
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

THE SENATE

Wednesday, July 21, 1993

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, July 21, 1993, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator M. deL. JORDAN, (President)

His Honour Senator J. J. PAYNE, (Deputy President)

Senator the Honourable L. V. H. LEWIS, G.C.M., (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator A. MORRISON

Senator Mrs. V. C. FRASER, B.S.S., J.P., M.C.F.A.

Senator A. J. N. PHILLIPS, G.C.M.

Senator the Honourable Dr. C. D. CLARKE, (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)

Senator Dr. F. W. ALLEYNE

Senator Miss Y. V. WALKES

Senator Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH

Senator Dr. E. A. SIMMONS

Senator Mrs. A. STRAUGHN, G.C.M.

Senator W. L. INNISS

Senator J. A. F. COLE

Senator Miss M. A. MOTTLEY

Senator T. C. BECKLES.

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY, THE ACTING GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have the honour to report that the following message has been received from His

Excellency, the Acting Governor-General to the Honourable Senate:

"His Excellency, the Acting Governor-General has the honour to inform the Honourable the Senate that on the recommendation of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition under Section 3(1) of the Ombudsman Act, Cap. 8A he proposes to appoint Clifton Carlton Browne, Esquire to the Office of Ombudsman established by Section 2 of the said Act.

His Excellency further has the honour to seek the approval of the Honourable the Senate for the proposed appointment pursuant to Section 3(2) of the said Act."

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following document: The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Barbados Port Authority for the year ending 31st December, 1992.

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF SITTINGS OF THE SENATE AND MOVED BY A MINISTER

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 45(2) to enable this Honourable Senate to deal with one or two matters which notice was given of and which first reading will take place later today.

The question that Standing Order 45(2) be suspended for the duration of the sitting was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, while I have no difficulty in supporting the Leader on two matters, there is a third matter which I noticed on the Order Paper today that deals with a Resolution vesting land in the National Housing Corporation which I have just seen for the first time. We had notice of the other two before.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Yes, but Senator Barker, surely that could be raised after I have disposed of the question which I am just raising. This has nothing to do with this. I am not hindering you doing that but when we have disposed of this matter not in the midst of it. Are you discussing the motion before the Chair?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I was under the misapprehension of the suspension of the relevant Standing Order. If that is so, I withdraw.

The question that Standing Order 45(2) be suspended for the remainder of this sitting was put to the Senate and agreed to.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Yes, Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I was just highlighting the fact concerning this particular Resolution dealing with the National Housing Corporation that I have just seen five minutes ago. I hope that the Leader is not attempting to deal with this matter today because I am not prepared to deal with this today. Regarding the other matters, there is no problem. But this particular one I am only seeing for the first time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you for the observation. Senator Lewis.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Sir, all I will say to the Honourable Senator is that today is a sitting and we have an Order Paper with three items. When we get to the item and he is not willing to deal with it, we can deal with the matter then. But the fact is that this is an Order Paper which we have to dispose of today. There is a fourth matter, Sir, which may be we can take when we start Public Business. But there is another matter which is not there which has to do with our response to that Message from His Excellency the Acting Governor-General. We also have to dispose of that Resolution.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Sir, on a point of clarification.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Morrison, what are you rising on did you say?

SENATOR A. MORRISON: On a point of clarification on the same Order Paper, Sir. I have a

communication in my possession from the Clerk of Parliament which does not tally with the Order Paper today either. I have on this communication that Public Business shall be such of the following that the House of Assembly passes during the sitting of Tuesday, July 20, 1993:

- (1) A Bill to amend the Barbados Foreign Sales Corporation Act;
- (2) A Resolution to approve the borrowing of the equivalent in Barbados dollars of the sum of US\$7 800 000 from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to assist in financing the Human Resources Project;
- (3) Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, 1993.

Now this Order Paper No. 43 here has on the following:

- (1) To move the First Reading of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, 1993;
- (2) To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the borrowing of the equivalent in Barbados dollars of the sum of US\$ 7 800 000 from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to assist in financing the Human Resources Project;
- (3) To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the vesting in the National Housing Corporation of the parcel of land situate at Thomas Gap, President Kennedy Drive in the parish of Saint Michael.

This particular Resolution does not appear on the communication from the Clerk. I got mixed up with the two communications and I would like to draw this to the attention of the Senate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much for your observation.
11.25 a.m.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: I will respond to that, Mr. President, merely to say that it is my information that the House did not deal with the Barbados Foreign Sales Corporation Act and that is why it is not on today's Order Paper. Although notice was given, it is not on the Order Paper because it was not dealt with in the Other Place and we cannot deal with it before they deal with it.

We are seeking leave, Mr. President, of the Senate to deal with a matter that is of some great urgency relating to the vesting of land, vestings that we do in this Honourable Senate nearly every time we meet, and I really do not understand how any difficulties are being created.

Senator Barker rose.

Mr. PRESIDENT: On what do you wish to speak, Senator Barker?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, on the same matter. The Honourable Leader of the Senate said there is some urgency about this particular Resolution. He just said he is seeking leave of the Chamber to discuss a matter, given that the relevant notice was not given, because there is some urgency. Perhaps, Sir, through you we can ask the Leader of the Senate to explain to us what is the urgency of the situation.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you. This will be done.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I beg to move the First Reading of a Bill entitled an Act to make further provisions for technical and vocational education and training and for matters related or incidental thereto.

I move that this Bill be read a first time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 - THE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL BILL, 1993

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill seeks to establish a Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council to, *inter alia*, advise the Minister on policy relating to technical and vocational education and training, and also to establish an Employment and Training Fund to be used generally for the purposes of promoting and supporting training, and the upgrading of skills for the labour force, and provide for other matters related or incidental thereto.

In introducing legislation, Mr. President, I always seek to ensure that the Honourable Senate is clear on the need for the introduction of such legislation. I believe that the attorneys tend to ask the question, what mischief is the legislation seeking to correct? At present there are many

institutions involved in training and job placement. Unfortunately, the activities of these agencies are not always as articulated and co-ordinated as they otherwise ought to be, especially so within a developing country. In a developing country resources are scarce and because of the very nature of development, which is dynamic, the response time necessary is faster in order to get new programmes going. As the institutions now stand, we find that they are not as responsive to the training needs of the country as we would hope in the current circumstances.

If we were to take a look at some examples, Mr. President, first the National Employment Bureau. This is a Division of the Labour Department and this registers people seeking employment. Some of the people who use its services may be unemployed and others, although employed, might be seeking to upgrade their skills in order to find different jobs. This agency then seeks to find jobs for the applicants and invariably it does so without a thorough and in-depth testing of the individual and/or an evaluation of the job market.

We also have the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College, both of them providing formal training for students, most of whom are just out of school. This training is generally conducted without surveys as to the needs of the present job market and also without a good feel for what the future job market is likely to be. In addition, the students enrolled in these two institutions must have achieved some academic proficiency and, as matters now stand, very little credit or recognition is given for work experience or on the job training. Thus persons having left school and working at a trade, although gaining valuable experience, will find it difficult to re-enter a formal educational institution to acquire the necessary formal training to become certified. In addition, these two institutions - the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic - prepare students for certification usually by external bodies. I believe it is only within recent times that the Associate Degree and other programmes have been introduced within the Barbados Community College, but invariably certification has usually been by external bodies.

We also have the National Training Board and this, as it now stands, provides skills training and apprenticeship programmes without much attention being paid to the level of skills required in the present and future job market. Although both of them fall under the same Ministry, there is a lack of, or not sufficient, co-ordination between the National Training Board and the National Employment Bureau. Thus we find students or graduates of the apprenticeship programmes and skills training programme of the National Training Board, upon successful completion of these programmes, if they demonstrate the aptitude, motivation and skills to benefit from further formal

tertiary training, more often than not they find it difficult to enroll in either the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic or the Barbados Community College, because they do not meet the minimum academic requirements. In spite of their performance at the National Training Board, if they are lucky to be accepted, then they have to subject themselves to courses being offered in the day when most of these students are experienced and highly motivated and are likely to be working during the day-time hours.

11.35 a.m.

What I am saying here, Mr. President, is that provision is not made for adults to re-enter institutions of higher learning if they are ahead in the work force and if they have dropped out of school, having now become more highly motivated, they are now seeking to re-enter an educational institution but they lack those basic requirements. Having proven themselves in the world of work, they still find it difficult to get into these tertiary institutions which will be the institutions preparing them for certification.

In addition to these institutions, we also have the Manpower Survey Unit of the Ministry of Labour and this Unit carries out regular manpower surveys in terms of the jobs available in the work force. But again the information gathered has very little impact or influence on the courses offered by the National Training Board, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic or the Barbados Community College.

We do recognise, Mr. President, that training is a very costly exercise. I turn now to the private sector. Many firms are afraid of providing formal training, either within its own work place or by enlisting the support of one of the governmental institutions, of putting on courses for employees who have demonstrated that they can benefit from such programmes for fear that such highly skilled and motivated employees, at the satisfactory completion of their training, will leave their firms for higher wages at other firms which did not undertake the training costs.

A firm might be willing to encourage its employees to go ahead and enrol at one of the tertiary institutions in order to upgrade his or her skills but is afraid to do so because the individual upon returning is likely to demand higher wages. If that firm which gave it the time off to benefit from higher training does not accommodate this request, then of course he goes off to another firm. The net result of this is that there is not sufficient training taking place within the country.

Thus, in the face of these realities, by establishing the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council this will seek to:

- (1) coordinate all the technical and vocational training between the private and the public sectors which will take care of the cases I just mentioned;
- (2) grant certificates equivalent to the current external bodies to all students who successfully complete their courses;
- (3) articulate programmes between the National Training Board, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College in order to avoid duplication and also to assist students to achieve their educational potential.
- (4) it will ensure that all training undertaken by the National Training Board is training necessary to fill present or immediate future jobs as determined by the Manpower Survey Unit, the National Employment Bureau and the private sector;
- (5) to provide formal training courses in the evening so that students currently working do not have to resign their jobs in order to avail themselves of a formal training;
- (6) training will be provided in such a way that students can acquire credits or certification at various levels of training and these credits and/or certificates will allow them to proceed to higher levels of training if pursued within specific time frames.

That is, one can go into the world of work or into a programme under TVET and go back into the world of work rather than having to complete the programme throughout. The earning capacity of the individual is not lost and he is able to plan and programme his education at his own pace.

The constitution of the Council is set out in the First Schedule attached to the Bill and has as its main features the following:

1. The membership of the Council shall be as follows:
 - (a) the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the Environment, ex officio;
 - (b) the Chief Education Officer, ex officio;
 - (c) the Executive Director of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council; and

(d) the following persons appointed by the Minister:

- (i) 3 members appointed on recommendations of the associations which represent employers;
- (ii) 3 members appointed on recommendations of the Boards of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College;
- (iii) 2 members appointed on recommendations of the trade unions.

The functions of this Council are:

- (a) to advise the Minister on policy relating to technical and vocational education and training;
- (b) to prepare plans for technical and vocational education and training in accordance with national policies and economic needs;
- (c) to ensure that agreed plans for technical and vocational education and training are implemented;
- (d) to coordinate technical and vocational education and training at the tertiary level;
- (e) to establish standards for technical and vocational education and training;
- (f) to establish training priorities, tests, qualifications and accreditation;
- (g) to determine the facilities and resources required to ensure satisfactory standards of technical and vocational education and training and the welfare of students, trainees and staff of training institutions;
- (h) to advise the Minister on the allocation of resources for technical and vocational education and training;
- (i) to make grants and loans for the support and provision of technical and vocational education and training;
- (j) to carry out such other functions relating to technical and vocational education and training as the Minister may require.

The staff shall consist of amongst others an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the Council and be responsible over all for the administration of the Act. His powers shall be derived from the Council. The Council shall appoint such other staff as may be required for the purposes of this Act.

Let me hasten to add here that if we are talking about the appointment of staff and about an institution that should be flexible enough to deal with developmental needs of our country, then, of course, you will expect that most of the staffing arrangements will have to be by nature on a contractual basis so that the response time to have staff on board to develop programmes as they are identified... We must be in a position to be able to respond to those needs and entrenched staff with tenure cannot be that responsive to most of the programmes that would be coming on stream 5 and 10 years from now where training will be identified. This is one of the characteristics of this new Council which will give us the flexibility necessary to deal with the needs as identified within the country.

11.45 a.m.

There shall be an Employment and Training Fund established under this Act. The Fund shall be used generally for the purposes of promoting and supporting training, and the upgrading of skills for the labour force, and more particularly for the following:

- (a) to provide financial assistance such as grants and loans for training and skills upgrading;
- (b) to subsidise the costs incurred by employers in training and retraining of employees in accordance with the criteria established by the Council;
- (c) to support training programmes in accordance with national priorities, including training for retrenched workers and self-employed persons.

The resources of the Fund shall be

- (a) monies voted by Parliament for the purposes of the Fund;
- (b) monies made available to the Fund out of the training levy established by the Occupational Training Act; and
- (c) any other monies, whether from gifts, grants or otherwise provided for the purposes of the Fund.

The Council may, with the approval of the Minister formulate schemes for regulating training in any occupation.

There is a penalty for offences committed under the Act. A person guilty of an offence under the Act is liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$2 500 or imprisonment for a year or both.

This Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by Proclamation.

I might add at this point that in anticipation of the coming into force of this Act, the National Training Board has recently developed an incubator programme for students who have graduated from that programme from either the apprenticeship programme or the skills training programme, and are now ready to enter the world of work, in those disciplines which require tools and/or equipment, and/or accommodation such as housing. The National Training Board is currently making arrangements with those students to rent them equipment, especially in off hours of the National Training Board and also to provide for them housing, that is, space so that they can pursue their skills.

