as I said before are forefront; outside of COVID and I am hoping to take over from COVID once COVID behaves, with respect to the NCD fight. If I may Mr. Speaker, we had Sir Hillary Beckles joined me in a presentation not so long ago and he has supported the efforts with respect to the NCDs. Of course, in his realm dating it back to the times of slavery. These are things that I know obviously if he has it so the forefront of the University of West Indies, whether it be for healthcare; whether it be for reparations; whether it be for both, so the support is there.

With these few words, I can only hope and encourage the University of West Indies and with 25 per cent stake holding we still have, that some of it the place on the on under the umbrella of the health care system, specifically the hospital which really needs help, a lot of help. With those few words Mr. Speaker, I end here. Thank you so much for indulging me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker it gives me great pleasure to speak on this resolution and to indicate that this is but the first because it is only on the resumption of coming back into Government and formally into office, that I learned that not even the lands at Cave Hill are vested in the University of the West Indies (UWI) and that hitherto, a commitment by a previous BLP Government, to vest the lands at Lazaretto in the UWI, Cave Hill Campus, was also vetoed by the last Government.

Let me make my position very clear, Sir. This country has benefitted significantly from the presence of the Cave Hill Campus of the UWI. This region has benefitted from the presence and existence of the UWI. Only last night at the “Tom” Adams Lecture, the distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Henderson Carter, who is the Head of the Department of History would have been referring to the 60th Anniversary Celebration that are now being prepared for them on that campus; the diamond jubilee. When we came to office, Sir, we inherited a situation where the UWI finances were comprised significantly by a reduction in the commitment both on economic cost but also by the introduction of student fees for persons attending Cave Hill Campus.

Why? Once those fees were introduced, the enrollment at Cave Hill dropped by about 40 percent. We made a commitment from the campaign trail which we honoured in spite of going into an IMF home-grown BERT

Programme; to reinstate the payment fees for Barbadians at the Barbadian educational institutions; the Barbados Community College (BCC), Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI)and the UWI, whether it was at Cave Hill; Mona; St. Augustine; Open Campus and now you have the Five Islands Campus. Mr. Speaker, at no stage over the course of the last four years almost have we had cause to regret making that decision; not once. We all know that it is the only route by which persons can escape poverty legitimately in this country. I should say one of the only routes because there is the vocational route as well.

Even that requires knowledge and it is the acquisition of knowledge and training that then allows us to have the productive citizens who can earn for us as a nation. When we came to office, the Barbados Government owed the UWI almost, I think, $140 million and therefore we had to settle an arrangement with them. Part of that arrangement included us putting on the table assets and in particular, the vesting of the Cave Hill Campus and of the Lazaretto which we discovered would have to be done as well and in particular, the vesting of the old St. Joseph Hospital lands to a special purpose company. The Government of Barbados would retain 25 per cent in that company. The UWI would have 75 per cent vesting in them.

Very recently, I have been in discussion with them to see how we can work collectively, to be able to encourage a medical tourism investment that will allow the UWI to ensure that its students going into the medical faculty are in a position to be assured of access to internships. This is a major problem. This was problem when I was the Minister of Education in 1994. We have had some years when we were able to resolve it seamlessly and other years where it became a huge bugbear. I feel that morally, if a person is going to study medicine, they ought to be assured of the ability to complete their training; such that they can practice medicine, rather than being left in a lurch with respect to where they would do their internships.

Mr. Speaker, it is a matter then for us regionally not just domestically, to see how we can expand the number of internship places available, based not purely on the provision of medical services to our domestic population but including the provision of medical services to a global population but in our countries in the region. Why do I feel as strongly as I do on this? This country, Mr. Speaker, has had a reputation for medical tourism before it knew what medical tourism was. You only need to look at why George Washington left the USA to come to Barbados. He came to Barbados for his brother to be able to recuperate from the respiratory problems that he was having. This is a country that constructed a Psychiatric Hospital in the 19th Century.

This is why I am so impatient and I speak to the Minister of Health and the Minister in the Ministry. He knows how I feel for us to have a Mental Wellness Programme rolled out, especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic where we know that the restrictions and the lockdowns have played on people's heads and disrupted people's mental stability. I feel that in this country that has distinguished itself in the provision of public health services and the settlement of health policy; we have been the ones who have exported the great public health advisors of the 20th Century in the Caribbean. Sir George Alleyne who became the Director General of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Sir Kenneth Standard worked for the UWI; Sir Kenneth Stuart. Barbados has had a distinguished record and we had to.

