
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 12, 1993.

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, May 12, 1993, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator M. deL. JORDAN, (President)
Senator the Honourable L. V. H. LEWIS (Minister
of State, Prime Minister's Office) (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

Senator the Honourable Dr. C. D. CLARKE
(Minister of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the
Environment)

Senator Dr. Frank W. ALLEYNE

Senator Miss Y. V. WALKES

Senator Dr. E. A. SIMMONS

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

Senator Mrs. M. WALCOTT, S.C.M.

Senator the Rev. Canon J. L. SPRINGER

Senator T. E. BARKER and

Senator T. C. BECKLES.

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr.
President, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 2)
Order, 1993.

2. Instruments Adopted by the International
Labour Conference at its 79th Session held in
Geneva in June, 1992.

3. Annual Reports of the National Assistance
Board for the years 1989-1990 and
1990-1991.

4. Annual Report of the National Petroleum
Corporation for the year 1990-1991.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr.
President, it has been brought to my attention that the
father of Senator Canon Springer passed away during the
last week. I would like on behalf of the Government and
the Senate to extend condolences to Senator Canon
Springer and his family on the passing of his father.

As a mark of respect, I should like the Senate to rise
for one minute in silence.

*Senators stood in their places in silence for one
minute.*

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you. I should like myself
to be joined to any statements which were made on the
passing of the father of Senator Canon Jimmy Springer. I
have personally extended my condolences. I know that
everyone present would wish to do likewise. It is the sort
of thing that the more we talk about the more we feel and
therefore I know we do not want to prolong this too much,
but I am sure that Senator Springer would wish to say
something.

SENATOR THE REV. CANON J. L. SPRINGER:
Mr. President, just to thank you and the Honourable
Minister for the sentiments just expressed here, and also

other Honourable Members for their several expressions of condolence during the last several days. My family and I appreciate very much, and were strengthened by, the support we got.

Thank you, Sir.

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING IN THE BARBADOS TOURISM
INVESTMENT CORPORATION OF LAND
AT GRAVESEND, ST. MICHAEL

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, this Resolution now before the Senate seeks to vest Crown lands at Gravesend, St. Michael, in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation. These lands to be vested are currently occupied by the Barbados Hilton Hotel, which is now under the control of the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation. As you know, Sir, also under the control of that Corporation is the Heywoods Hotel.

As early as 1987 it was agreed that the land should be vested in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation so as to give that Corporation good title not only to the buildings but to the lands on which they are situated. The reason for that is quite clear to anyone in business. By so doing it enhances and facilitates the ability of the Corporation to raise capital, if it should so desire, in order to carry out refurbishments, extensions and the like.

As I said earlier, it started as early as 1987 and it has taken considerable time to reach this stage in the vesting process, since the Crown first had to establish a good and marketable title to the property. During the search certain discrepancies relating to the definition of boundaries and encroachments had first to be resolved. This necessitated some discussion with neighbouring parties and lengthy research into legal title.

When it was first ascertained that the Crown could not establish proper title to the land, title was sought under the Land (Adjudication of Rights and Interests) Act, Cap. 228A. Title has now been declared in favour of the Crown with all legal requirements having been duly discharged. Consequently, the Crown has a good and marketable title to the lands which have been defined and demarcated. A copy of the Lease Agreement made between the Government of Barbados and Hilton Hotel (Barbados) Limited and Hilton International Company has been handed in at the Clerk's table for anyone who might be interested in looking at it and examining the documents.

With these few remarks, Mr. President, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR. T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, the Honourable Minister in making his presentation gave us the impression that this was a minor matter, a matter of little or no consequence. Sir, I want to differ for several reasons which I shall go into. The Minister did not expand on the Resolution because the Resolution said that part of the reason for this vesting was the loan for the Hilton for refurbishment.

11.25 a.m.

Sir, I want to read from the Order Paper:

"To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the vesting in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation of land at Gravesend, Saint Michael, in order to facilitate the raising of a loan by the Corporation for the purpose of refurbishing the Barbados Hilton Hotel."

Sir, that is what appeared on the Order Paper under Public Business. So this talk about 1987 and all of that while though relevant does not explain in full the reason why today we are discussing this Resolution because it states the Resolution is to allow the Corporation to raise loans for refurbishment purposes. That is part of the Resolution. So Sir, I have to be guided by that.