What this will necessarily do is we are not saying that it is sufficient to give the skill to an individual and say, go out there and get funding because invariably the individual has no collateral which most of the banks demand in order to set up his own shop. So by making tools available to new graduates at a rental fee we are reducing the cost of operation, and by making space available to him we are also reducing the cost of rentals. This is being done when those facilities and equipment and tools are not in demand for the other programmes which are being run by the Board.

With those comments, Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I must confess that I am very confused with regards to this particular piece of legislation. It is far-reaching and it has a lot of implications for some institutions which are presently in force, for example, the National Training Board. I will come to that a little bit later.

Sir, I want to preface my remarks by saying that I am glad that the time has come where the whole business of technical and vocational education is now in the public domain. In the past, we have been served in Barbados with tradesmen of exceptional skill. There is no doubt that our joiners are among the best in the world. They have built up a reputation and a tradition which has spread far beyond the shores of this particular Island and they have made tremendous contribution to national development and, indeed, to national life.

I am not as old as some other Honourable Members in here so they are better able to talk on the importance of

the tradesmen in the scheme of things, in the village, the blacksmiths, joiners, tailors and so on. They played a tremendous role in society as a whole and they, indeed, were men of some stature within society. Any measure which is seeking to improve the status of this group of person will get my support. On a personal note, I am a son of a tradesman also.

Sir, there is urgent need for us to look at this situation with regard to technical and vocational education as we seek to put Barbados into the 21st Century. It is something that we must, as a society, do as a matter of some urgency because what we notice now is that the status of the tradesman and the artisan class has diminished somewhat over the years and it is not to the betterment of the society. So the first task, in my view, would be to find measures of improving the self-esteem and the importance of this particular class of people.

Sir, we are in an unemployment situation which threatens to overwhelm us where unofficial reports have the unemployment figure as high as 30%. I do not know what the official figure is but unofficially it is around 30%. I am told, Sir, that the last official figure was 27.1% at the end of March, the end of the first quarter, and it is rising.

In addition to looking at the whole business of technical education, Sir, we must look at the other end of the scale. Right now there are thousands of artisans in Barbados who are unemployed. While we are looking at technical education I just want to bring in this point because I want to get Government to recognise that there is an urgent need to stimulate demand in the economy so that our artisans would be able then to be more productive because right now too many steel-benders, masons, joiners and so on are now in the unemployment line.
11.55 a.m.

Because right now a lot of them, too many of them, too many steelbenders, masons, joiners and so on are now in the unemployment line. That is something which also while we are talking about education, we must make sure that down the line we provide, if not by stimulating demand within the economy, by seeking exports markets for the goods that our quality artisans are producing day by day. The BIDC is important in this regard. While we are talking about technical education, at the end of the line the artisans make goods which must be sold in order for them to be productive. That is something we must also look at.

As we look at the unemployment situation also we know that a lot of our young people especially those who are under the age of 19 – the latest figure at the end of 1992 shows that out of 8 300 persons in the labour force who are under 20 some 5 000 of them, close to 60% of them were unemployed. This figure that I got was to the

end of December last year which showed that about 60% of our people age 15 to 19 are or were at that time unemployed.

This brings me to another fundamental question. When a youngster leaves school at age 16 because under our Administration we raised the school leaving age from 14 to 16. I mean the minimum school leaving age. We have a lot of children who have left school at age 16. A lot of them and, indeed, too many of them have left school without skills. Some of them have left schools without certification. But we have not devised a plan as yet to deal with those 16-year olds. We are not effectively using their skills, whatever innate skills they have and their energy in a meaningful way. I wonder if the time has not come where we need an islandwide apprenticeship scheme, a more effective apprenticeship scheme to cater to those youngsters who have to enter the labour market who are age 16, 17, 18 and those who have just left school who have not done as well at school as they should have done and hence are not likely to seek tertiary education.

If we are not going to have a youth scheme of the type that was proposed 10 or so years where they get some sort of military training, we need to get an islandwide apprenticeship system, like what happened maybe 50, 60 years ago where the fellow who left school at age 14 after leaving seventh standard he went and joined himself with a tradesman be it a tailor, carpenter or whatever and where, for the first couple of years when he is learning, although this may have been exploited as I said, he is not really earning as such but he is learning. I feel the state can come in here now and devise a proper scheme where that youngster is not exploited but rather he is put in the care of a competent tradesman who will teach him the necessary skills. That is something we can look at as a means of dealing with the high level of unemployment in that particular age group.

I am talking of between age 16 and 19. It is something that is a matter of grave urgency because I am very distressed when I see many boys who have left school at age 16. Some have left with high hopes but because of the situation there is nothing for them to do. It seems as though society has abandoned them. We see them now almost at every street corner soon to enter the ranks of the lawless. We have to find a scheme so that when a fellow leaves school at age 16 he is in some scheme. If he is no longer in the educational system, he must be either in the military or in some apprenticeship scheme.

But we cannot allow our 16-year olds to leave school and just lie idle. That is when they are vulnerable to all sorts of evil influences. We need an islandwide scheme where every young man is taught some skill. At age 16 if he is not in tertiary education he must learn some skill as a matter of urgency otherwise we would end up with further chaos in our social order.

As we develop these apprenticeship schemes we need to bring in some of our old and retired artisans who over the years have built up a wealth of knowledge and expertise. A lot of them have retired and they may be in a position to pass on their skills to the younger generation. Because I do not think that as a society we can afford to totally lose the skills of those artisans. That, Sir, is something that we have to look at as we further develop an apprenticeship scheme.

Therefore if we look at the unemployment situation again we see that a lot of young ladies are among the ranks of the unemployed. Some of them can be trained, they are trainable in such areas as hat making, dress making and so on because we still have a big suitcase trade which is still killing our garment industry. If we can find a way where we can get some of the young girls more involved in this important area of activity, we can find something for them to do because there is an old adage that "The devil finds work for idle hands to do." We cannot afford to have these young ladies who are very vulnerable without meaningful employment.

Sir, the whole area of, as I mentioned before clothes making and the food industry. Teach them skills – I am sure I would get the support of some Members on the other side – like making preserves and jellies and so on. It is very important that we find things for our young people to do. That is very, very important especially in the light of the present difficulties.

I have no problem with the attempt, albeit in some areas misguided attempt, by the Government to look at the whole area of technical and vocational education.

I want to make another point here and this has to do with the question of perception. It is perceived that the person who gets into technical or vocational education is the fellow who did not do well at school. That is a perception. It is one that we have to remove as soon as possible because it is killing our development thrust. We believe that the best of our children should be doctors and lawyers and whatever and those who have not succeeded should go and learn – as people would say – a trade.

I believe that the whole business of technical education needs to be looked at again where we can encourage some of our best brains, some of our brightest young men and women. We should be encouraging them to move into technical fields. Because as we move into a new era, so to speak, as we move into a more competitive world, almost a global village where the emphasis now must be on productivity, where the emphasis must be on competitiveness we need some of our brightest young men and women moving into these areas where they can bring their imagination and their creativity and their

academic training to bear on the particular industry which they have chosen for themselves.

12.05 p.m.

Sir, in this regard, when I read the proposal by the Minister of Education for the 14+ examination, I noticed that he devised a system where at age 14 there would be three types of schools. You would have the old time grammar school and he mentioned 4 schools there. Then you would have the commercial schools and ...

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, I believe the Honourable Senator is debating something that is not before us. I do not know that it is something before either of the two Chambers.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Clarke. At that very point I was looking into my papers here to see if there was anything in this which I had missed which he was perhaps referring to before making a statement. You are quite right, Senator Clarke. I heard him and I started quickly to look into my Bill here to see if there was something which I had missed.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, if you would allow me to make my point you would see where I am coming from because, Sir, the Honourable Minister was quick to jump up without even listening. I was pointing to the fact, Sir, that the Minister proposed academic studies for one group of schools, commercial for another and technical and vocational training ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Oh, but Senator Barker, we are not debating that. We have to debate the Bill before us, not something which is purported and maybe in the media or something like that to be so. We can only debate what is before us.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, Senator Barker is accusing me of introducing. He said the Minister proposed something. I did not propose.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I apologise but I meant the Minister of Education in his proposal about the 14+.

Sir, the point I am making was that he proposed certain schools for academic training – Harrison College, Queen's College, Lodge and Combermere. Certain schools for commercial. I cannot remember the exact number but I know that St. Michael was one of them, Alexandra was one and a few others. And he ended up with two schools

for technical and vocational training and those two schools were the St. Leonard's Girls and the St. Leonard's Boys. So, Sir, he put, by inference, technical and vocational training at the bottom of the ladder so to speak. He picked out certain schools for academic, certain schools for commercial and at the bottom of the pile he mentioned two schools for technical education. So, Sir, I just wanted to make that point. I want to see a consistency in Government's policy. Here we are, Sir, discussing a Bill for technical and vocational education and on the other hand now we see the Minister of Education proposing a different sort of set up.

SENATOR Miss Y. V. WALKES: Mr. President, I rise on a point of order. It is not a policy of the Government if the Senator who just sat down is referring to the proposal sent out by the Minister of Education. That is not a policy of the Government. It is a personal suggestion.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I agree with that because the Prime Minister recommends that – because the Prime Minister said in other words that it was bare foolishness. But the point is that ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: But you cannot attribute something of the sort. Did he say that it is bare foolishness?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: No, Sir, he did not say those words.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Then you will withdraw that.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I have no problem withdrawing it but I just say the Prime Minister did not think much of the proposal because he put forward an alternative proposal. Sir, the point I want to make is that there is confusion and if you are talking about technical and vocational training it must start, Sir, not at age 16 but you must prepare the children for it almost from the time they get into the primary school. You must gear your education to a technological age. You must have the educational system in such a way that when the fellow comes to age 16 he is prepared academically for vocational and technical education. We must not feel as seems to be the thinking of some members in the camp of the DLP that vocational and technical training must be for those who do not succeed academically. That is wrong. As I said before, we must encourage some of our brightest young men and women to move into that area. Technical education must be at the forefront of national educational policy. It must not be in the background but it must be at the forefront as we seek to develop our society, especially to meet the needs of the 21st century which we will be stepping into in a few years.

Sir, I am having difficulty to see how this particular Bill ties in with the Occupational Training Act, CAP 42 of the Laws of Barbados. I notice, Sir, that in this particular legislation, in the First Schedule on page 19, this particular Bill has implications for the Occupational Training Act, CAP. 42 where it says that the particular Act, CAP. 42 is amended in certain ways. For example it says that in section 2, delete the definition "Board" and substitute the following where it says: "'Board" means the Barbados Vocational Training Board established by section 3." Section 3 says that there is to be established a Board to be known as the National Training Board which is a body corporate to which section 21 of the Interpretation Act applies.

Now section 3 is amended by deleting the words "National Training Board" and substituting the words "Barbados Vocational Training Board".

Sir, I have a slight problem that this Bill here speaks about a technical and vocational education and training council. I hope I am wrong but nowhere in this Bill mentions a vocational training board. It mentions a technical and vocational education and training council.

I hope, Sir, that I have not missed something but I was looking for reference to the Barbados Vocational Training Board. So as I said previously I am very confused because the situation is confusing. I am not clear as to what is meant by the Barbados Vocational Training Board.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please address the Chair, Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, does this Act mean that the National Training Board is gone? I get the impression that the old National Training Board no longer exists but in its place, according to this Act, is something called the Barbados Vocational Training Board but this Bill is to establish a training council with particular powers and so on. So, Sir, I am at a loss and I am sure, Sir, that some others of us are at a loss also.

Mr. PRESIDENT: All right, Senator Barker, I am sure the Minister will enlighten us.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I wish he would, Sir, but what I might have to say might to some extent depend upon the explanation that he might give. In any case, Sir, CAP. 42 which is referred to in this Bill has, as part of it, some schedules and the First Schedule is for the constitution of a National Training Board and the Second Schedule is for the constitution of the committees. The First Schedule is for the constitution of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council. The Second Schedule is for the constitution of committees. Probably, Sir, those Schedules would no longer apply. But the point

I want to make is this, Sir. Why do we have this particular Bill we are discussing as well as the Occupational Training Bill? Would it have not been a tidier arrangement to have repealed this Occupational Training Bill, CAP. 42 and in its place put this Bill along with the relevant portions of the old Bill that you may want to keep? I was looking at it for the whole morning and I am not clear and I am sure, Sir, the Government is not clear on exactly what they want to do.

12.15 p.m.

Certain remarks made were asked to be expunged from the record by Mr. PRESIDENT.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Hearing him speak with such authority, I certainly had thought that he had consulted you before. I am very glad that you have set the record straight, Senator Alleyne. Now you may proceed.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I can assure the Honourable Chamber that there are many occasions where I can speak...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Never mind. He set the record straight so we will go on.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: He knows that I know a lot about him. Sir, I would like the Minister to clear up all of these things with regards to technical and vocational training. Is Chapter 42 still in existence and how does it tie in with this new piece of legislation? There is an urgent need for the Minister to clarify the whole situation especially since he was not in the Other Place to make the situation clear.

Sir, there is another point which I want to highlight and this is in regards to the composition of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council. It mentions specifically in the First Schedule that three members are appointed on the recommendations of the Boards of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College.

Sir, the University is, to some extent, the leading tertiary education institution on the island. I find it strange that they do not have an input to make in an area that is as important as technical and vocational education. I do not know that it is an omission or slight. But the point is that, if we are talking about a Council which is going to coordinate all technical and vocational training on the island, Sir, I believe that the University of the West Indies must be represented. In a sense, Sir, they are in the business of training teachers to some extent in areas which are going to be needed like mathematics, physics and so on for technical education. So I find it very, very strange

that, while the other tertiary education institutions are represented by right on the proposed Council, no specific mention was made of our premier institution of the University of the West Indies.