Sir, when you live on 166 square miles, the one thing that must matter is public health because we live cheek by jowl. In addition to public health, the provision of medical tourism can range the entire gamut of services and in my view, we have now to be serious about going about it. We built a hospital at Harrison's Point in four weeks and it tells us what we can do if we put our mind to it. I want to speak to that because in 1995, the current Minister of Education was the Director of the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) and attended a weekly management so she would recall. We moved the Barbados Youth Service (BYS) to Harrisons' Point.

It lasted there for a few years and after I left, for whatever reasons it was moved from there. No problem except the buidings became derelict. All of the money that the Government of Barbados had invested, went into Maxwell Pond. The youngsters may not know what Maxwell Pond is. It went into the earth. As Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs in 2005, when the prison burnt, I remember going to St. Lucy with Major Binx and others and the then Commissioner. We went to the old plant of Atlantic Manufacturing which was obliquely opposite the St. Lucy Parish Church. I will never forget because when we were there, it is when we learnt about the death of one of the persons in the prison. It was the day after the fire had happened.

We settled and agreed that it was perfect for conversion and that we would have to add on to it as we went along. By 9 o'clock the night when I walked into house, Major Binx called me and said, "Attorney General, I am sorry to report to you that that building will not withstand a Category 1 Hurricane." I asked, "Major Binx, what are you telling me at all?"

If it not going to withstand a Category 1 hurricane we are now in the month and I think it was the end of April, how am I going to tell Parliament and the taxpayers that we are going to fix up a building that may not withstand a Category 1 Hurricane and may not be standing by the end of the hurricane season? I said, "Please inform the Commissioner of Police and the Chief of Staff. It is

now 9.25 p.m., meet me at Harrison's Point at 11:00 o'clock" that same night and the poor officers had just gotten home; everybody bathe and came back down the road.

Sir, we went to St. Lucy and went into the building that had the submarine facility; the one right on the coast. The building, I swear, had not been opened up for years and when the rats started to move, I will not say which men started to move too. Suffice it to say that it was clear that that would require too much work. When we were going back up the hill, however, we came across these other buildings and we stopped the cars. We had no measuring tape and I said to the then Commissioner of Police and to the Chief of Staff, both of you look as though you have feet so that once you pace this out we could get a rough estimate and we sat there and the cars and did the back of envelope numbers. There was a huge generator bigger than the Clerk's Table and about as tall as four feet high that had not been moved for decades and we indicated that by the next evening we needed to move that and to see what could happen. Within eight days of being there, we moved prisoners from the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC) building in St. Philip and brought them down there with the exception of the prisoners who were on death row who went to District E Police Station at Speightstown. You will recall, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to make the point that Barbados housed a prison on that site for just under 18 months. I was the most shock person when I went with the Attorney General at the end of February. The Honourable Member for St. Peter would know it was the evening that we were opening and renaming your predecessor's highway, the Honourable T. N. R. Husbands, Doc Husbands as he was affectionately known and I said to the Attorney General, before it gets dark, let us go to Harrison's Point because in my mind, I believe, that this can be the location for us to put a dedicated facility so that we do not bring COVID-19 pandemic into the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) easily or at all and that we needed to have a separate place in order to do that. When we got there, 15 feet high bush; every wire removed; every conduit removed; every window and door removed. Now why am I giving you this discussion in the middle of this Resolution? Mr. Speaker, because this Government and any future Government must not allow that facility which has now been used three times in the last 30 years, to fall into a state of dilapidation again, therefore, what must be done, in my view, is a strategic partnership, either with other local and international private sector players to maintain Harrison's Point as a site for medical tourism as we go forward even as we get out of the management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