Sir, the Minister did not tell us how much money was involved and he did not tell us from whom the money is to be obtained. He did not tell us why the lender was insisting that as a condition for this loan that the lands had to be vested in the BTIC. I was here waiting patiently to hear the Minister enlighten the House to enable us to come to a conclusion on this matter. But, the lack of information shows disrespect for the Chamber. We are not here as a rubber stamp. We must have full information if we are to come to a reasonable and fair conclusion of this matter.

So I am at liberty then to speculate since the Minister as usual was not forthcoming. There are certain aspects of this Resolution which leave me a bit worried. It is not the first time that the Hilton was refurbished. We know that a hotel which was built in the mid-sixties would have undergone some sort of refurbishment in 30 years otherwise it speaks a lot for the management of the hotel. Why at this point in time would the lenders be making this condition?

I am going to speculate with your permission that it speaks volumes for the confidence that lenders are having in the Government of Barbados led by the Honourable Prime Minister. I am told the loan is of \$5 million. If I am wrong the Minister can correct me. The Hilton Hotel is probably worth much more than \$50 million and again if I am wrong I stand willing to be corrected.

Senator A. MORRISON: Sir, we are here entertaining a Resolution dealing with the vesting of land in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation of which Hilton is part of that corporation. There is no Resolution before this Chamber dealing with a loan for the Barbados Hilton. So any reference is irrelevant to the whole Resolution.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Senator.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, the Honourable Parliamentary Secretary has not read the Resolution yet because it states specifically that the vesting is in order to facilitate the corporation in raising a loan. So I am at liberty to talk about the loan.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: I repeat, Sir, we are not discussing any loan to the corporation. We are discussing the fact that we want to vest the land which was stated in the Resolution for the purpose of obtaining a loan for the corporation. We do not know at what stage the loan is being negotiated and what will be the loan. So how can we discuss that at this stage?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Morrison, I shall determine how far Senator Barker may go. You may proceed Senator.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you very much, Sir. The point I was making was that a loan of \$5 million which we are here now to approve, the vesting of land in order to facilitate that loan... Sir, it is like my having a \$100 000 house and I wanted to borrow \$1 000 from the bank and the bank says, "Okay, I will lend you the \$1 000 but I must have the title to your \$100 000 house. If I go to the bank and the bank does that it would show that the bank has little confidence in either my ability to repay or my integrity, that it will take as collateral for a small loan such a valuable property. That is the point I want to make. Why is the Hilton Hotel being put up as collateral for a loan of such a small magnitude? I am saying that it speaks volumes about the confidence that investors and lenders have in the Barbados Government.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, there is nothing in the Resolution before us to suggest that the Hilton Hotel is being put up as collateral for anything besides the imagination of Senator Barker. I would wish he would refrain from going down that line of argument, Sir.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, the Honourable Minister is very forthcoming now but when he had his chance to speak he did not give us any facts whatsoever about the matter. This is a serious matter and I am going down the line on this with your permission, Sir. We must have proper information in this Chamber if we are to make proper decisions. If he does not give the information I have to go on what information I can glean and from hearsay.

I am saying that the Barbados Hilton is the property of the citizens of Barbados and that plus the Hilton are the 2 biggest hotels in Barbados and it is noteworthy...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not understand you. You said that plus the Hilton?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Yes those are 2 of the biggest hotels in Barbados.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Which two? I do not understand you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I meant Heywoods.

Mr. PRESIDENT: All right.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Those are 2 of the biggest hotels on the Island and maybe 2 of the 3 or 4 luxury hotels. It is not coincidental that the state had to build them because where was the private sector when we wanted that sort of investment in our hotel plant? They can come in now that the plant is finished. I am told the Hilton Corporation has an eye on the Hilton Hotel because they are now in the business where they are saying that they not only want to operate hotels but they want to get into the business of owning hotels.

This Resolution is not as slight as the Honourable Minister is saying. It has deep implications for me as part-owner of the Hilton. I have shares with the Hilton and when the Government of Barbados is vesting the lands on which the Hilton is standing in that corporation I have to sit up and take note. In case anybody wants to know what I mean when I say I have shares, I do not have shares but I am a law-abiding tax-paying citizen of Barbados and if the State owns the Hilton then I have part ownership. So I have to declare an interest in this matter and if the State owns the Hilton then I have part of the ownership. I have to declare an interest in this matter.

11:35 a.m.