Sir, probably the Minister can enlighten us as to why the University was left off from the Council which had an automatic right.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, you are repeating yourself. We have heard you say that a number of times. Go ahead.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I also see that there are two members appointed by the recommendation of the trade unions. Again, Sir, whenever I see that, I have a problem because there are six or more unions. What mechanism is the Minister going to put in place? Whose recommendations is he going to take with regards to the members who are there on the recommendation of the trade unions. The same thing goes for those who are appointed on the recommendation of associations which represent employers. There are lots of people who have inputs to make. There are people out there with knowledge and ideas who are not in either the Employers Confederation or the Chamber of Commerce. How are we going to get the views of those people? It mentions specifically that three members are appointed on the recommendation of the associations which represent employers. There are lots of small artisans maybe who have employed 2, 4 or 6 people and who are not in these organisations. Perhaps the Minister can widen his net to bring in one or two of those persons who have a contribution to make, especially when it comes to technical and vocational training.

Sir, I see those three points on the constitution of the Council that the Minister needs to look at again. Because we want to make sure that we have a wide representation on this particular Council. We are tired of hearing the same names on everything because there are lots of people in Barbados who are the unsound heroes so to speak, who because they may not be shouting too loudly never get a chance in national forum to let the Island of Barbados know that they, too, have ideas with regards to the development of our country especially in an area such as this. The Minister can take note of what I have said. I know, Sir, it is not going to make an impression, but at least he can take note of what I have said with a view of making sure of the widest representation on this particular Council.

Sir, as I said before, there is confusion. But I am glad that technical and vocational education is again on the national platform. I hope that the Minister will take account of what is said not only in here but in other places, because

in the final analysis we are talking about our future as we develop into the 21st century. Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Simmons.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. President. I want to give my support to this Bill and to make a few comments. But before I go on to make those comments, I think that I have to say something about what Senator Barker kept harping about and that that was his confusion. Senator Barker definitely was confused because he demonstrated in his logic his confusion. One of the things Senator Barker said was that in the present school system because of the number of drop-outs we should start a programme of technical training to incorporate the drop-outs into the main stream of society. You said that earlier in your discussion that the sixteen year olds...

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, are you speaking on a point of order?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Yes, Sir. I never used the word "drop-out" about the sixteen year olds. The sixteen year olds have to leave school because their age is up. They are not really drop-outs as such.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Are you saying that sixteen year olds are not drop-outs and that is what you object to? All right. Senator Simmons, you may continue. He did not refer to them as drop-outs.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: The people who are at the age of sixteen who did not acquire the academic ability to continue that we should get these people and train them for technical skills. Then he went on to make a mistake that we keep making in Barbados all of the time. He was saying that if we look at the Barbados of old you will see that from the pool of people then came those great carpenters, joiners and so on. I want to remind you that those people did not have access to the educational system that we have access to today. Those people, therefore, had potentially great brains and that is why we were able to produce such skilled craftsmen because that school of skilled craftsmen came from people who did not have the educational opportunity to get into Harrison College or Combermere but were bright. I make that point because we keep getting into this thing that when we think people fail the academic system we can take them and make good carpenters and masons out of them. This is a fundamental mistake. To train people technically for the technical skills you need people with good brain potential, so whereas in the second part of your discussion you argued that, in the first part you were saying the opposite, so I understand your confusion. We have to be very careful. I agree with you totally that we have to look seriously at how we

deal with the pool of children who cannot make it academically at the age of 16 and see how best we can bring them back into the mainstream of society. But to suggest that we are going to turn them into skilled craftsmen is a fundamental mistake we are making.
12.25 p.m.

Mr. President, I want to make some comments on this Bill. I think it is a very good concept but it needs to be enlarged. If we look at the Barbados of old, we will see that Barbados over the last century has made great contributions not only to education in the Caribbean, but beyond. For the past 25 years Barbados has been in an almost unique position where we have had access to free education at all levels. I have said already in this Honourable Chamber that I do not think there is 166 square miles of land any place that has the intellect, intelligence and training as we have on this 166 square miles in Barbados. Therefore, when we talk about training for access to markets, we have to look beyond Barbados. We cannot see Barbados as the only area for which we will be training people. The world today is becoming a single world and just as in days of old the trained people from Barbados went not only to the Caribbean, but they went to Panama and Cuba, then to the United States and later some of our skilled people went to London to refuel their engine of transports systems that were failing, we have to look at Barbados in that concept again with respect to a vocational training programme with technical education as its base.

In the Caribbean today we are seeing the transformation of Guyana. Guyana will be needing a pool of skilled people. Right now there are multinational corporations moving into Guyana and transforming the landscape there. We know that there will be massive building programmes, road programmes, hotel building, *et cetera*, and in Guyana there is going to be the need therefore for the kind of people that the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Barbados Community College and other schools put out. So I think when this Council is looking at the development of such a programme, we have to look at widening the territory and because we are, in a sense, the hub of education in the Caribbean, there is something else we have to look at in a world that is rapidly changing. We have to look at providing facilities for the training of other developing countries, and here Barbados has an important role to play. I am not saying that these should be free services, there are many developing countries who would like to have access to the training facilities of a polytechnic, of a community college, and Barbados can provide these facilities and earn hard currency. The point I am making is that when this Council sits down to look at this new concept of education, it must not be a concept that is to provide people only for occupation within Barbados but beyond the shores of Barbados, something that Barbados has traditionally done for years.

Secondly, the concept of looking at Barbados as a centre for education for other developing countries. We are moving into an age of informatics. When you look at other developing countries Barbados is very well placed for providing information for the development of other countries. If you look across the Atlantic Ocean to southern Africa, for example, with South Africa going through rapid change where at this time next year the black population will be looking forward to the changes that must be put in place by the new African Government, I am saying that Barbados and the Caribbean have a fundamental role to play in terms of providing technical assistance. If we look across the Caribbean sea to a place like Haiti, for example, I maintain that you cannot have a transformation of the political system in Haiti unless the Caribbean plays a very important role in putting in the infrastructural democratic structures that are needed for the development.

These are areas we have to look at, because nobody is going to come into the Caribbean and solve the Caribbean problems overnight, we have to solve the problems ourselves. What I am saying, Mr. President, is that any such Council has to move from before its mind just the narrow concept of dealing with Barbados alone. We have to think beyond those boundaries, and once we think beyond those boundaries, once we put in place a plan, then we can succeed. I do not think that in Barbados alone we can sustain levels of high employment in the world that is restructuring, because Barbados is not the only place restructuring, the whole world is filled with unemployment. One of the major problems in Europe is unemployment, therefore we must look at what Barbados has traditionally done in the past, and that is to export trained people. Once we export trained people we will get that back in financial benefits. There is no doubt about that.

These are some of the observations I wanted to make. I think the concept is a wonderful concept, but I think we need to look at some wider parameters in terms of how Barbados can best benefit by the setting up of this Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council.

I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. V. C. FRASER: Mr. President, in supporting the Bill I want to say that I am very happy this is going to happen, but I also want to straighten up a few things that Senator Barker has said which are not specifically correct.

We have a Youth Service which is very popular with the youth and plans are being made to expand that service. They learn all sorts of things, as he said, but they are placed in various institutions and work places, so that they get a hands-on knowledge of the skill they want to pursue. About two or three of them have been into the area

of broadcasting and are involved in the media now. These people came from the Youth Service and they did that as a sort of cadet scheme where during the summer they went in and did work with them, learnt the skills, and after two years they were able to continue the training and people have employed them. There are several other business places that have employed them because they have the skills and they come from the Youth Service. The discipline is so good in that Youth Service that we have been able to reform a number of young people who were drug addicts, who were going down the wrong road and all sorts of things.

I want Senator Barker to know that it is still going. It should have been started long ago, but for some reason people did not seem to understand that it was necessary. Perhaps we would not have had so many unemployed young people if we had started that quite early.

It is not correct to say that we do not have technical and vocational education at the secondary schools. I stand here as a Deputy Chairman of a secondary school board because I sat here as a Deputy Chairman of a secondary school board and we do have technical and vocational education. There are students who go to the Polytechnic to do electrical engineering, electrical fittings, mechanics and even some of them are doing carpentry and masonry much to the distaste of some of the families who do not want them to do these things. These children have been so interested and have talked to the career guidance counsellor in the schools and they are adequately suited for these kinds of things.

12.35 p.m.

Certainly, this whole point that was mentioned about the types of skills that people can acquire I find interesting because here you have the Youth Service, the Polytechnic, the Community College, the School for Continuing Education at the University and the National Development Foundation and these institutions are all geared towards technical and vocational study. You have children from the various schools going to the Polytechnic on a weekly basis, sometimes twice a week or so, doing technical drawing or things like that and they are doing technical drawing in the actual schools and business studies and handicraft.

I wanted to make these points very clear that there were not only 2 schools in Barbados doing it and it was not something that people from the lower echelons of the society do. That is something that is wrong. I think what we have to do now in starting this Council is to ensure that we educate the public and make them understand what this Council is all about and what it is going to do to help with the unemployment situation in the future.

In the meanwhile, we have a number of resources that we have to continue to utilise until such time as this

Council comes into being. I think people are utilising them very heavily at the Craft Guild which is a private organisation which gets some assistance from the IDC and from the NDF. I think these organisations must be encouraged because you have some people whom nobody has taught certain skills but they are doing them. I don't want to use myself as an exhibit A or B, but I want to say that the earrings and necklace I am wearing was done from bits and pieces of fabric and these young people are making these things and selling them to stores. As a matter of fact, I know of one store owner who has completely pushed out all the foreign earrings and necklaces and he is carrying all local. There is another one carrying local things in Sheraton as well.

Gradually these young people who are very smart because some of them can use a computer very well... They are computer literate. They are not fools and they have had a good basic background. I think in Barbados we must understand that when you have had a good background in the elementary school and then some area in the secondary school you can go any part of the world. We are known and we still are known for a very good basic background in education. Our people are quite literate and they will use their hands. Now I would like to suggest that support and information should be enlisted from any of the tradesmen and craftsmen out there who might just be out there relaxing. I feel they should be asked to come up with some suggestion to send to this Council and I feel they will because they are interested in helping but they feel that no one has asked them to help. Therefore, I feel that we need to solicit all that we can from the tradesmen.

I notice that we have a section which will have committees and some of them will be dealing with things like research. I am happy about this because we have a lot of indigenous raw material out there that can make a number of items which can be sold on the overseas market to earn foreign exchange. Every big country utilises bits and pieces. If you leave off a bit of fabric from something you make it into a case for eye-glasses in Africa or something that can be used and sold throughout the world. Therefore, there is no reason why in Barbados we cannot utilise all the bits and pieces of materials that we throw away.

Saying this, we are going to have a doll show in Barbados tomorrow, I think. Again you may think it sounds slight, but Barbados is earning a lot of money from dolls especially ones in school uniforms. The tourist love them. Also dolls in traditional Barbados wear – the nutsellers and different people.

These are people who have not had the benefit of a secondary education but they have been able to develop their skills and have gone into a wide area, doll baskets

and all sorts of things that we can use as packaging material to send things abroad to other countries. They look very attractive. They are well finished and they pass all the various required standards so they can stand up to anything. They, indeed, have been bought and the people are earning money. So let's not think that these people cannot do it.

One of the areas that I think we should tread on very carefully here is the question of grants and loans. I think this area should be very carefully scrutinised. Small grants, I agree with that but I find that when anything has to do with Government and people make loans they tend to believe that it is their money and they do not have to pay it back. I am saying that we have to be very cautious with something like this. Sometimes I wonder if we are not giving people a little too much of a start. I find that people who start by themselves – and this is my experience – many of the young people who start off things do a whole lot better and they do not come to borrow for a very long time. They try and sell and put it back in and it is only when they see that they have a big order and development is coming in their business that they will come and make a loan.

I think we should be careful with the loans and see to it that we do not give people everything. In view of the fact now that the places will be rented that is something that we should go into very carefully because some people like to work at home where they do not have any overheads. I think that if they can, there is nothing wrong with that person working at home especially if he or she is doing craft and not food where they have to get a lot of sophisticated equipment. These are things I would like to put to the Council and I think that members of the public should be able to offer the Council advice and suggestions on this area of skills.

More than that, Mr. President, I see this Council as an organisation or a group of persons who are going to ensure that Barbados prepares itself for the 21st century and beyond.

12.45 p.m.

In the area of skills we do not want skills that are not going to be marketable. I think it is necessary therefore to utilise the marketing information that has been tried and tested so that people would know exactly where they can begin from. There is no point somebody getting all involved in something only to find that it cannot be marketed.

I should also like to say that this Council is going to be coordinating everything. I am wondering here in coordinating all these various things what is going to be the role of some of the other institutions that are going to do similar things and if these institutions are going to be

invited to sit on the various committees to give of their information. I ask this because I have found that in Barbados sometimes we have a whole lot of duplication going on. I think that if the people are informed and they know they do not have to bother about this, there is a Council to look after so and so, that they would tend to move towards that Council rather than sitting down and doing the same thing all over again.

There has to be a big sell on this Council. There must be a big sell and the media must be heavily involved in letting the people of Barbados know because everybody is just sitting down and talking about unemployment, and the unemployment situation, but very few people are talking about creativity and what people can do to help themselves. There are so many young people out there helping themselves. All they need is a little bit of capital. Our organisation, the NDF, helps those people very much in getting themselves off the ground.

I would like to say to Senator Barker that unemployment is not a governmental responsibility alone. Too often we think that only the Government is responsible for unemployment. We all live in Barbados and therefore it is a private sector as well as Government's responsibility. The private sector can create jobs. We have private sector Senators who know that they have created jobs in various areas and that the people who are in these jobs learn their skills whether it is printing or what, and that is not a Government-created job. There are only certain Government-created jobs and no more. But the extent to which the private sector in Barbados can create jobs is very great. The potential is there.

We have a lot of indigenous raw material that can be utilised. The same sugar cane we keep talking about all the time that can be turned into several other products and all the various things like the sweet potatoes, the chips and so on. We can export even steamed pudding. Let me explain. That is the black pudding without putting it in the skin. Nobody uses blood anymore because they are afraid of the AIDS situation so they use colouring to make it look brown.