(A rousing round of applause)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The European Investment Bank (EIB) has lent us money up to a maximum of $60 million and the current Minister is now working to be able to have other aspects because we have said we are not paying for any consumables out of that loan. That loan is to build capacity and we were able to access it at 2 per cent and with a five-year moratorium, I believe but a 20-year loan. Excellent terms and we thank the European Investment Bank (EIB) for that but the actually spend was, I think, initially $15 million and we have had to spend money converting the tertiary building into primary and secondary last year in the middle of the Delta variant outbreak. Mr. Speaker, it therefore is necessary and I have given the Minister of Health and Wellness a remit, that he must find investment along with Invest Barbados for Harrison's Point. We are only using a fraction of the land at Harrison's Point. Harrison's Point is 80 acres and the last Government had entered into an arrangement which is a story and a tale for another day on Harrison's Point to do a tourism investment that never came to reality.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about the suitability of that site for tourism but there is equally no doubt about the suitability of it for medical recovery because the area is fresh; the view is therapeutic and quickly frankly, it is nestled in the part of the island where it is not the subject of bustling traffic and activity and I believe, therefore, that a combination of a site there and a site at the St. Joseph Hospital will bring the provision of healthcare services to the north, but not just simply for the north or for Barbados. Barbados must not limit itself to its population with respect to the provision of medical services. We can be a global provider of medical services from this rock. We have done it in the past without knowing that we were doing it and we can do it in the future by carefully planning and structuring it out.

Sir, I am open to all players and all partners and if there is, for example, a determination that the University of the West Indies (UWI) through this Special Purpose Vehicle, may want to partner with those who ultimately go in at Harrison's Point too. That you have a facility that is capable of servicing an international market and providing medical services at a fraction of the cost, that you would otherwise access them in the developed world, then this is our business and we must go for it.

Mr. Speaker, this step this morning is a statement of confidence and courage in our ability as a nation to carry our country to become a premier destination for the supply of medical services globally. We have too many people who have studied medicine. We perhaps need more people who have studied business but we have too many people who have studied medicine and we need to have an entrepreneurial spirit, Mr. Speaker, in order to be able to convert these into assets that will earn exponentially for

this country and provide jobs for the people particularly of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I say, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, under the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), they went out on a tender and I hope that it would be issued soon if it has not been as yet, for the award of a consultancy service to help reposition this country, to go into the life sciences industries. We cannot have 6 000 people studying science at the Cave Hill Campus and the only opportunity available to them is teaching. Teaching is a noble profession and at some point in my life I think I will end up teaching too but my point is, that it cannot be the only option. We need to be able to be developing laboratories; developing industrial projects, where we can utilise ... Up to last night, the gentleman, Dr. Carter, spoke about his daughter who is a microbiologist and a lot of them are having hell finding work in this country. We have a solemn obligation as a Government to attract enterprises and industry and research laboratories here that will allow the investment that we have made in their education, to pay off without them having to go to another man's country to earn a living. They must be able to earn a living in the land of their birth and not have to go an immigrate for that to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy that this has finally made its way here. I thank the Minister of Housing and Lands for bringing it. It is regrettably, in my view, been on the road for too long but the Honourable Member has brought it and I thank him for that. Secondly, I want to say that as this Government identifies the possibilities for the future, I have one major passion project that I have broken down into four divisions and I think you all have heard me speaking about it sufficiently: First, the establishment of the memorial at Newton Plantation, a memorial for the 570-plus slaves that were buried there and that we are using the opportunity to take the fact that we have the second largest transatlantic slaves records and poll for this parts of the world and the Western world and build a genealogical research center there, that will allow people to come from all over the world and would know more about their lineage.

Sir, we watch movies and see Gwyneth Paltrow, I would have never known that she has lineage to Barbados, if Henry Lewis Gates did not do his special programme that he does on people's ancestry on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). We also need a museum ensuring that slavery or forced migration does not become a part of the language of this hemisphere or world again and Barbados is the place where racism in its modern form was forged in the 17th century. I have said it too often in the last week with the congressional visits, regrettably, this is the Parliament that passed the 1661 slave code and we have to continue to pay penance for it because that was the code that informed other slave codes directly and indirectly in the Americas.