What are the consequences of vesting this land in the BTIC? As it stands now, if the Hilton is to be sold now both Houses of Parliament have to give prior approval...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Have to give. I simply said both Houses have to give.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Sir. Anyhow that does not matter. ...before the Hilton can be sold. When the land is vested in the BTIC one morning the Minister can wake up, as is being done at Heywoods, and give his approval without recourse to Parliament and next thing you know, just like with Heywoods, Hilton is to be on the auction block.

Sir, we in this Chamber should make a united sound on this matter. It may seem a slight matter to some but beneath the surface this is part of the process by which we are selling out everything that the State owns in Barbados under the guise of loan facilitation. I am saying that it is a bad decision to sell Heywoods, especially at this time and the BTIC the agency in which we are vesting this land is seeking to offload Heywoods at less than a fair price. I am fearful that if we say "Yes" to this resolution we will wake up one morning and see in the paper that the Hilton Hotel is to be sold.

Soon from now the words of the late Prime Minister will come to pass that we will wake up one morning and find that we no longer own Barbados, that foreigners have come and taken over the place as they are about to do at Heywoods. The Minister can gloss over it as much as he likes.

I call upon this Honourable Chamber – I know we are Honourable men, Sir – to put sentiment aside... I apologize most sincerely. Honourable men and women. Sir, the women in here know that I think they are honourable so they will forgive me for that slip.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: We must take a stand on this matter. We must let our voice be heard. Enough is enough. This whole privatisation business has gone too far and it is bringing no benefits to Barbados. Not one benefit would accrue to Barbados from the selling of these properties. By vesting land in the BTIC we are facilitating such an action under the guise of a little \$5 million loan which the Government of Barbados should be able to wake up and with one minor phone call to an official get the \$5 million. The small amount of this loan should not require us to vest a \$50 million property into the BTIC just like that with all the attendant consequences. This is not the way to run a country. \$5 million is far too little. Like Esau we are selling out ourselves for a mess of pottage and we should not be standing for this.

Confidence is the key word. The lenders of this money have more confidence in the BTIC than they have in the Government of Barbados. That is clear. If that is what is to be our international status then it is time for this Government to take Barbados out of the misery in which it has put it and let people who are more dedicated and more qualified run this country.

Aside.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: We will get the votes. Do not worry. The point is, this has to stop. I am against this vesting because it is not in the best interest of the people of Barbados.

One last thing, Sir, we have to make sure that the public maintains access to the beaches around the Hilton Hotel.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Morrison, will you stop interrupting.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Whenever a hotel is built on the beach there is always this uneasiness, for example Sandy Lane, there is always that uneasiness about the public using down there and Paradise and so on. Now that approval is being sought to vest Crown lands in another agency we have to make sure that the public who has been, for generations, using the beaches off Hilton that they have the same access because I am not convinced that Hilton is not going to be sold. I feel that from what I have been hearing that it is sold. I and thousands of Barbadians would raise a lot of fuss if somebody from overseas who the Government probably half give away the hotel to would come and deny the citizens of Barbados access to that beach. That is something I am warning Government strongly about because there are certain rights that I have enjoyed in my past that I will not surrender lightly in the future. I am sure I speak for a lot of us in here that we like the beaches as they are. Just a word of warning.

With those words, I invite the Honourable Members of this Chamber to look again at this resolution bearing the points that I have raised – it is not a simple resolution – and let us come to a determination on this matter and let us tell Government that we do not like what they are doing with regards to the Hilton. Let us put party loyalty aside and let us think of what is best for the people of Barbados who, in a sense, have put us in this Chamber inadvertently. We have a greater responsibility and we should, in this Chamber, be sending the right signals to Government.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Simmons.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. President, I rise to support the resolution and it would be negligent of me if I did not challenge some of the comments or insinuations made by Senator Barker. I think it is time in this country that we really address the issue which Senator Barker raised, that is, the issue of confidence in this country. I think it is a very, very serious matter because Senator Barker says that the raising of these funds demonstrate a loss of confidence in this country.

I want to remind Senator Barker that in 1991 the Party which he represents went through this country telling people that there will be a devaluation of the Barbados dollar. That is where the loss of confidence in this country started. If you travel throughout the Caribbean... and I

happened to be in Brussels a couple months ago and the Ambassador from Dominica said to me with great certainty that the Barbados dollar had been devalued. That issue had been so much in the air that people took it for granted. We really need to address this issue of confidence.