Asides.

SENATOR Mrs. V. C. FRASER: Well, people are afraid of blood. That is all I am telling you and throughout the world people do not want anything that has blood in it. That has been our experience and I pass it on to you. If you do not want to take it you can leave it but you check it out and you will find out that many people do not want blood in their pudding.

Mr. PRESIDENT: All right Senator Fraser. Just get back to the debate, please.

SENATOR Mrs. V. C. FRASER: Mr. President, this is something that can go into so many areas because you can develop so many things that are going to be marketable or not marketable, and so many things that people can get further training in. That was necessary to let people know something: that we Barbadians who were marketing a particular product know and understand. Many of the pitfalls that people can fall into can be prevented if they would only seek the advice and information from those people who have had the experience.

Mr. President, it is a good for us, and as I said, I would like to see the public having an input into giving information, the old craftsmen, the people who have a lot of skills, that some information being solicited from them and advice so that we ensure we are doing things that we can afford to do. If we use indigenous raw material it is going to cut down a lot of the cost and if we extract, because education is about extracting, from a lot of the talent that they have, then I think that this Council will be good for Barbados in the year 2000 and beyond. We have to look at self-sustainability which, I understand, we are going to look at next year here. But all along those institutions like the National Development Foundation and so on have had to be looking at it because, as we must warn, certain agencies overseas are drying up for Barbados and the Caribbean. Therefore, it behoves us to try and be developmental as much as possible, utilise what we have as much as possible and also look for these committees to be able to investigate, to dig up some of the research that has been done there already and is just sitting on shelves and go the forward way.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. A. STRAUGHN: Mr. President, after scrutinising this Bill, I am convinced that there is much in it that makes it a plausible piece of legislation. I should like to state here that Senator Dr. Clarke made a comprehensive presentation and clarified a few points.

I should like to take the opportunity provided by this particular forum, however, to compliment the Division of Continuing Studies at the Barbados Community College. This Division has introduced a 12-week programme and it is accommodating some of those people falling into one of the categories that Senator Dr. Clarke referred to. The content of the programme is instrumental in upgrading the knowledge and skills of a number of persons and will qualify them and strengthen them for re-entry into the world of work. It also gives them a chance, as we say in every day parlance, to "add another string to their bow".

Mr. President, turning to page 6 and continuing with the heading "Financial," and the subheadings "Accounts and Audit," and other subheadings, I would say that this

area provides for thorough accountability at all levels and this is commendable.

Looking at page 15, the First Schedule, the membership of the Council, I am a little bit concerned as to the number. If my addition is correct, membership numbers 11 and that is an unusual number for the composition of a Council. But I suppose that adjustments will be done in due course to accommodate what has to be accommodated when necessary.
12.55 p.m.

Mr. President, I am hopeful, like others, that with proper implementation the measures laid out in this Bill would do a lot to enhance the technical and vocational training in our country. But I must caution as I have done on several occasions in this Chamber that the human element is paramount and at all levels including the level of the selection of the council. And to re-emphasize as I have done already in this Chamber that proper use of human resources is fundamental to success and to the effective functioning at all times and in all situations where human beings are involved.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Cole.

SENATOR J. A. F. COLE: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill. It is a good one. I cannot see any area in which it could do any damage. It has everything going for it. Basically it seeks to establish a council to advise the Minister and it seeks to establish the development of a training fund and this fund would be used in many ways.

There is no doubt in my mind that technical skills backed by a high standard of education does work. That is the Japanese model. It has worked. It is there for all of us to see.

I liked Senator Dr. Erskine Simmons comment about using Barbados as a resource for helping to develop the area. Also I would hope that this council would develop some sort of data base where we would have on file in store the names of artisans, middle management many of whom are not now at work and who could be deployed as he suggested in other areas around the Caribbean.

I have been involved in training people, sending them away in the printing industry and my company, more recently, has been asked a few months ago to go to Guyana and help in a certain area there. I sent a senior technician. He had a one month's secondment as it were, the project would take a month and in 10 days he wrote back to say that he was ready to come home for the simple reason that he found he had no one with whom he could leave

his knowledge. There was top management which was brittle because it was forced ripe, there were the troops plenty of enthusiastic troops but there was no middle management and there was no one with whom he could leave his knowledge. Added to which on the technical side there was no infrastructure to back up the ideas which the company had to move into the future, to bring in some new equipment, there was; no infrastructure to service that. There was a major problem there.

I am saying that if this Council could develop a data base where the names of middle management and artisans, technicians could be stored it could indeed, as Dr. Simmons suggested, be very, very useful. There is one thing I wanted to say and it is this, we may be able to impart skills into people but skills as such are not all that much. We have to do something about the attitudinal approach to applying these skills. Quite often we have skills and we use them in a rather passive way. We are not pro-active. We have to be pro-active rather than reactive and passive. In other words the man who has acquired these skills cannot sit back and wait to be given orders. He has got to move out and he has got to show that this is a new world and so on.

Also we must always remember that here it is we seek now to give credits and certificates. People having completed their new training they would be given credits and certificates. We must remember that credits and certificates are only that. Quite often people are looking for qualifications and these credits and certificates are accepted and the person down the line is found out to be not fully qualified to do the job. I would like to think that this Council will bear that in mind at all times. We need rounded people to be fully qualified almost for any job nowadays. There is the ongoing feeling that people who are trained only in the sciences cannot be rounded people. I believe there is something in that. Technical training nowadays really is almost purely scientific so we have to be mindful of that sort of thing.

I should just like to say one last thing. In introducing the Bill Senator the Hon. Dr. Clarke did mention that sometimes people in the private sector are tardy to give employees advanced training where they might improve their skills in technology and so because they might ask for raises, words to that effect, unless I interpreted it wrong. I have invested heavily in training and people and I have always looked at it as an investment rather than an expense or a liability. I really cannot see that a company would send someone away and not expect to get additional revenue from this person when he starts to perform. Once the revenue is there he is quite easily paid. There is no doubt in my mind that most companies nowadays would look at an investment in an employee, as a human resource and that in the long run it could only redound to the betterment of the company itself.

With that, Sir, I would just like to say that I support the Bill and I think it is a very good idea.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Lewis.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.10 p.m.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly at 1.05 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is now resumed.

SENATOR Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. President, I rise to speak on this Bill and to raise a number of concerns which I have generally in relation to the whole question of vocational and technical training in Barbados in so far as that relates to the demands that presently exist within the job market both now and for the future. I believe that there was no need for a new institution to have been brought in as is being done in the form of this Bill and that a rationalisation of the occupational training board would have been far preferable as well rationalising that particular legislation rather than bringing in a whole new form of legislation once again raising people's expectation that something will be done.

I hope, Sir, that the results will be far more productive than the results that are now being seen by the replacement of the IDC by the BIDC and by the Tourist Board with the Tourism Authority. I hope, Sir, that it is not just another instance of replacing an existing institution with one just by a new name but with similar personnel, similar tasks and similar results.

Having said that, Sir, one of the things that concerns me is that the legislative framework has never really been our problem in Barbados in so far as this area is concerned because we have had, as I said, Chapter 42 of the Laws of Barbados establishing the occupational training board for some time now. What is of more concern to me, Sir, is the overall planning that goes behind how this vehicle which is being created is to be used. I am concerned that to date we have not yet had any sort of idea from Government, and indeed from the Prime Minister, as to where he sees this country being in another 30 years or so because that is important in terms of what it is to be put in place now in order to be able to develop to that stage.

It is important that we know what are the areas of development that his Government sees as having the

potential in the next 20 to 30 years and that indeed our educational and training programmes are such that they are capable to meet the demands of those areas of development.

It has been said, Sir, by an Honourable Gentleman who was associated with the United Nations for many years by the name of Sojo Moto, that the challenge that faces the developing countries in the eighties and the nineties is one of ensuring that they have a population that is readily retrainable at all times. Not indeed, Sir, that you have a population whom you have trained in certain aspects but one who is readily retrainable at all times. The reason for this, Sir, is that the pace of technology is moving so rapidly that it is insufficient just to train a person in a particular area only to find out that in less than 10 years time that investment is of no value to you because you have to do a totally new retraining process.

I believe, Sir, that his comments in fact not only extend to the developing countries but indeed to that of the developed world as they are particularly experiencing and realising in the United States of America and Britain, where their educational and general vocational and technical training systems have failed them and they too now realise that they also have to face the challenge of having a population that is readily retrainable at all times. That pursuit must be combined with the development of a national sense of purpose because it is that national sense of purpose that helps to provide the impetus for the development of the job ethic within that particular individual, for the level of productivity that person is capable of attaining. To that extent therefore, Sir, the whole question of attitudinal change is perhaps the other most important factor facing this nation today and one which Government cannot just relegate as being the responsibility of parents or indeed teachers in a school room but indeed must become part and parcel of Government's overall policy as it seeks to continue development in Barbados into the 21st Century. Because as we all know, just because a person has acquired and is good at a skill does not mean that they have acquired the job ethic to associate itself with that skill.

So that, Sir, the pursuit of a readily retrainable population and the pursuit of a national sense of purpose are to my mind the two pins which must secure any plan that seeks to develop the human resources potential of this country and I believe, Sir, that in so doing we then look and see what best our population is suited to doing.

Now, to a large extent it has been said that our labour costs have priced us out of the market of labour intensive manufacturing, except that I would wish to issue this caution, Sir. I believe the IDC did a study in the late

eighties which showed that many companies that sought to invest in Barbados were not as perturbed about the high labour costs as we might think they were and indeed their attitude was that they accepted this cost because of the level of education of our work force and the fact that apart from that level of education, leading to higher productivity, that it would also lead to lower initial cost of training and lower cost of retraining at a subsequent date. So, I do not think that we can simply ignore that concept of labour intensive manufacturing provided we understand and are capable of marketing ourselves in the correct manner.

However, I recognise, Sir, that to a large extent we need to redefine what are the potential areas of employment for our population over the next 30 years. One of the things that has disturbed me is that the draft report of the National Commission of Youth which unfortunately has never seen the light of day in the public and to which there was much hullabaloo attached when it was established two years ago, but one of the things which the Draft Commission showed was that there was very little employment by young people in the agricultural sector. I think, Sir, that must be paramount in our development of our human resources potential as to how we can incorporate the youth back into employment within agricultural activities, particularly as we seek to rationalise and develop a land use policy which is essential before we move into 21st Century.

I think also, Sir, the low percentage of self employment which I believe they put at 3.6% on par with the percentage in agriculture also is an area which shows a lack of confidence within our youth as to their ability to be creative and do things for themselves and that, Sir, ties directly back to the need for the development of that national sense of purpose of which I spoke a few minutes ago.

The other areas that they seem to have been most involved in is the retail and distributive sectors which were the hardest hit in the last few years and hence those figures which existed for 1991 will probably show a higher level of unemployment with a large percentage of the retail and distributive sectors having to lay off extensively in the last two years as we all know. So that the question begs itself, Sir. To what degree has this Government sat down and determined where it sees Barbados' development in 30 years time, and to that extent what is it prepared to do in order to develop the training facilities so that that demand in those industries may be met? What are the areas of technology that are readily accessible to us either by way of availability or indeed by way of finance, or indeed in terms of attracting foreign investors to participate in those activities?

It is unfortunate, Sir, that this has not been the basis upon which Government is laying its development plan

because, Sir, I think that if that were the case we would not have seen incidences for example of a Telecommunications Act being passed in this Chamber and the other Chamber which accorded unto the Barbados External Telecommunications and to BARTEL the monopoly for all new technology within that area. That, Sir, is an area that traditionally has shown a number of young black Barbadians becoming involved in rather it is in the form of the construction of satellite dishes etc. by companies like ACME or whether it is in the form of just general telecommunications like Andy Niles and Company and other Companies around the island who have the potential to develop and provide cellular communication and other forms of radio communications, because a cellular phone is only radio at the end of the day. If we had that kind of overall planning we may have seen that Act being drafted differently from a policy point of view that would have ensured that that monopoly would not have gone to BARTEL and BET.

We would also have ensured, Sir, that when we talk about further training in tourism, that we do not end up with a system where there are too many workers provided and trained for that particular industry, and we do not run the danger of repeating the tragic mistake of the sugar industry and developing a monoculture within our economy once again.

So, it is important, Sir, in that overall plan. It is also important, Sir, and I believe Senator Simmons made the point, and it is a point which I endorse but I wish to modify, that Barbados has traditionally had a history of exporting services. Throughout the Caribbean you see evidence of the teachers, the police, the priests, that we have exported for the most part of this century and I believe that to a large extent the dilemma of our dense population needs to be continually met by the fact that if we can continue to export those services, not only do we ease our population density at the particular points in time but we raise the question of the earning of foreign exchange in order to remit to this country so the economy will benefit.

2.25 p.m.

One of the things, Sir, that I believe Senator Simmons did not refer to and which is as necessary and which fortunately the foresight of Bernard St. John was able to provide for back in 1985 was that you need the fiscal incentives in place to want and encourage the continual export of those services and, more importantly, to encourage the remittance of the foreign currency earned. What bothers me is that since those incentives were put in place in 1985 that they have not been extended across the board. I believe the time has come, Sir, if we are going to pursue an avenue such as that, that those incentives must not be limited to the construction industry, lawyers,

accountants or whoever but they must be available across the board for anyone who so deems that they have a valid skill to sell outside of this country for valid remuneration.

Indeed, Sir, I believe that within the last two or three years and even within the region, for example, the Cayman Islands have been interviewing extensively for teachers from within our Public Service here and taking teachers. Now what facilities exist for those teachers to remit their foreign currency back here so that they may get the requisite tax allowances when they come to filing their tax returns. I think these are things that we need to look at in terms of the fiscal incentives to encourage the growth of the export services.