Secondly, the establishment of a spiritual university at Codrington College. Why? This world needs to know how people of different religions and faiths can live together. I am not only talking about the Abrahamic faith and there are some who would attack me but regrettably we are not all of the same faith. The truth is, that we are not all of the same gender. We are not all of the same race. We are not all of the same anything and we have to learn to live with each other on this planet called earth. I have already met with the Archbishop of the West Indies and the Principal of Codrington College is taking a very, very keen interest in making this happen. As you would know, he would also have led to the representatives of the Abrahamic faith; walking in Bridgetown together collectively two years ago in a spirit of partnership and cooperation. We feel that Barbados can set that example for the rest of the world but that at the same time, it becomes a niche form of tourism by bringing people here to reflect. Codrington college is one of the oldest theological seminaries, if not the oldest, in the Americas and we are the home to the oldest synagogue in the Americas, right here in Bridgetown.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the third project and these are not necessarily to be funded by the Consolidated Fund because there are going to be fundraising efforts internationally to be able to help Barbados be the beneficiary of these types of projects which will all lead to a greater number of visitors and a greater product for persons to engage in, once they land here. The third project and ironically once again we have representatives from Bollywood with us this whole week looking to sign a Memorandum of Understanding, so that Barbados can be a site for on-location film shooting, while at the same time, the development of an indigenous film industry. We have said in our Manifesto that we must repurpose old buildings for new things and therefore, the old sugar factories and old plantations ought to be repurposed into the sound stages where necessary for us to be able to ensure, that we can allow people to tell their stories but that we will build the skills for us to be able to tell ours as well; through the development of an indigenous film industry. We have just finished hosting a team of people from Outer Banks, the Netflix series, the second series they have done here and we want to be able to bring more people to this country with respect to that.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth limb of those passion projects is the University of the West Indies role in helping to settle policy to Small Island Developing States. I would glibly call it a school of public policy. Sir Hilary and others are now crafting it in the context of a school for international justice for Small Island Developing States and others. Why? Sir, whether it is climate justice; economic

justice; social justice, the bottom line is that Small Islands Developing States in this current world order, are left in the same place they were before the establishment of United Nations and when the Imperial Order still existed and that while there has been the appearance of... Well, there has been more than the appearance, there has been progress but regrettably that progress has not necessarily closed the gap sufficiently between those who are accustomed to power and those who are seeking fiscal and policy space, to be able to exercise dominion over their own affairs such that they can improve the quality of lives of their citizens.

We feel that the University of the West Indies has a credible and legitimate role to play in this respect and to that extent therefore, the Governments of the region and the Government of Barbados in particular, must work hand-in-hand with University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus to ensure that we can be that place where people from across the world can come and reflect, learn, study, teach on matters pertaining to social justice; economic justice; climate justice with respect in particular, to Small Islands Developing States.

Sir, I know that Sir Hilary is hoping to carry before the Council the concept of a global campus and that that will be a combination of the rebranding of the Open Campus but the establishment of this new school which must also be a revenue earner for the University of the West Indies so that it can continue to minimize the extent to which it must rely on Governments in the Caribbean, to carry the majority of the load in their functioning and exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I share these things with you. Sir, I am so happy to be back in this building; I am so happy to be back in Bridgetown that you are going to hear me more and more, even now because I believe that there are some things that we need to start talking about as a nation, if we are going to make the journey to being working-class by 2030. I know in my bones that we can do it but it is not going to be easy and it going to mean having some difficult discussions; just as you do in your family; it is not everything in a family that is honkey-dory every day, you have to have some difficult discussions sometimes and in having those difficult discussions, we can then move forward. Especially when we are breaking new ground, when everything new invariably has growing pains, so that there will be some discomfort but we have the capacity and the resilience to get passed that.

This morning, this Resolution represents the statement of faith that we have in a future that says that Barbados can be a provider of global medical and educational services, that we have had distinctions in the past but we now want it consistently to be part of our future and that, tourism as tourism on its own cannot function that easily (and we learnt that in COVID-19 pandemic) but when we have tourism that is anchored to medical facilities or tourism that is anchored to educational facilities or that tourism that is anchored to sporting capacity or cultural, for example, making movies, then all of a sudden you remove the discretionary aspect of why a person would just want to come and visit and be a part of here.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have heard me saying over and over again, we do not have enough people coming to work every day and we learnt the hard way that we do not even have enough people living here to take the output of our farmers, with respect to what the produce, so that if we want to be serious then these are the steps that we must be taking to guarantee a stable and prosperous future for our people.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank this Honourable House for considering this Resolution. I ask the Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance to bring the other Resolutions that will appropriately, before the 60th Anniversary of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, that would make them right and that will allow their balance sheet to reflect an asset that is known as the acreage at Cave Hill and the acreage at Lazaretto. If we do that, we will give them a leg up as we have already committed to doing with being able to ensure that five per cent of our renewable energy is shared between the University of the West Indies and the CARICOM regional institutions. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because it reduces the pressure on us as a Government in terms of what we must give them. Secondly, we are the beneficiaries of their output in every respect, so this is just allowing us to make them stronger while stabilising our own circumstances. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this Resolution and I am obliged to the Minister for doing us the courtesy of bringing it before this Honourable Chamber. Thank you.