We are in a situation where we are in an association with the International Monetary Fund. I would say this, that some of the private sector people in this country went public and said that the Barbados dollar should be devalued. That is where we lose confidence in our own country. The issue of devaluation of a currency causes people to lose confidence in their own country and the value of their own country. So if there is an issue of confidence we have to identify where the loss of confidence came and it is not only now that we are discussing the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation that we should all stick together and portray this country as a strong country. We need to do it whether we are in opposition or we are in Government and I have, in this Honourable Chamber, Mr. President called time and time again for Members on all sides to come together to build the name of this country. We are not only in Barbados, but in the whole world, going through some very, very rough economic scenes and if lending agencies ask you for papers which they normally did not ask for before that is not only true in Barbados that is true in all countries of the world. 11.45 a.m.

The President of the United States is today faced with a great problem where he wants to reform the health services of the United States and the President, although he has been given a mandate by the people of the United States to reform the health services of the United States, which you can consider less than adequate, he is getting a rough time because no where can he find in the great United States a method by which he can raise funds in order to improve the health services. If he talks about a tax they say it is retrogressive. If he talks about cutting funds from some place to put some place else they say it is retrogressive. So it is not only Barbados, all countries develop and developing are finding difficulties.

There is another issue I think we need to address. Senator Barker has made a statement that I think has to be challenged, because he insinuates that the reason for vesting the lands in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation is that the Government intends to sell it.

Now, I think that is a very serious charge and unless Senator Barker has evidence to support that claim I think it is a very serious claim because here again we can undermine the confidence of people in Barbados. If in tomorrow's papers it is said that Senator Barker says that the Government is vesting this land in the Hilton so that the private sector can buy it, this Honourable Chamber

happens to be a Chamber of dignity and therefore when a statement comes out from this Chamber people have to accept it as valid.

I would like Senator Barker to explain to me from which source he has received this knowledge. If he does not have that knowledge then I think that Senator Barker should not make such a sweeping statement because that statement itself can undermine the same confidence which we are talking about.

I do not know if it is true. I do not have any facts but I would assume that Senator Barker, having made that statement, would have been privy to some information that leads him to that conclusion. So I would like Senator Barker, as a very responsible citizen, as a citizen who has got his money vested in the Hilton Hotel, to be absolutely sure that statement is correct because he went through all the steps to explain why he is a part owner in the Hilton and since he is a part owner in the Hilton I believe therefore he has information which he can share with us as to why he thinks Government has that intention. I do not have any such information but I would not like it to go out from this Honourable Chamber that that is a statement of fact unless Senator Barker can produce the information.

I think we have to be careful and what we need to do in this country is to build confidence in the country. The confidence does not come from making glib statements. Senator Barker talks about holding fresh elections but let me assure you that within your own party you know your people have said you are not ready for leadership so we have no difficulty with that.

Let me say that changing political parties, because this is part of the concept that is given the people that the morning a political party changes all the answers are going to fall down from heaven. That is a joke. The world is in an economic recession.

Barbados has been doing extremely well given the fact that the confidence in this country has been seriously undermined. We have been able to maintain the parity of the dollar and it is for us to put our hands to the plough and work harder.

I understand political criticism. That is fine and that is what we are here for and this country has been a stable country because we have allowed dissent and political criticism, but we need to be objective. When we make comment we need to be serious about what we are doing. I believe that in this Honourable Chamber we should be hearing suggestions about how we can improve the tourist plant, how we can blend health with tourism. Even if we have to sell St. Joseph how we can blend health with tourism. These are the things that we need to look at seriously. But to make accusations about the Government

wanting to vest the lands in order that they can sell it to the private sector I think we need to be serious and make serious statements.

With those words, Mr. President, I support this Resolution. I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Morrison.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Thank you, Mr. President. Sir, I would just like to state that in listening to Senator Barker's contribution where he digressed from the subject of this Resolution which dealt purely with the ...

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: On a point of order, Sir, I did not digress from the subject of this Resolution. I take that as a slight on your ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, I have told you before that I am here and I will direct this Chamber. I do not need your assistance. You will take your seat.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I just want ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: You will take your seat. I do not need your assistance in guiding this Chamber.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Sir, I am making the point that Senator Barker digressed, and I will repeat, Sir, digressed from the subject of this Resolution. If I may read the Resolution, Sir.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: On a point of order, Sir, I did not digress from the subject of the Resolution and, Sir, I wish the Honourable Member would stop saying that I digressed. I did not digress, Sir, from the subject of the Resolution.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much Senator Barker. I heard you first time around. Thank you. Will you proceed, Senator Morrison.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Sir, the Honourable Member was able to talk about loans and the amount of loan that could be acquired and that was being done. This comes in order to accommodate the Barbados Hilton in order to obtain a loan which was said in the Resolution. Then he further made out a case about selling the Hilton Hotel. That is what I understand by digressing, where you move away from the real tenor of the Resolution which states:

"Resolved that the House of Assembly approve the vesting in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation of the parcel of land situate at Gravesend in the parish of St. Michael in this Island and more particularly described in the First and Second Schedules hereto, subject to the terms and conditions

set out in the Third Schedule hereto and that the Senate be invited to concur herein."