In so far, Sir, as the question of the local development of our manpower, I believe that early in the 1980's the Barbados Labour Party Government established a manpower survey which has been continuing throughout the years. I am not so sure, Sir, that the extent to which resources have been available to that Department has been sufficient to allow it to put the proper infrastructure in place so that it might adequately meet the needs of ensuring that there is a proper data bank of services that is readily available and accessible both to employers and the general population. So that those who are leaving school may have an idea of where the majority of people have been trained, what are the areas that are relatively open in terms of the lack of people trained in those areas and, similarly, for the employers so they may know how to become involved.

Sir, I know that the National Employment Bureau exists. I know, Sir, however unfortunately that a large percentage of the National Employment Bureau's work has been concentrated within the Farm Labour Programme and other forms of low skilled activities, although I am assured by the Minister that he is trying to get the private sector to become more involved so that there is a far wider cross-section of information as to skills available within that Bureau which presently exists. If that is the case, Sir, I would wish him success in that venture. Because I believe that it is highly important that we know what skills are available within this island, what skills are available for export as well, what we need to develop in terms of planning and how we can apply our budget within the Ministry of Education and within the technical and vocational areas to meet those demands where there are presently deficiencies. Nothing short of a proper data base and properly computerized so that it can be updated on a regular basis will suffice in order to attain this pursuit.

One of the things however, Sir, is to a large extent we have had in Barbados a lot of these institutions, agencies, projects and funding available for a very long time, in fact, in excess of ten years now. But one of the things that

has happened is that there has been very little public information about these institutions other than perhaps the National Skills Board which has concentrated primarily on the more labour intensive skills and manual skills. To that extent, we have been doing ourselves a disservice by failing to advertise and promote those agencies that presently provide services within Government.

Government talked often of the Youth In Business Project recently which they have been trying to set up with the OAS. Unfortunately, other than talk, we have not seen much being done in that area. We also hear of the macro-business project of the BDB. We hear of the programmes within the NDF and we also hear of the programmes within WID and WAND, which I think the BDB has a hand in financing as well. Sir, but the extent to which the average person out there who is coming out of school knows about these projects is very limited. Unless there is a continual promotional and public education campaign as to what financing is available and what infrastructure is available, they will be under utilized and, indeed in so being under utilized, they will not receive the attention from Government that they should be receiving.

In fact, Sir, the other unfortunate thing which has happened under this Government has been the application of the substantial funds from the Training Levy of \$13 million at the last count being applied to the Consolidated Fund and not being kept for the purposes for which it was being taken from the persons who contribute which is for training. Indeed, those funds could have helped and can still help in ensuring that the infrastructure which Government hopefully is trying to rationalize now is capable of developing at a far quicker rate than it is presently doing so. Because that \$13 million can go not only to developing that infrastructure but indeed for financing the training that is needed within the particular areas.

One of the other things, Sir, is that when we think of training very often we leave out the new areas of technology in being able to bring about training. We believe that training can only take place on a one-on-one basis or within a classroom whether it is for training for an automotive mechanic or whatever. But to a large extent, Sir, a lot of training in the developed world has extended beyond that one-on-one contact. Indeed, within the University of the West Indies, we have seen their acknowledgement to that fact by the establishment of the UWI Programme. What I would like to see, Sir, is some form similar to that concept where we use both video and television broadcast and radio, expand our ability to have that readily re-trainable population but more importantly, Sir, to use those vehicles to ensure that they go a long way towards helping us to develop that national sense of purpose which I feel, Sir, is so important to the

development of any human resource's potential in this country.

One of the things that the draft report of the National Commission On Youth revealed quite clearly, Sir, is that there has been an increasing level of unemployment among youth in this country since 1981. Indeed, in 1981 the level of unemployment among youth stood at something like 21 per cent and in 1991 it stood at something like 36 per cent. It also showed, Sir, that within that level of unemployment among youth that it was greatest in the 15 to 19 age group and greater still among females in the population rather than males.

Sir, that is a cause for great concern. I think that many of us have traditionally felt that it is the man that will give us trouble if he is unemployed because he will get involved in crime, *et cetera*. But in the same way that those boys who remain unsupervised may be more disposed of becoming involved in crime, those girls who remain unsupervised may be more disposed to become involved in propagation and that, Sir, is something which is equally a concern to Government in terms of its ability to provide for its population. Unless Senator Beckles wishes that the effect of the boys remaining unemployed is to ensure that the crime rate is high so that the effect of the propagation is kept down, Sir, I do not think that is what he wishes though. But the point is this, Sir, that it must be of major concern for us that the level of female unemployment especially in those years when their ability to have children is perhaps the greatest is something that is solved. Because too often in our culture we have developed a mentality where women seek to get money from men by means of their ability to tie them down by means of a child. While they may see the immediate benefits in terms of getting some benefits from the men, invariably they are left to carry the ball on their own after a short period of time. It increases the difficulties for Government in terms of its ability to provide for these people who now have no way of finding such means – money, services or whatever – for themselves to be able to live in a decent standard of living. 2.35 p.m.

Sir, I would think that one of the benefits of the informatics industry in particular has been the extent to which it has created young female employment. Indeed, if we look at the profile of companies like CDS, we will see that their level of employment is almost 100% youth related, and by youth related I mean under the age of 30. I believe CDS also has a work experience programme where children come in from school in their later years at school and very often these same people who are involved in the work experience programme usually find employment later with the firm upon leaving school. This is the kind of activity that we need to continue to encourage.

There are also some offshore companies that presently exist in Barbados that do a substantial amount of data collection as well as data training for the international financial markets, and indeed, Sir, you will find many of them working at 9.00 and 10.00 o'clock at night, when other international financial markets are now becoming active, because of the need for them to be able to translate that information as it relates to stocks and bonds and other forms of trading on those international financial markets. Very little is known about those companies nationally, but they do exist in this island, and there are certainly areas that we need to encourage.

The area of telecommunications is another area that requires promotion in terms of the development of skills to be able to fulfil that requirement. When I spoke earlier of the need for an overall policy, one of the things that comes to mind is that if we had a vision of Barbados that includes this as part of our development potential and part of our employment profile, it would necessitate that the Barbados Government does not remain silent as it has been on matters such as the INTELSAT Agreements which prevent us from beaming information and other things into the United States of America, while they have the right to do so into us. These are things that we need to look at, if we had that overall plan, that we could pursue as part of Government's Development Plan. Similarly, our position in so far as the talks with GATT are concerned will also be motivated to a large extent by what we are trying to achieve over the next 30 years, hand in hand in the same way we are trying to develop the human resources potential to meet that demand. You would be developing the international environment within which this country could easier operate.

Sir, having said many of these things, I wish to end by referring to my first point, that is, that there must be that overall planning and that the two cornerstones upon which any human resource potential in this country is based must be (1) development of a readily retrainable population, and (2) development of a national sense of purpose so that each individual in this country understands why it is they must work to the best of their ability not only for their country but for themselves and their families. Without that, Sir, we will find that we will be spending a lot of money where the returns are going to be far longer in coming back to us because of a lack of proper participation.

One of the factors about CDS that was revealed in the draft report on youth from the Youth Commission was also that to the extent to which other private sector firms, particularly within the distributive sector, complained of the attitudes of young people, that they expected too much and they responded negatively to discipline, that they were only interested in money. It was found within CDS that these

complaints were far less, particularly because of the participatory style of management, than obtains therein so far as their employees, the majority of whom are young, exist. To that extent to which they felt a responsibility because they were participating in the form of management that the level of complaint was much less and indeed the level of job satisfaction was far greater. Moreso, the fact that promotion could be obtained for, I think, one quarter of the staff within 18 months was also a significant factor in that they could see where their skills and their involvement were taking them. Too often there is no attempt to involve the same young people in the process of management, even if it is only to force them to develop that level of responsibility towards the organisation of which they are part, and too often there is not the appreciation that one of the most debilitating things about youth employment is the lack of security of tenure, either because of the recency of the acquisition of skills or because very often, especially in an economy which is in a downturn, the last in first out principle obtains and therefore to that extent their security of tenure is something that bothers them greatly in the whole scheme of things.

I would wish to reinforce that I think. . . .

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Mottley, you have one more minute.

SENATOR Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Sir. I would wish to reinforce that the legislative framework has not been the problem here. What is more the problem, in my view, is Government's overall concept of where it is taking us and I think this needs to be articulated far more clearly not only to this Chamber, but indeed to the population who it involves. To that extent I would hope that this Government gives us an indication as to where in terms of its Development Plan it is taking Barbados, and that what it is putting in place, albeit not absolutely necessary, has the capacity to be matched by the intention of taking us there via putting the correct things in place.

Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR W. LeR. INNIS: Mr. President, I rise to support this particular Bill because I think that anything which is done to harness the forces of our young people especially, and anything which is done to foster education at any level, whether it be academic or otherwise, is worthy of support.

As I looked through the Bill I could not but help thinking that it shows what kind of thought has been put into academic education in the past, speaking about academic education, that similar thought is being given to technical and vocational education. We have come up in a tradition where it has always or often been believed

that you went along the academic stream and if you could not fit into the academic stream you were a drop out, and you may find some consolation in technical and vocational education. But things have been changing and the very fact that we have this Bill before us goes to show that those who make the decisions are coming along with time and are showing the serious responsibility which policy makers have on their hands to look at all aspects of activity, especially among young people.

2.45 p.m.

Many years ago, Barbadians could be proud of their apprenticeship system where young boys would be attached to a carpenter, a mason or a mechanic, and many people learnt their trades by putting their hands to the wheel. The apprenticeship system has been a good system in its time because many of our skilled craftsmen were not exposed to any special technical or vocational education. They had a good basic class 7 education which, I would submit, Mr. President, is still hard to beat. There are many people who go through some of the classes and end up in our secondary system who cannot touch a good class 7 boy or girl of time gone by.

I am not one to say that everything in the old days is good and everything in the new times is bad but, unfortunately, our educational system has pushed many people through what they consider to be a secondary education; but the only thing they do is to go through an institution and watch some secondary students being educated. No one is catering for them because the system is against them. Anytime you have a system where 1 school or 2 schools cream off the top and then you have 19 other schools fighting for what is left but society is still expecting the same result at the end of the day from those who came at the top and those who were left behind that provides us with many frustrated young people who were not given the opportunity to do what they were equipped to do and were left out of the system they were forced into.

Experience would show us that we can parallel stream, not an inferior stream and a superior stream. We have parallel streams of those in pure academic education as well as those in technical and vocational education. You cannot do technical education without the practical hands-on approach and that is why the Bill is so important in that it makes provision for this kind of thing. It sets up the framework within which you can be exposed to your classroom work but still exposed to your hands-on experience. This, I will submit, will take the place and should be superior really to our old apprenticeship system where many did not get the opportunity to continue the academic side of their skills and of their training.

As we look at development, Mr. President, and we look at how the system is to work, we would hope that the

bureaucracy does not prevent this system which looks good on paper from functioning. Very often you find that we have things that are very good on paper but by the time the bureaucratic process begins it sometimes comes out completely different from what you thought you had put in and what you expected to come out. This system must be monitored carefully that people can have the opportunity to develop themselves and provide Barbados with the kind of skills which Barbados of the next century will need.

Again, Mr. President, you can look at some of the shortfalls which obtain in the system that was set up heretofore for people doing pure academic education. I note what Senator Fraser had to say about the loans which are given to people to further their education. I believe fervently that anyone who has the will to learn and work should be given ample opportunity. The lack of funds should not prevent you from furthering your education, including your education in skills and vocational training. "To whom much is given, much is expected".

Too many people in our society take money, especially what they consider Government's money. I don't know there is anything called Government's money. If that is the case, it means that I am part of the Government because it is part of my money and yours, Mr. President, and the money of all of us who have the good fortune to have jobs. The more you have, the more there will be.

MR. PRESIDENT: Be careful how you wave your hands.

SENATOR LeR. INNISS: One hand went towards the Chair and the other towards my friend on the other side.

Mr. President, people must realise that if they do not stand up to their own responsibility to repay what is given, all forces must be brought against them to ensure that they pay. As I look at the list of persons who owe the Students' Revolving Loan Fund money, people with all kinds of jobs that you know they can afford to pay, people who have had the opportunity to spend money and would not put it back into the Fund that others behind them can benefit from the education which they had, I would hope that the funds that are set up for this training will not be allowed to run away as the Students' Revolving Loan Fund has run away that by the time they tried to shut the stable door the horse was prancing all down Broad Street and elsewhere.

We must provide money for the education of our citizens but when money is provided in the form of a loan the machinery must be in place to ensure that loans are repaid so that others who come behind may benefit from it.

We have seen this kind of system work before, Mr. President, where persons with attachments have found

themselves permanent employment. There was a time when the Training Board would send out people on attachment, not only in skills and in trades, but even at the clerical and stenographic, many young people, who showed that they had what it took to benefit an organisation but all that they wanted was the opportunity have been able to hold jobs. I can speak of persons who were attached for 3 months and some 5 years after they are still in that same employment, the only distinction or difference being that they are now in full-time paid employment as opposed to being in a temporary attachment with a small allowance.

Without any more ado, Mr. President, I would give my full support to this Bill and hope that in a sense it is the continuation, because it is not really the beginning, and the improvement of things that are good for Barbados. Thank you.

SENATOR T. C. BECKLES: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill. I just want to say a few words on 2 areas. I think the pros and cons of this Bill have been very well ventilated by both sides. Unfortunately, there are some people who have to use a little bias and that sort of detracts from the logic of their contribution.

One of the things I would wish to talk about is this area of planning education to suit some predetermined set of perceived values in the society. In my view, it is fairly difficult, almost impossible. Wherever it has been practised successfully, society was not the better as a result of it. If one looks at the Russian society, every Russian child from 14 or 15 had an idea not only where they were going to work but what kind of work they would do and they went into that job because the society was planned that way. We have now seen the fall out of that sort of arrangement.