Asides.

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

Hon. D.G. SUTHERLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First let me thank the Prime Minister. I do not want to use the phrase “putting the icing on the cake”. This Resolution started with the Prime Minister’s vision in respect to building out tertiary education at the University of the West Indies and, as she said in her wrap-up, to give Barbados the opportunity to be seen as one of the world’s leading global medical training institutions -- that is the UWI -- utilising the assets that we debated this morning and the further call to bring to this House, the other land at the Lazaretto and those lands at Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies so meaningfully occupy. I will give this Lower House my word and commitment that the Resolution requested by the Prime Minister, will be here before the House within the next four to six weeks.

I also want to go further and thank my colleagues who contributed to this debate and who also brought a different perspective and varying views. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West showed that under the last Administration the enrolment at the university dropped by some 40 per cent. She also gave us the insight into the plans for the University of the West Indies and the partnership with the Ministry of Education. The Honourable Member for St. James Central, I want to thank him. He looked at the key asset of Government and specifically the formal framework to be determined wholly to build out entrepreneurship and the drive of young people to utilise the skills and the institutions to create wealth among working class people. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central referred to the Sovereign Wealth Fund and the Public Wealth Fund; the utilisation and the management of our assets and also the utilisation of derelict properties and to have that register before Parliament and to see how best we can monetise that register. I want to thank the Member for St. Peter who brought the wholistic view on not only the value which the University has brought to this country but the decentralisation of the University and the assets that would benefit people within rural and urban Barbados. I want to thank you.

Mr. Speaker, while this debate was about the vesting of land, it spoke to several developmental thrusts within that institution, the University of the West Indies. It also spoke to the whole need to allow the University of the West Indies to become an independent and self-sufficient entity and to create a balance sheet that it can utilise its assets to monetise and to take the strain off Government. There is not much more that I can add, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister started this project and also put the icing on the cake this afternoon. With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I beg that the Resolution to vest 8.58 hectares (21.45 acres) of land....

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member. Please let the House revert to the details of the Resolution which is to be rescinded.

ORDER No. 6

To move the passing of a Resolution to rescind a Resolution passed by the Honourable the House of Assembly on the 16th Day of March, 2012, and the Honourable the Senate on the 28th Day of March, 2012 and published in the Official Gazette as Resolution No. 12 of 2012 on the 5th Day of April, 2012, approving the lease to American World Clinics Barbados Limited of a parcel of land, together with the buildings thereon, situate at Ashton Hall in the parish of St. Peter in this Island, for the development and operation of an international health centre.

Hon. D.G. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Resolution as cited -- No. 12 of 2012 that was passed on 3 April, 2012, to lease the St. Joseph Hospital's property to the American World Clinic Barbados Limited -- be rescinded.

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

The question that the Resolution cited as No. 12 of 2012 be rescinded was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDER No. 5

To move the passing of a Resolution to approve in accordance with Section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, CAP 225, the vesting in a commercial Special Purpose Vehicle in which the Government of Barbados will hold 25 per cent of the shares and the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill will hold the remaining 75 per cent of the parcel of land, the property of the State, formerly known as St. Joseph Hospital situate at Ashton Hall in the parish of St. Peter in this Island, for the purpose of a joint venture between the Government and the University of the West Indies.

Hon. D.G. SUTHERLAND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution to approve in accordance with Section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, CAP 225, to approve the vesting in a Commercial Special Purpose Vehicle in which the Government of Barbados will hold 25 per cent of the shares and the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill will hold the remaining 75 per cent on a plot of land, 21.485 acres, be now passed.

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

The question that the Resolution be passed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of Government Business.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the House be adjourned until 17 May at 10 a.m.

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

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, 17 May, 2022, at 10 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before we adjourn I wish to acknowledge the presence of Miss Alicia Todd, the

Director General of ParlAmericas which is headquartered in Canada. This organisation and institution provides tremendous assistance to the parliaments of the Caribbean and she is here to attend a meeting with United Nations Women; the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). I hope you have an enjoyable stay, Miss Todd and that you enjoy the warmth of Barbados and that you will go back and bring numerous visitors from Canada to this country. I hope you have an enjoyable stay in Barbados. This Honourable Chamber stands adjourned.