There is nothing about the amount of money you have to secure in a loan in this Resolution, Sir. It is a pure vestment and there is nothing unusual as far the Government is concerned. All Governments have had to vest properties in different corporations.

As a matter of fact all the accounting firms when they have to do the accounts for all the corporations in Barbados, the ADC, the BMC, all of them ask for the papers which belong to the Crown in order to assess the assets of various corporations. When there are no title deeds, accounting firms year after year put in their notes that they could not attest to the assets because they had no legal papers to go on. So Governments have from time to time, when these things become more and pressing, they have had to give these vestments over to the various corporations in order that they can do their business both with the accounting people and also a matter of fact that they can be in a position to bargain on their own behalf without referring to the Ministry of Housing who is the repository of all Crown lands in Barbados and who hold all title deeds for all lands owned in this country. So I do not see any mystery about this particular vestment. We were not hiding, Sir, we said it in the preamble in order to facilitate the loan. It was not a hiding matter. Then he used the part about the loan to start to speculate whether the Hilton Hotel could acquire a loan or whether they had anything in order that they could be considered for a particular loan. He knows the amount of money they want to borrow. I do not see that here in the Resolution, Sir, and that is why I used my remarks about digression. The only sensible point which the Honourable Member raised which is a point that should be of concern to all Barbadians and which I fully endorse, is the point about the access to the beaches.

11.55 a.m.

The information is all in the Third Schedule which is important to anything of this sort. I will read it for him, Sir, in order that he will know that the Government has been very, very careful and is very watchful to protect the rights of the citizens of this country. In the Third Schedule, it reads as follows:

"The lands described in the First and Second Schedules are to be vested in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation subject to:

- (1) an existing easement in favour of Mobil Oil Barbados Limited, its successors and assigns, over a portion of land 12.19 metres wide under which a pipeline runs as is more particularly delineated and shown on a plan certified the

30th day of October, 1990 by Andrew P. Weekes, Land Surveyor, and recorded on the 16th day of November, 1990 as Plan No. 1232/90; and

- (2) reservation of the following easements, more particularly delineated and shown on a plan certified the 30th day of October, 1990 by Andrew P. Weekes, Land Surveyor, and recorded in the Lands and Surveys Department on the 16th day of November, 1990 as Plan No. 1232/90,
 - (a) a right in favour of the Crown, over the the main road leading to the Hilton Hotel, through a car park and over a right of way 4.22 metres wide between Points D and E, more particularly shown on the aforesaid plan, for the purpose of gaining vehicular access to a jetty owned by the Crown;
 - (b) a right of way in favour of the Crown over a road which leads to the Military Cemetery and over a right of way between Points A and B more particularly shown on the same plan, for the purpose of gaining access to land of the Crown adjacent to the sea."

In accordance with the said provisions in the Addendum, the approval of Parliament is now being sought for the vesting of those lands to the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation in order to secure the existing rights of Mobil and also the rights of the public of Barbados, these have been put in as safeguards to make sure that the public has the full access to the lands around the Hilton and that we in no way have incriminated the public of Barbados. I think that is the most important thing in matters of this nature, Sir, and I hope that this will satisfy Senator Barker.

As I said, Sir, the investment is a normal thing and it has been done over the years. Then he had the gall to talk about the Sandy Lane Hotel.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Sandy Lane?

SENATOR A. MORRISON: He made reference that this will eventually be done as what is happening at Sandy Lane Hotel now. We did not build the Sandy Lane Hotel. That was built by the Barbados Labour Party and whatever restrictions are there now existing are still existing because your party set the restrictions at that time so that Barbadians cannot go certain places at Sandy Lane. It did not happen in the Democratic Labour Party's time. When you are talking, you should remember what you are talking about. Sandy Lane is right in your court. It has nothing to do with the Democratic Labour Party.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please do not let us have this cross talk.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: We built Heywoods and there is public access all around Heywoods. We built the Barbados Hilton and we have always made sure that the public has free access to the beaches. When you all built the Sandy Lane Hotel, you all did not think about those things. Now you want to lay that sin to our charge.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, I repeat do not let us have this cross talk. All right proceed.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Sir, I just wanted to mention those remarks in order to clarify the Honourable Senator's mind about those easements that we have made provisions in the Third Schedule. I do not see anything wrong with the vestment and we are moving on. It is a very good vestment and the Barbados Investment Tourism Corporation will be able to conduct its business with more confidence having full rights to the property which it has the rights to control. We expect that we will get good results and benefits for the people of Barbados in the future.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Fraser.