I am making the point that I am a strong believer in market forces, whether it is the labour market or the capital market, the money market or the commodity market. I believe that the role of any government is to allow these market forces to work. I believe that this Bill is a good one because it allows people to take advantage of their own lives and to do what they want to do with it. It allows persons who are academically bright if they want to pursue academic pursuits to do that. It allows the persons who are good with their hands to pursue courses along that line. Of course, if they are academically bright, if they have to get either grants or loans I think depending on how the society can afford it they should make them and I think this Bill makes allowances for it.

The second area I want to talk about. Again we have to accept the fact that we are not an ideal world but we are in a world that is constantly changing. Here I must agree with Senator Simmons and Senator Mottley. We have to train or give people the background training not only for a

specific job in a specific geographic area but we must see the total world situation as one in which persons are competing for jobs. We must see the total world situation as one in which the persons are competing in it for jobs. I think over the next 50 or 60 years this is the kind of world that we are going to be living in. It might change again but our perception of the world is that over the next 50 years it will be one in which we are all going to be competing in one sort of global situation. Hence I think that if you look at the Bill again, it allows people to develop skills to continue to be trained. Then they can compete worldwide for an occupation. Therefore, I see the Bill as being useful. 2.55 p.m.

As I said, there may be cons in the Bill but I personally have not picked up any. It is a very positive approach to dealing with a situation that appeared to be intractable, the situation of what do you do with so many young persons who, after they have left school, almost seem to be leaderless, or like a flock without a shepherd. It now gives them an opportunity to start fashioning their own lives, looking for their own shepherd and following the direction in which they want to go.

In an ideal world, of course, we would have had a situation in which everybody would be born with the right talents, to do the right things, at the right time, to satisfy everybody else. Now, if we move away from that and accept that we are always going to have these situations because of changing circumstances which it does not matter how well prepared you might think you are, the situation will change, then we require circumstances that allow persons to change direction.

I myself am aware of many instances in my life where persons started out their lives as engineers and they ended up as poets, where some started out as poets and ended up as engineers, lawyers, doctors, and what have you. The unfortunate thing is that we do not see so much of this break-through from the so-called echelons to the upper ones. You might find it occasionally. You tend always to find the exchange at the top.

I am saying I see in this Bill for the first time such an opportunity because I am not one of those persons who feel that education should ever finish. I do not think what happens to a person at 11, 14, 16 or any time else in their life should determine what that person is going to be. It just shows the social circumstances under which the persons are at the time. I do not think it is a Bill which has caused much antagonism. I think both sides are agreed that it is a good Bill.

The final thing I want to say is we have to look at the world of work as it really is. I think it might do us a lot better if sometimes we stop being sentimental about

this area. The world of work is one in which there are some very tough relationships played out sometimes tougher than a lot of other areas. Sometimes I listen to people as they speak and we talk about participatory management. We talk about all kinds of management. These are things we like but in the final analysis there are few employers who can afford to pay people for working in an area in which he does not get any return on their labour. I think this is what it boils down to, and I think this is what the Bill will do. We must allow people the opportunity to make themselves more productive persons in the society and because I am quite satisfied that in its design it will do this, I have absolutely no hesitation in supporting this Bill.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, I would like to personally thank all the Senators who have entered into this debate for the significant contributions which they have all made towards the legislation before us. There are just a few areas I would like to tidy up and clarify in case there has been any misunderstanding.

On the question of the data bank operating out of the Manpower Survey Unit in the Ministry of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the Environment, at this point in time handbooks are being put out indicating the jobs which are available. I think this is a necessary first step but I do not consider it to be sufficient. What we are trying to do here is not only to determine what sort of jobs are available but we also want to know what people we have out there, what sort of jobs not only exist today but would be coming on stream. That is why we are seeking through this instrument before us to tie in the needs of the private sector and have them involved in terms of the planning.

I think it was Senator Mottley who talked about a development plan from Government. Government is currently looking at a development plan through the year 2000. It is not a Government development in and of itself but it is being done with the private sector because if Government makes a plan over here the type of pressures that we make on the resources available to us and the country these things should be coordinated. The Government's development plan should be complementary to or augmented with what is taking place in the private sector and you should not have the crowding out of activities which is likely if they are not properly coordinated as we have experienced in the past.

In Barbados we all pay lip service to our resources. We talk about penetrating the external market. We talk about the human resource being our greatest resource. This is an attempt to develop that human resource, to develop that resource in which we have a comparative advantage given the institutions which we have in place. At this point

in time we are exporting nurses to the United States and elsewhere. We have teachers in Africa and elsewhere.

I am glad to report that at least the live-in care programme is beginning to take off after many hiccups and much effort. We have placed about 5 or 6 people in this programme. I have mentioned it before. In this programme young people with 4 or 5 GCEs can get jobs in Canada not as domestics but rather as home helpers for geriatrics and children. But they are required to continue their education and at the end of a year then they are eligible for permanent residence within Canada. The reason for this as compared with the old domestic programme was that in economic downturns if people are not educated these are the first ones that find themselves as burdens on the social systems in the country with unemployment, *et cetera*. If they are better educated then the chances of their falling beneficiaries of the social system are less likely.

On the question of female unemployment in Barbados, one person unemployed who is seeking a job in the country is one too many. That is the policy of this Government. We would like to find a job for every man and woman or young adult who is seeking employment. But that is a utopian situation. It has never been achieved any part of the world unless there is forced labour. However, what I want to say here is that in Barbados the level of participation in employment by women is the highest it is in the Caribbean and in many parts of the world.

3.05 p.m.

However what I want to say here is that in Barbados the level of participation and employment by women is the highest it is in the Caribbean and in many parts of the world, women's participation in the work force. One peculiarity about employment that I want to share with Members of this Chamber this afternoon is this. When we talk about the levels of unemployment what we also need to talk about in the same breath is the levels of employment for the simple reason that if there are no jobs available in the marketplace, more and more people would stop looking for jobs and list themselves as not being actively seeking jobs and they will not be reflected in the figures of the unemployed. On the other hand if jobs are likely to be available more and more people would then come into the work force. You would find what appears to be a paradox occurring that while absolute numbers in employment are growing, you will also find the unemployment numbers are growing along with it. You will tend to think that there has been an increase in the work force which is not necessarily true at all but just the hope or expectations of getting a job would pull or attract more people to the work force to become again seeking employment. I just want to share this with you.

Again I want to thank the Senators for their contributions, they have been worthwhile contributions,

and I do hope that the bureaucrats who eventually have to administer this legislation will have the same enthusiasm and will share the same objectives as the Members here in this Chamber.

With those comments, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE, Mr. PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, SENATOR THE HON. J. J. PAYNE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 6 and 7 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 8, 9 and 10 were called and passed.

Clauses 11 and 12 were called and passed.

Clauses 13 to 18 were called and passed.

Clauses 19 and 20 were called and passed.

Clauses 21 to 26 were called and passed.

Clause 27 was called and passed.

The First Schedule, the Second Schedule and the Third Schedule were called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING OF THE EQUIVALENT OF BARBADOS DOLLARS OF THE SUM OF US\$7.8 MILLION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT TO ASSIST IN FINANCING THE HUMAN RESOURCES PROJECT

Order No. 2 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the borrowing of the equivalent in

Barbados dollars of the sum of US\$7.8 million from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to assist in financing the Human Resources Project.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Thank you, Mr. President. This Resolution seeks approval from the Government to borrow the equivalent in Barbados dollars of US\$7 800 000 from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, that is the World Bank, to assist in the financing of the Human Resources Project.

The main objectives of this Project are to strengthen the human capital base by expanding the availability of trained manpower. Specifically it will seek to strengthen the quality and efficiency of basic education, it will seek to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of technical and vocational education and training and it will seek to reinforce employment services and labour market information. The maturity of the loan will be for 15 years including a grace period of 5 years. It will be amortised in equal semi-annual installments with the first payment falling due on October 15, 1998 and the last payment on April 15, in the year 2008. The interest rate will be the International Bank for Reconstruction cost of qualified borrowing plus one half of 1% and there will be a commitment fee of 3/4 of 1%.
3.15 p.m.

There are really 3 parts to the project. There is the general education project which will consist of training for primary and secondary school staff, counsellors and the Ministry of Education staff. There will be courses in, among other things, special education and diagnostic assessment techniques, early childhood education, remedial reading, information technology, environmental education and instructional leadership. Provision is made for the upgrading of Erdiston College including the acquisition of furniture and equipment.

There will also be an upgrading of the learning resources in schools and libraries through –

- (a) providing audio visual equipment, books, references and instructional materials, furniture, typesetting and printing equipment and training for the Audio Visual Department,
- (b) providing basic audio visual equipment to all primary schools and establishing and equipping 15 libraries resource centres,
- (c) equipping all secondary schools with audio visual equipment and interactive materials for

foreign language teaching and providing training related thereto, and

- (d) the provision of computer equipment, books reference materials, furniture and overseas fellowships with the National Library.

The second part is for the technical and vocational education training, that is, TVET development. We have already discussed the principles of the Bill and here this funding will facilitate the design, implementation and evaluation of a new multi-certification level competency based training programme for TVET teachers.

It will provide for the development of a cadre of teacher trainers at the Barbados Community College and the improvement of the instructor, appraisal and feedback system at the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.

It would provide for the establishment of two teacher resource centres at the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the upgrading of the Barbados Community College Library.

It would provide for the strengthening of the arts and crafts programme within the Barbados Youth Training Service, for the expansion of the facilities of Training Administration Division of the Ministry of the Civil Service.

It would provide for the establishment of an industry service unit at the Barbados Community College and it would provide for the upgrading and equipping of the Language Centre at the Barbados Community College.

It would also provide for the creation and operation of a technical vocational education and training council and an employment and training fund.

It would also provide for research and tracer studies to monitor and evaluate the impact of the TVET (Technical vocational and education training) programmes and a specialised course at the Barbados Community College in education management and administration for TVET managers and administrators.

A third component of this would be for labour market support and this will assist in the design, implementation of a computerised information and placement system at the National Employment Bureau. It would provide for staff training and the acquisition of computer equipment for the National Employment Bureau. It will also provide for technical assistance, staff training and the acquisition and utilization of computer equipment and materials for the manpower research and statistics unit.

It is clear, Mr. President, that now with the passing of the Bill we have a vehicle before us which will provide the funding to assist us in launching and getting those programmes which we consider worthwhile on the way. It is almost a companion piece of legislation in support of that measure which we have just passed.

I beg to move, Sir, that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR Mrs. A. STRAUGHN: Mr. President, on July 15, 1992, we dealt with a Resolution involving a ceiling – an aggregate of a large sum of money – a loan to cover a number of related projects including the human resources project and much of what I said in my contribution then, is applicable now.

Looking at the Addendum, Mr. President, I would say that it is a strong, and a powerful boast. When we look at Part A, the general education support area, again I would say that all these areas are plausible: training for primary and secondary school staff, section 2 – upgrading the learning and resources in schools and libraries, and no one could dispute the fact that libraries are store houses of information and educational resources. But looking right through this Resolution, Mr. President, there is still to me a grey area and it is an area of concern. It is to do Mr. President, with the fact that enough is not being done for our Composite schools in whatever category we care to place them to include them in this particular resolution.

Our Composite schools, Mr. President, cater to that type of student which is chronologically post primary but developmentally, not equipped to pursue the secondary school programme to any appreciable level.

All our Composite schools – there are now 10 of them – do a remarkably good work under the present circumstances. If they are well equipped they would be able to do even better and I make a strong plea for the upgrading and the equipping of these schools in the line of teacher training and anything else that would really give them an enhanced image.

Furthermore, Mr. President, in the allocation of places in our 11+ examination there is still the award of bursaries and some of these students who are awarded bursaries reach only as high as 15%, 12%, 10% in this Common Entrance Examination. The acceptance of such bursaries, both the award and the acceptance give a false feeling of well being and a false feeling of achievement and can sometimes be an added financial strain to the parents. The very fact that a number of these bursars receive such a low percentage shows that they are in the lower socio-economic bracket which is in itself a militating force against their normal progress. Some parents do request bursaries and for different reasons: Some parents feel that it would be almost unkind to uproot their children from where they are

and send them somewhere else and some parents can afford to pay the fees set by the private secondary schools.
3.25 p.m.

I am not for one moment underscoring the contribution that our private secondary schools have made and are still making to our education system. There is on record their wonderful achievement, but some of their fees are prohibitive and justifiably so because education does not cost a little. When some of our bursars are shunted off to the private secondary schools, that deprives many of them the chance to get a further qualification through the BSSC, Barbados School Secondary Certificate, because all of our private secondary schools do not allow for the sitting of this exam. That certificate enhances their chances of job opportunity and sometimes of further education.

It is difficult, Mr. President, to convince anyone that there is no loss of prestige when students go to our Composite schools. It is very difficult. That is because the image of our Composite schools, in most cases, is not a good one. I make a strong plea, Mr. President, for the upgrading of our Composite schools by giving them better equipment and better facilities to uplift their image and restore some confidence in that level of education. A few moments ago Senator Inniss spoke of the 7th Standard elementary education and I stress the word "elementary" because it is not the same thing to my mind as primary. Primary connotes stages and elementary is that school where all of the elements were taught up to a particular level so that students of such a school were able to cope and could fit themselves into their society – somewhat satisfactorily. If we could upgrade our Composite schools to the point where we restore that confidence in a 7th Standard education, so to speak, I think that we would be doing something. As Senator Clarke said, the Resolution that we are now debating and the Bill which has just passed are very inter-related; one is providing the financial assistance to get the vehicle moving.

Mr. President, I make a strong plea for the upgrading of these schools to accommodate those bursars who in many cases are lost in some of our private secondary schools. If these bursars are absorbed into our Composite schools after they have been upgraded, their chances of proper developmental progress would be greater.