His Honour the SPEAKER adjourned the Sitting accordingly.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. *Heading, Order No. 5.* The heading reads 'THE VESTING - IN A COMMERCIAL SPECIAL SERVICE VEHICLE', while the Resolution as moved and the whole debate refer to a 'Special Purpose Vehicle'. The heading also spells 'GOVERNMNET'. Printed as in the source.

Q3. *Order No. 6.* The Order describes Resolution No. 12 of 2012 as passed by the House on 16th March, 2012, by the Senate on 28th March, 2012 and gazetted on 5th April, 2012, but Hon. D. G. Sutherland moves to rescind the Resolution 'passed on 3 April, 2012'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. *Order No. 5, speech of Hon. D. G. Sutherland.* The area of the site is given as 'some 21.45 acres ... as 8.69 hectares' and, later in the same speech and in the motion, as '8.698 hectares of land, some 21.485 acres'. Printed as in the source.

Q5. *Order No. 5, speech of Hon. D. G. Sutherland.* The history of the hospital's closure is given inconsistently: it 'eventually closed in 1995 under a BLP Administration', then 'When we came to office in 1994 ... it was closed down', and then 'We closed it in 2008'. Printed as in the source.

Q6. *Order No. 5, speech of Hon. K. D. Symmonds.* Mr. Symmonds congratulates 'the Honourable Member for St. Philip South who piloted this particular Resolution', although the mover, Hon. D. G. Sutherland, was called as the Member for St. George South. Printed as in the source.

Q7. *Opening.* The Speaker's words 'Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.' are run into the note on prayers rather than set as a separate speech. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at the Parliament Buildings on Tuesday, 26th April, 2022 at 10.00 a.m., the Speaker, His Honour A. E. Holder, presiding; prayers were taken by Rev. Father Mark Harewood. The Minutes of 23rd February, 14th March, 25th March and 29th March, 2022 were confirmed on the motion of Hon. Ms. S. J. O. Bradshaw, and Standing Orders were suspended. No papers were laid.

Orders No. 5 and No. 6 were taken as a cognate debate on the motion of Hon. D. G. Sutherland, the Member for St. George South: Order No. 6 to rescind Resolution No. 12 of 2012, which had approved the lease of the former St. Joseph Hospital at Ashton Hall, St. Peter to American World Clinics Barbados Limited, and Order No. 5 to vest the site, about 21.485 acres, under section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225 in a commercial Special Purpose Vehicle in which the Government would hold 25 per cent of the shares and the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill 75 per cent. Mr. Sutherland traced the history of the lands, bought by the State in 1988, and of the 2011 Memorandum of Understanding with American World Clinics, and said the Government had settled the University's debt of $220 million on taking office in 2018. When he sought to make a newspaper article a document of the House, the Speaker ruled that he could refer to it but could not table it as it was not authenticated.

Hon. C. E. Jordan, the Member for St. Peter, spoke of what the hospital meant to people of the north and of the celebration of Cuffee on 12th June in the National Season of Emancipation Calendar. Hon. K. D. Symmonds recalled the work of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother and said the previous Administration had turned away from the University. Ms. M. K.-A. Caddle called the purpose of the Resolution noble but said the specifics or broad framework of the venture should have been set out. Hon. Miss K. S. McConney said the vesting would help the University towards financial independence, and Dr. S. E. Browne welcomed the derelict site being put to use and spoke for the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

The Prime Minister, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, said she had learned on returning to office that even the Cave Hill lands were not vested in the University, that enrolment at Cave Hill had dropped by about 40 per cent after fees were introduced, and that her Government had reinstated payment of fees for Barbadians. She referred to a European Investment Bank loan of up to $60 million at 2 per cent, and suggested that the St. Joseph site and one at Harrison's Point could together serve healthcare in the north and an international medical market. Mr. Sutherland replied, thanking the contributors.

The Resolution rescinding Resolution No. 12 of 2012 and the Resolution vesting the land in the Special Purpose Vehicle were each agreed to without division. The

House was adjourned until Tuesday, 17th May, 2022 at 10.00 a.m., after the Speaker welcomed Miss Alicia Todd, Director General of ParlAmericas.