SENATOR Mrs. V. C. FRASER: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I rise to support this Resolution and I want to say in supporting it that perhaps Senator Barker missed something that was very important. It clearly sets out that the purpose is for refurbishing the Barbados Hilton. In saying that there is no purpose for this, I think that people must be very careful. There is a purpose and the purpose is for refurbishing the Hilton. May I say also, Mr. President, that the Hilton is really a free place. People even walk through the Hilton so freely that sometimes you wonder if the Hilton really belongs to everybody all and sundry. I have never seen anywhere in the Hilton where anybody has told anybody to do not pass through here or there.

On the other hand, I am happy about the whole question of refurbishing the plant that belongs to the Government. We have many people who want to bring their various conferences to Barbados, because of the lack of accommodation they are not able to bring the various conferences to have the people stay in one particular area. I think that the Barbados Investment Corporation has done a very timely thing, at a time when Barbados is now a focal point for many, many conferences and many planned

conferences for years ahead. An Investment Corporation like this should be congratulated for its futuristic thinking.

We sometimes believe that our own people are foolish and that they do not have the capacity to sit down and negotiate with funding agencies and so on. I should like to say to anybody, especially to Senator Barker, that Barbadians are very knowledgeable people. I just came from a conference at Sam Lord's and you should have seen the number of intelligent Barbadians there. Also, I talked with many funding agencies and Barbados has graduated from a number of these funding agencies. That is something that we must also remember. They have now to look to other funding agencies. If Barbados did not have a good reputation with the other funding agencies, there is no way that they would ever get any assistance from any of the new ones or some of the ones that they never borrowed from before. Also, funding agencies look at the integrity of the country, they look at its people. All the funding agencies' top bosses that you talk to will tell you that for them they can see what Barbados is doing with the money that they have borrowed. When they look and find that we have not got any real resources other than people, let us all face the facts that is our resource. Therefore, our people are able to go whether it is to Washington, Germany, Belgium or wherever and talk with these people and they are able to put forward ideas and they are able to tell them that we want to invest some money in a particular industry and in this case in the tourism plant. We expect that in 1996 that such and such conference will be held in Barbados. Therefore, we want to have rooms ready.

Now I was very pleased when Senator Morrison touched on the very important aspect of the facts of the negotiation and what goes on behind the scenes when people negotiate. Barbados has put itself straightforwardly before these people and we have made it quite clear that we are going to come to you if you can give us this on these terms. They made it quite clear that we are going to come to you if you can give us this on these terms. If you do not give us these terms, that our people can have access to the beaches and so on, well no can do. How many other countries do you think will be prepared to stand up to these kinds of things? It shows that instead of our degrading ourselves, Senator Barker, and trying always to sell Barbadians short, I want to say to any Barbadian who continues to go out there, or to say things in this Honourable Chamber that are negative of our country, that can be reported, it is time that they remember the positive things. They should remember that everything that is being done, especially in this Resolution, is being done for the upliftment of Barbados and Barbadians.

12.05 p.m.

The way that some Barbadians try to put Barbados on the international scene is scandalous. I travel a lot, and some people will tell you this thing is going to happen in Barbados, I heard it from X, Y, Z. They call your names

too. Sometimes they are people who are supposed to be responsible. Let us understand that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. A piece of this land God has lent to us and it is called Barbados. It is a beautiful piece and every Barbadian should understand that we have tried in this small country with, as I say, hardly any resources to use and tap the resources of our people so that they can offer themselves, their services and their knowledge to other people in exchange for money to help build up Barbados.

I should like to issue a challenge here to all those persons who feel that they do not have to live in this place, and that they will say it is the worst place in the world and that everything that happens is bad, that they had better watch out, because there is somebody who is greater than you and me who is looking down on all you say and all you do. If you try to destroy what you have, you may end up destroying yourself in the process.