I would like to suggest that in looking at this Resolution we consider not looking at the Composite schools as a tertiary stage, but as a measure that would promote and give some kind of hope to that type of student who would eventually, probably because he or she is a late developer, gain admission to the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic into one of its technical or vocational streams, and give some degree of confidence. I do think that this can be done if some attention is paid to our Composite schools, which are at present the "Cinderellas" of our

education system – making them the kind of stepping stone so that it gives that type of student an opportunity to step further into the work-force or into further education, in the long run would prove to be of some great benefit to the education system and to the citizenry in general.

With those remarks, Mr. President, I support the Resolution. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Mr. President. Any measure which deals with improving our educational system would have my support because I am a strong believer in education. I see it as a vehicle for social mobility and the fact that successive Governments have paid a lot of attention to education is part of the reason why we have developed in the way we have for the past years. So I welcome this Resolution and look forward to its implementation. I will note that this Resolution is just another step in the process started when the Barbados Labour Party was in Government when we undertook a massive programme of school construction. However, we are at the stage where almost all of our schools are in very good shape physically. As one drives around the countryside, no part of the island seems to be left out and especially the primary schools are in very good condition. I think the fact that the physical setting has improved and will in time feed itself so to speak in the whole learning process. Children are obviously learning better in my view as the result of the enhanced physical conditions under which they are learning.

Sir, the time has come where we can now move away from the physical environment to look now at other issues. I note that this programme seeks to address these other issues which are very, very important. Before I go, Sir, I want to highlight the fact that, while we are impressed with the physical improvements, we do not want to be in a stage where some schools are left out in the scheme of things. I want to highlight in this Honourable Chamber the plight of the St. Leonard's Schools. Sir, I do not feel good about the situation down there. It is okay to have a new Queens College building and new extensions here and there, but 2400 students go to school in that complex at Richmond. I have a special attachment there because those schools were established in 1952 and at that time they provided free secondary education. The St. Leonard's Boys' and Girls' Schools started free secondary education in Barbados. I think last year they had their 40th anniversary. So it has a lot of emotional attachments as far as I am concerned, because for the first time the children of poor working class people had the chance to get free secondary education. A lot of them, Sir, have made full use of the provision that was made under the guidance of the late Premier, Sir Grantley Adams.
3.35 p.m.

I am distressed that over the years we have allowed the physical environment there to deteriorate to the extent that in spite of all the public outcry teachers and students in the Girls' School especially are still suffering physically. Even today we are still hearing complaints that at least 6 teachers from the Girls' School are having problems as a result of the environmental conditions and there are cases where some students have to seek transfers to other schools in order to avoid the harsh conditions at that school.

Sir, while we applaud Government for improving the other schools we have at the same time to say there is a physical problem at St. Leonard's which must be addressed as soon as possible. We cannot have a situation where teachers and students are suffering physical ailments as a result of the environment. I believe, Sir, that the time has come when we must make a harsh decision on the matter and we may have to look at those 2 schools with a view to closing them and relocating them elsewhere.

Many investigations have been carried out and many environmental studies have been done, but still up to today the problem still persists. Until we can come to grips with the problem, I think Government is going to have to take the drastic steps and alleviate the conditions of the staff. I know that the staff is very unhappy about the situation.

Certain remarks made by SENATOR T. E. BARKER were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. PRESIDENT.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: As I was saying, Sir, the situation at St. Leonard's needs to be addressed and any caring Government would take urgent steps to ensure that the legitimate complaints...

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, Senator Barker knows full well that this Government on several occasions has instituted studies to determine if anything is wrong with the institution and its environment and has found nothing to be wrong, not only by the local authorities but also by independent authorities. I would wish that Senator Barker would respect that.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, any caring Government would investigate the persistent and continuing complaints of the teachers and pupils of those institutions.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Are you implying that these complaints have not been investigated, Senator Barker?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I am saying, Sir, that they are persistent and they are continuing up to today, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Are you implying that they have not been investigated?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, they may have been investigated in the past but they are persistent and continuing. I am saying that there is need for further investigation and any caring Government would make sure the complaints are investigated and serious attempts made to address this health problem. That is what I am saying, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: All right, Senator Barker, you may continue.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I am continuing, Sir. The school must be relocated as soon as practical and feasible. We have an unfinished building in St. Thomas.

Not me. I don't go to school there.

Mr. PRESIDENT: No. Senator Clarke, we do not have cross talk. Senator Barker, ignore the asides and go on with your debate.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I cannot ignore them.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Well, you understand how distracting it must be when you interrupt in similar fashion. 3.45 p.m.

You appreciate how distracting it is when you do a similar thing.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, but I do not interrupt the Chair so I do not know how it feels.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Well, you go ahead.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, but the point is we must look for an alternative site for that school not only because of health reasons but imagine that you have 2 400 students in that compound in two schools and there is hardly a playing field. All the facilities that the other schools boast of those two schools are denied. This is 1993 and we are spending money left, right and center on education. All around you have schools with good facilities and these two schools where the majority of children are working-class children – that is the point. They are working-class children in the main.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Working-class children?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: The children of working-class people. I thank you for your interruptions.

Sir, I am sure that if the children of the upper and middle classes were going to that school that in no time the situation would be corrected but we have one law for the rich and another law for the poor. The Minister can

joke about it from now until tomorrow. This is no laughing matter when people are suffering. They are suffering and Members over there are laughing but it is a serious matter. If I were a teacher there or a parent of one of the children I would have to take strong action because we are talking about a life or death situation.

I am glad that we are borrowing \$7.8 million but those children cannot learn effectively in that environment when they are concerned about their health. All the money we are spending on these general support services would be wasted if we do not ensure that the environment is conducive to learning. Up to yesterday we were hearing that the school again was in the news. When this is happening we cannot get value for the \$7.8 million that we are now seeking to borrow. It is an urgent situation. This is an impassioned plea now. I am calling upon Government to do something about the situation at St. Leonard's. It is urgent and pressing. Sir, what hurts me is that I heard two Ministers of the Crown referring to the problem as psychological problems.

Sir, I now want to go on to some specifics about this Bill. Under Part A – General Education Support, it has training for primary and secondary school staff and it has a lot of areas. I want to pause a little bit here because this same section talks about the upgrading of Erdiston College. I am worried that if we are not getting value for our money in primary education it is because the system does not identify the children with learning problems early enough so that remedial action could be taken. It is not always the teachers' fault. A lot of them are not trained well enough to detect these psychological and physical conditions which can militate against the effectiveness of the learning process.

I believe, Sir, that at every primary school a system of evaluation should be continuously done so that from the time a student gets into Infants "A" you know at 5 or 6 years the child should be doing A, B, C and if it is not therefore it is possible that this child could have a problem. Immediately the child could get the help that he required if not at that school at a school nearby. What would be happening is that we would identify students early as having problems. But nowhere in the system are the mechanisms in place so that the child can get the help he desires.

Sir, we have the age system where if a child is 6 years old he must be in Infants "B". If he is 7 years old he must be in Class I and so on because at 11 years old he must be in Class 4 in order to do the 11+. I have no problem with the 11+ *per se* but what I would say is that we are making an assumption that at 11 years old all children should be at the same level. I know for a fact that there are some 10-year olds who should be doing the

Common Entrance Examination. There are some 10-year olds that should be doing that but the system makes them stay in primary school for another year, a wasted year, when they were bright enough in the first place to have gone on to whichever secondary school they so desire.

At the same time there are children who would benefit from an extra year of primary education so what do we do? We say at age 11 you must take the test and they get 20% and 30% and they get lost in the secondary system where if they could spend another year at the primary level you could probably build them up to a 50%/60% student who would then be better able to benefit from the secondary education. But having this age criteria at 11 years old that you must do the 11+ it is operating against the interest of the very bright students and on the other hand of the students with some sort of problem who can benefit, as I said before, from the extra year. It is something we need to look at. We do not have to phase out the examination as such but we need to look at both ends, the very bright ones and the ones with problems and see how we can accommodate them within the whole Common Entrance system. It is something I think must be done if we are to get maximum mileage from the money we are spending on our education.

Sir, I also note that we talk about the teachers getting more training in a lot of other areas including information technology and so on. There is a view that we should broaden the curriculum at the primary level. I am not a trained educator but I would urge the Government to look again at the whole system where the primary school prepares students not for life for secondary education, where the emphasis on the primary schools has to be on the so-called 3 Rs because if a child cannot read properly he cannot study French. If a student has problems adding numbers he cannot do Physics. We have to make sure that enough emphasis is placed in the traditional areas in the primary schools so that the student can be better able to benefit from secondary education. But to go and broaden the education too much at the primary school at the expense of the traditional subjects is not advisable.

We talk about computer literacy and all of that but a student who understands English and Arithmetic when he comes on the computer he would find no problem whatsoever but if he has problems understanding Arithmetic and English he cannot benefit from the computer as such because he does not have the basic academic training to help him read a computer manual and understand it. We must at our primary level refocus again and make sure that when a child leaves primary school he can read properly, he can write properly and he can do Arithmetic properly. If that is all the fellow can do in his primary life, Sir, maybe I am backward in this, but I am satisfied because then he can benefit from History. He

can benefit from Geography. He can learn it properly because he has the basic background but to go and broaden it at the primary level means that somewhere along the line in order to expand the curriculum you would be taking out some hours that should be spent on reading and so on. One has got to be careful how we are broadening primary education. I am not saying that the child should not be exposed to science and social studies and so on. At primary schools, even in my day, we were always exposed to basic science and hygiene and social studies and so on. But the focus must be on the traditional 3 Rs. That must remain our primary focus in the primary system.

3.55 p.m.

The Addendum also mentions the library services and so on. It is good that we encourage our children to read. But I remember in years gone by where the Mobile Library used to go not only to schools but also in villages. Part of the problem is that some children in Barbados, believe it or not, have hardly ever seen their parents reading. Whereas in a household where the parents are reading quite a lot the children get into the habit of reading. We have got to find a way of getting the adults in the society to start reading again. I do not know if the national library can again look at that. I do not know why it was phased out, probably they had no reason for phasing it out. I do not know. I am saying we have to devise a programme to get our adults in study, reading again, to pass on the habit of reading to our children. All of us know that when a child sees its parent reading, it will tend to have this thing for books in general. That is one area that we need to look at.

We talk a lot about technical and vocational studies this morning. I would not want to go too much into that, except to say that a trend is developing where entry to the Polytechnic, to some extent, requires "O" Levels not in a general way but because of the pressure for places. Students without "O" Levels find it difficult to get into some programmes. This would tell me that the demand for technical education seems to be outstripping our ability to supply places in technical education.

I wonder if a case cannot be made out for a second polytechnic in Barbados. It is something we need to look at whether the demands of the society, as we go into the Twenty-First Century, require that we expand technical and vocational education. At present we have the Polytechnic and we have the Community College doing some but there could very well be a need for extra places for technical education. It is something that Government, when they do their manpower studies might find that in order to prepare our people for the new era so to speak that we probably would have to look at the building of a second campus for technical education. I do not know what the figures are

saying in terms of the manpower requirements but it is something for us to look at some time in the future.

Apart from those comments, all I can say is that I give my support to this Resolution and I hope that Government bears in mind that we cannot have, in Barbados, 19 secondary schools in reasonably good condition and 2 secondary schools in conditions for less than optimum. We have to make sure that every child in Barbados at the primary level, at the secondary level, whatever level, enjoys environmentally clean air in their school surroundings.

Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Inniss.

SENATOR W. LeR. INNIS: Mr. President, it seems as though today is the day for education. We spent a lot of time this morning discussing technical and vocational training. As I look at the Resolution before us, Mr. President, it is interesting to see how it ranges from the basic when one looks at the general education support Part A and by the time we get to Parts C and D we notice that part of this money is to be spent in equipping secondary schools with audio-visual equipment and interactive materials foreign language. Then we go to D provision of computer equipment books reference material *et cetera* for the national library. It goes to show that Government is accepting, as it is correct in doing, that we live in a changing society.

Once upon a time the people in the library business were concerned with taking books from shelves and putting them back there and keeping a record. Nowadays it has changed so much that we even change the name now from library science generally to information science. The computer technology is of the greatest importance nowadays. The computer is of utmost importance because we are able to access material from various data bases within the twinkling of an eye. One is sometimes surprised to see how quickly information can be brought from New York or London right before one here in Barbados. Similarly we have got to the stage where we realize that foreign language teachers can no longer rely on chalk and talk because we are now appreciating that language is not something you write to pass an examination but it is something that is dynamic and living and therefore we have to teach children or adults in a system which is realistic, which is something like what is going on in life around them.

But as you look at the sophisticated things, Mr. President, you must not forget the basics. That is why

I support wholeheartedly the comments made by Senator Straughn when she made her plea for an improvement in the conditions of those persons who have to attend the Composite schools. Because very often, as I was saying earlier this morning, we tend to look at one area, and without any malice just as an oversight, we do not pay the kind of attention to other areas as we pay.

I have been listening to Senator Barker, Mr. President, in between his asides, his comments and his getting involved in perhaps what he should not have been involved in, there is much sense in what Senator Barker was saying. He has made, I would submit, some critical points when he is speaking about education at the primary level because that is where we have to begin. When we read the resolution we hear about training for primary school staff including special education and diagnostic assessment techniques. That is high sounding and highfalutin. It sounds excellent. But unless we follow it up and put our money where our mouth is these words are just wasted words and our children will not benefit.

There are children in our community who have learning disabilities of one type or the other and pleas have been made for them time and time again. Occasionally they get a sop. I would submit that enough attention is not being paid to these children. Barbados has gone too far where only privileged persons who can afford to pay for the private education of children with disabilities can be reasonably comfortable with the kind of education which their children are getting. There are children in this country with disabilities who because they were fortunate enough to have parents who can afford to pay for them that you could see the miracles that a little assistance can work. They are poor children who do not have that kind of support in their homes and they are on the outskirts of society. As Senator Barker suggested we should have people who could diagnose the problems at a very early level. Sometimes some of these children only need remedial help. They can go out for reading, improve their reading skills and return to the regular stream.