Mr. President, I feel very happy to know that we can find ourselves in the same light as some of the international places with proper hotels, especially the Hilton. It is a great favourite of many people, the food is good there and it is reasonable and I am glad that it is part of the Barbados Government's plan to refurbish that further so that we may get in line with many more of the international conference type hotels and we will be able to earn money. When winter tourism is off, we can be attracting conferences. Many conferences go on at the Hilton, but sometimes they will tell you we wish we had a couple more rooms, because all the people cannot stay here. Some have to go to 3 or 4 other hotels, just to be in Barbados for the conference, so I think it will augur very well for tourism and for Barbados.

I hope Senator Barker will recognise the importance of being proud of one's country and at all times try to uphold its dignity and remember that this country is ours and we have to keep it that way.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. A. STRAUGHN: Mr. President, my contribution to this debate will be simple and short and probably going into the more humane field. Looking at the 2 words "refurbish" and "extension", I have a little fear and apprehension that sometimes refurbishing and extension could turn out in the process to be all-embracing.

In the hotel industry, as you may be aware, Mr. President, there is the introduction of something called the all-inclusive package. Perhaps it could be explained a little more fully, but from my understanding of it, it could be very all-embracing. This all-inclusive package, I fear, could in the long term direct and in some measure control the spendings of clients and would-be clients. This package could embrace many facilities which are at present the

means of livelihood of some of our small entrepreneurs. I stand or sit corrected if I am wrong. Included among these facilities would be those offered by the beach boutiques, the services of hair braiding and those skills and various avenues of employment that some of our locals now give.

Mr. President, any drive, however unintentional, that might in the long run undermine the efforts of the self-employed – and we have been encouraging self-employment for some time and continue to encourage it – I think would be a severe mistake. I submit that in looking at extensions and expansions of our hotel industry, in any direction, we have to consider very seriously, lest we make the mistake of pulling the mat from under the feet of some of our local, small entrepreneurs. I think we should guard our developments so that they are not made at the price of some of our very valuable human resources.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Dr. F. W. ALLEYNE: Mr. President, Senator Barker, speaking on this Resolution, speculated that the real intent of this Resolution was to facilitate – I think that was his word – the selling of the Hilton Hotel. Senator Barker made two allegations, which although not germane to the Resolution, in my view require examination. I am not in a position to examine the first one, because the first one is an allegation with respect to whether the Government is acting in good faith or not. Perhaps Senator Barker has information which I am not privy to, but he is challenging the integrity of the Government.

My training and experience have always cautioned me against giving myself that liberty which Senator Barker takes so readily, but I think we have to examine very seriously the second allegation which he made. For some time the notion of privatisation has been wrapped up in a lot of emotion, speculation and idle talk in Barbados. This has happened in Barbados within the last 2 years. At times I have heard comments about selling family silver, even by people who do not know what is family silver.

Mr. President, the whole concept of privatisation, as I understand it and I hope my understanding is what Senator Barker means by privatisation, was not invented by Barbados or anybody in Barbados. Privatisation in the 1990's is one of the foremost themes in economic restructuring in the western world and the eastern bloc countries. I can understand some people who are not read who can hardly spell their names getting upset about the term "privatisation". The whole notion of privatisation is working towards a market economy which is driven by market forces. Poland is doing it. What was formerly Eastern Germany is trying to do it. The Soviet Union is doing it. The critical issue is whether it is properly done, but to come in here and give people the impression that whenever the State is selling an asset something is fundamentally wrong, is to betray a level of abysmal

ignorance which I do not want to associate with Senator Barker.

12.15 p.m.

I think Barbadians have to understand that there is no particular intrinsic merit in whether an asset is owned by the State or by private enterprise. The critical factor is how that asset is used. I think we have to go back a bit in time and ask ourselves as Barbadians and as people who live here whether the justification for the state constructing the Hilton Hotel in the 1960's can be made today for the retention of the Hilton Hotel by the State.

The justification in the mid-1960's was for the Government to set the standard in the hotel industry, and open up a higher level of development in the industry because private enterprise was not progressing at the rate which Government felt necessary at the time. That was the rationale then but if today in 1993 that rationale is no longer valid the case for retention of the Hilton Hotel or any other asset cannot be made. I challenge Senator Barker or any of the people in Barbados who are saying you should not privatise this and that to tell me if the justification for acquiring them in the first instance is still valid today.