4.05 p.m. .

Others have to go out and stay out in special schools. There is one school of thought that these children should be educated in the general setting, others believe they should have special wings. Whichever school you support the most important thing is there should be space in the primary schools for every one of these children who have these various disabilities. Because when we see those who had the support of family and friends, how they have progressed, we say "My goodness, the only thing that was wrong with some of those who are going to prison, because very often because of their disabilities they become frustrated, they commit crime, they are used by thoughtless and insensitive people in society". And you say, "But for

the goodness of God there goes my own child". I am suggesting, Mr. President, that this money which will be well spent, because any money spent on education if it is put to proper use and does not get eaten up again in bureaucratic things – and I keep saying that because too much money in these projects is often spent in going around the project as opposed to getting through to the project. Any money spent on the human resources is money well spent. Governments have always been borrowing and they will continue to borrow money. We see it borrowed for all kinds of buildings and all kinds of things. When we see some being borrowed for human resources we should all give our support and join in supporting this venture. I support the Resolution, Mr. President.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. President, I do not think I would allow this opportunity to pass when we are talking about education and not have something to say. At any rate I have something specific to say later which I will mention.

I too, Mr. President, listened with rapt attention when Senator Straughn was speaking. Whenever we discuss education I listen with very close attention because I know that is a source of knowledge and experience and we should always listen to it with careful attention. I would like some time very much to be exchanging some ideas with her especially with the concept of the composite schools. I too am concerned about the composite schools and what can be done about the composite schools but I think that one of the things that we need to look at and we must not forget is the fact of discipline. No matter which educational system you have and we do not have discipline within the system it will be a failure.

My fleeting observation of the composite schools is that one of the basic problems we have is indiscipline within the schools. Of course this problem of indiscipline is something that is rampant in the society today. It is not a situation that is peculiar to the composite schools. But I want first of all to make some replies to some of the points that Senator Barker made about the St. Leonard's School because I think first of all as a responsible citizen and also as a physician by practice I need to reply to him.

Now you talk about the location and the environment of the St. Leonard's School. If we are talking about medicine we are talking about scientific data. The St. Leonard's School has been there, not yesterday, it was there for 40 years you said. We cannot therefore say that it is the present location of the school that is causing the problem. Secondly the school is not isolated. There are people living all around the school. The school does not exist in a vacuum. What the medical scientific people are saying is that ...

And let me say this before I get on to that. I think it is unfair to say the Government has done nothing about it. The local medical people have investigated it and at least two international teams have come to investigate the problem.

Now, the problems that are identified as being problems within the school, what the health teams that have come to examine the problems have said is that first of all when you talk about this person dying and that person dying first you have to analyse the cause of death. If a lady teaching at the school dies of cancer of the breast it is nonsensical and unscientific to attribute the death by cancer of the breast of the teacher at the school to the location in which she went to school because if that were true it would mean that there would be an increased incidence of all the women in the area who have been living there for the past 40 years who do not only go in and out for 5 hours on a daily basis for 5 days.

So we have to be careful what we are saying. What bothers me however is that when responsible people say that in spite of scientific data you should pick up all the children from the school and move them to another location. Any group of people can say, "I do not like the school, therefore the Government has got to build a new one and put me in". You definitely cannot be ruled by these sorts of sentiments. You have to take decisions based on scientific data and what the Government is saying basically is that not only the local information but the international information that has been provided so far does not give any weight to the removal of the school.

Let me say to Senator Barker that Barbados is not the only place in the world where a situation like that exists. There are other sick areas in the world where these peculiar phenomena exist and we know is that the phenomena will come and go. You can call it hysteria, you can call it that somebody let out a bachoo, you can call it what you want. But we know from historical data that normally these things go in passing phases and if we hold on long enough we will find out there will be a new group of teachers with a new set of students and you would not have the problem any longer. We have to be careful how as responsible citizens we get up and say, move all the children, move all the teachers, when there is no scientific basis for doing it. We have to understand what we are talking about.

I am very interested in the fact that a lot of time has been spent on talking about libraries because that is my pet subject. That is so much my pet subject that I as a one man institution made sure that we built a library in the Pine for underprivileged children that you talk about because I realise that reading is very, very important. When we were in the process of building that library we got criticisms day in and day out, how it was a waste of money. It is not a

matter of campaigning. The Marcus Garvey Library is there. You can drive by this afternoon and you will find it open because we have insisted that it must open until after 5.00 o'clock in the afternoon and half days on Saturdays so the children who come home from school can use it. The Library is there for the children to use. So when the issue of libraries is raised that is a pet subject of mine. I wanted to say that.

Mr. President, I think in the area of education and funding I would like personally to take this opportunity, with your permission, Mr. President, because I think that as Barbadians and we are in a unique position today on July 21, where Barbados in the present and in the future should be the centre for another area of education, education in sports. I want to pay a compliment to Mr. Clyde Walcott, a hero in Barbados who has just been named President of the ICC, a most significant position in the world and I think ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: While I appreciate your sentiments and while I fully agree with them they are in no way related to this debate, Senator Simmons. I really cannot permit this.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. President, I do not like to disagree with your ruling, what I want to say is that we must see things like cricket as a part of our educational process. That is the point I want to make. I am serious about this. This is an old theory that you must have a healthy mind within a healthy body and that sports and education is the blend to which you must go. What I am saying is this.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not disagree with the theory that *mens sana in corpore sano* must be a very important tenet of our debate. But you should have pointed out that that was the basis of your statement.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. This is the crux of the point that I am making is that we in Barbados must look now, since we have got such an important person heading an institution, for a wider scope of Barbados. In other words, educate not only Barbadians but the total population who is interested in cricket. Because I believe in terms of institution and funding. We have a makkah called Kensington Oval which we must use.

Aside.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: How did we get there? It is as important as the Asides that were spoken about the St. Leonard's Secondary School. We are talking about making positive and constructive contributions to the learning process. The learning process in this area

involves something that is very close to the hearts of all Barbadians and that is cricket. The development of the personality is important. We know that in the world today that the people who are known best in the Caribbean are the cricketers who have been the leaders. That is why I wanted to pay tribute in passing because I think it is very, very important.

Mr. PRESIDENT: All right, in passing.

SENATOR Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for allowing me to get that in.

With respect to the problem students alluded to by Senator Barker, I agree that we have to identify very early the problem students and to do something about them. But let us remember that in every society we have problem students. That is not to say that we must not address the issue. It is a very fundamental issue. But I want to pay tribute to this piece of legislation in identifying these very crucial areas especially in terms of computer because we are moving into the world of informatics. I think that is what they call it today. Again, as I said earlier today, Barbados is in the advantageous place where 5 or 6 years ago it introduced computers into the elementary schools. As far as I am concerned, that was a fundamental and far reaching piece of legislation because it made that piece of equipment accessible to children at the elementary school level. That put them some 20 or 30 years ahead of most of the developing countries in the world. That is why I keep saying that we in Barbados are very privileged and we have to see Barbados as a pivot around which a lot of developing countries can be drawn in order to further their education. I think that this can be a source of funding for Barbados. We must see ourselves as an educated people who will sell education as we sell sugar or rice. It is a commodity. It is something that we have invested in for the last 20 years and we now should be reaping the benefits. If we do not see it that way and if we do not sell it as a commodity, I think that we will be selling ourselves short. I say that because I think this Resolution is a continuation of the investment that Barbados put in a precious commodity of education.

Therefore, I give my wholehearted support to this Resolution. I thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Alleyne.

SENATOR Dr. F. W. ALLEYNE: Mr. President, I shall be very brief but I could not miss this opportunity to comment on this particular Resolution. Now I wholeheartedly support this Resolution approving the borrowing of this sum of money for human resources development and I underline human resources development. Because it is generally agreed nowadays that the key factor in economic development is the human resource. There was a time

when there was a thinking that vast endowment of natural resources was the key to economic development. Today it is generally conceded that the human resource is the most critical factor. Therefore, the mastery of technical knowledge is the key. The countries which lead the way in terms of technical knowledge will lead the world in the future. In Barbados, there is a proud record of putting resources into development of humans. I think that, if you look at the allocation of our Budget, you will find that there is not another country in the English-speaking Caribbean which has been allocating a higher percentage of its recurrent and capital expenditures to its education than Barbados.

Mr. President, this is the main point I want to make. I am saddened when I look around and see that successive Administrations in Barbados going back from the time of self-Government until the present time have spent so much money on education and training of Barbadians and all who live here. Yet, in many instances, it is like casting pearls before swine. I do not buy that weekend paper which indulges in pornography. I stopped buying it about four years ago. My attention was drawn to a story in last weekend's paper about the Sir Frank Walcott Building.

Mr. President, it is nothing but a disgrace that you spend so much money on education and training in this country and you can find that a new facility, which I believe is the best facility housing public servants in this country today that I know of, where people are working inside there and sabotaging it. We have got to start spending money when we should not be spending it. I think some of these people should be lynched. People can take a roll of toilet paper and deliberately block up the sewage system and then you have to call in the plumbers who have to work all night. Whose money is it that you are spending? It is money out of Barbadians' pockets who are working. It is the workers' money and it is the employers' money that you are spending. You have criminals and lunatics of the worst type who can have fun in doing that. When the Director responds to it and draws the misconduct to their attention, they have the gall to take it to that Newspaper and it publishes it. They have no shame. This is why I have serious reservations at times about training the untrainable.

Sir, I believe that it is time to put teeth into Public Service Regulations again because we have relaxed them too much. Since the 1950's, there has been a lot of relaxation with respect to the proficiency bars and so on which people like the Leader of the Senate would have had to come through. All those you see now as Permanent Secretaries had to come through that system. As part of the liberalization process, we have gone too far and we are allowing people to get into the Service and remain in it who should not be inside there.

It is time that the body who is responsible for managing the Public Service address the issue of discipline seriously. I believe that Heads of Departments and Permanent Secretaries in the Public Service should have real authority to deal with recalcitrant members. The days for minuting files and passing them back and forth are over. I believe that if you are managing the Public Service you should have the authority to manage, and once there is a *prima facie* case made out against an officer, that person should be suspended pending due process. We have to get serious. These people who take taxpayers' monies and throw it away as if it comes from somewhere in heaven have to be sent a message.
4.25 p.m.

My own position, Mr. President, and it is a position I am going to sell to the National Insurance Board is that any person who can be identified as damaging that property, the Board is going to take them to Court. We are going to sue for damages. This notion that you can walk around and damage a public building because it is public property and therefore is nobody's property, I can tell you we are going to put that to rest.

Mr. President, I support this Resolution because you cannot destroy the many so as to get at the few.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Thank you, Mr. President, I did not expect this Bill, recognised as a companion bill to legislation to what went earlier, to have evoked so much attention. Most of the contributions were supportive of the Resolution including the intervention from Senator Barker. However, there were a few comments which he made which are not supported by fact. I think Senator Simmons addressed the question of health and the inferences which he sought to draw about the environmental conditions existing at the St. Leonard's Boys' and Girls' School. There is also something else which he said about those 2 institutions.

Senator Barker would have us believe that the St. Leonard's Boys' and secondary schools as we know them today – and I believe I am quoting him correctly – are the 1st free secondary schools in Barbados. I would like to correct that for the record, Sir. I believe that the St. Leonard's Schools, Boys and Girls, were comprehensive schools and not secondary schools...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Address the Chair and ignore the aside.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: that free secondary education came with the Democratic Labour Party Government.

On the question of children experiencing difficulty trying to get into the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, I thought if the attention span of Senator Barker was that long during the presentation of the TIVET Bill debate he would have recognised that the purpose of this was to facilitate those students who might, because they lack the academic qualifications but have demonstrated motivation and through their experiences, that this arrangement would facilitate their entry into these institutions.

With those few comments just to set the record straight, Sir, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
VESTING IN NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION
OF LAND AT THOMAS GAP,
PRESIDENT KENNEDY DRIVE

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, this Resolution comes before us as a means of facilitating the National Low Income Housing Project which the National Housing Corporation has been working on. The vesting of some 11 747.4 square metres of land at Thomas Gap in St. Michael will allow the National Housing Corporation to dispose of lands which are presently available and yet not within the possibility of the National Housing Corporation to sell to the tenants at Thomas Gap.

As the Senate would be aware, these projects and this one in particular include the creation of approximately 10 house spots, the upgrading of the physical infrastructure which services some 50 houses and it also upgrades the vehicular access, improved foot paths, provides drainage and electricity for the households at Thomas Gap. The lands are presently owned by the Crown in its right of government and this Resolution seeks to vest the land in the National Housing Corporation so that it may legally undertake the further administration of the land and the execution of the project.

I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

The question was put and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION THAT AN ADDRESS
BE PRESENTED TO HIS EXCELLENCY, THE
ACTING GOVERNOR-GENERAL TO APPROVE
THE APPOINTMENT OF CLIFTON
CARLTON BROWNE TO THE
OFFICE OF OMBUDSMAN

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, you will recall that earlier today you received from the Acting Governor-General a message relating to the appointment of an Ombudsman. I now move that the

Senate pass the Resolution approving the proposed appointment of Mr. Clifton Carlton Browne to the office of Ombudsman established by section 2 of the Ombudsman Act, Cap. 8A.

I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

The question was put and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I move that this Senate be now adjourned *sine*

die. In so doing, I would like to serve notice on Members that during the week beginning August 9, the Senate will be expected to meet probably on the Friday of that week. If possible for us to meet on the Wednesday it will be so indicated, but it is more likely to be on the Friday of that week. The House is meeting on August 10 to deal with matters which the Senate will be expected to deal with shortly after.

The question was put and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
4.33 p.m.

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