If the State disposes of a physical asset like the Hilton can the buyers of the asset take it up and carry it out of Barbados? That is the question. You cannot take up a hotel and take it anywhere. I am saying, Mr. President, that to the extent that the justification for acquisition no longer exists it is better for the State to provide a mechanism whereby they can get fair value for the property which it is going to dispose of, dispose of it and use the proceeds to open up other areas of the economy which are in pressing need of development.

This notion that once you have something you hang on to it is an outgrown and foolish one. I do not expect people who should know better to get up and espouse points of view which they know have no foundation. The critical thing is that a proper mechanism for the disposal of the asset should be put in place and a mechanism which is acceptable to all as being fair.

I believe it is nothing new in Barbados. A number of political organisations in Barbados have been talking about privatisation and they have been writing about it so we are not inventing anything today. I am sure if you look at the manifesto put out by the Democratic Labour Party in 1991 you will see a model for privatisation in that manifesto. I believe the Barbados Labour Party, Senator Barker's party – sometime ago I referred to him as being on the tail end of that party and he objected to it at the time, but I still believe he is on the tail end of that party – has taken a position on privatisation.

I would wish, Mr. President, that for the benefit of those who do not know better when we speak of this issue of privatisation we will help Barbados to understand what is the fundamental reason for the State's acquisition of assets and when the State should let go of those assets. I think I have said enough on this issue of privatisation which Senator Barker raised as a red rag in this Senate to satisfy everyone who is reasonable that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with privatisation. What can be wrong is if the mechanism does not result in a conclusion which is fair to the residents of the country who are the eventual owners.

Mr. President, I repeat what is critical is the mechanism which is employed to dispose of the assets, but there can be no justification for the State hanging on to assets long after the justification of the rationale for acquisition in the first instance no longer exists.

This Resolution before us as I understand it, seeks to vest land in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation to facilitate access to a loan for the purpose of refurbishing. I take seriously the concerns raised by Senator Straughn. I need not repeat them, but I would think that any financier, any lender, would want to make sure that if he is going to provide you access to his funds he is in a position to secure his money. It has nothing to do with confidence or lack of confidence. In fact, if I do not have confidence in you I would not lend at all. I come to the point which Senator Simmons raised. The people who are talking about lack of confidence in Barbados are the source of the problem. They work very hard to create mistrust and then they are the first to come out and say there is no confidence.

I believe I have said before in this Senate that problems do not disappear overnight. Those of us who look around the Caribbean should learn some lessons. There is a certain country in this Caribbean where when a certain Prime Minister was in office they taunted him. When he demitted office he had to stay in his house for almost 2 months. He could not come out. They encamped around his place and mocked him. Then another Prime Minister took office and they walked into the Parliament buildings and they stripped him down to his underwear and he almost lost his life at the end of a gun. I say this so that Senator Barker might hear. Today you sow the seed. This Government might not reap it, but in time you might reap it. Do not believe that every day you will go around sowing mistrust and if perchance you become the Government people will feel that you are a different kind of person and put complete trust in you. Life is a dynamic process. It does not remain in one state.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, I am tired of your constant interruptions. As if you have to punctuate whatever any other Senator says by a little comment. Senator Barker, I have had enough of that. Will you stop

that and be silent. Senator Alleyne never interrupted you while you were speaking. Senator Barker, I will not have it. You may continue Senator Alleyne. I am just warning you, Senator Barker.

12.25 p.m.

SENATOR Dr. F. W. ALLEYNE: Thank you, Mr. President. I was about to make the point, Mr. President, that everyone recognizes there are difficulties in the world at this time, the Caribbean not excluded. Barbados has its difficulties and in fact, in Barbados, when we look at the Caribbean setting, we have difficulties of lesser magnitude than the others of our neighbours who are much better endowed. Our difficulties are far less severe and I believe it is in the interest of Barbados that in spite of our political views – we might differ at the level of political views – it is time that we desist from using every opportunity to so seize of discord. And I again make contact with a point Senator Simmons made when he talked about being in Brussels and somebody saying to him, "Yes the Barbados dollar was devalued". It is time we stop sowing these seeds of mistrust which pull down Barbados.

I was disturbed this morning, Mr. President, to see that a simple Resolution like this could provide the opportunity for Senator Barker to make the point there is no confidence in this Government. A Government that has spent and continues to spend so much money educating people at primary, secondary and tertiary level and you can find people still conducting themselves in that kind of way.

Mr. President, I support this Resolution.

Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, in introducing this Resolution the Honourable Senator Barker suggested I did not give full information to this Chamber.

What we are concerned with here today is the simple vesting of land owned by Government into a statutory corporation called the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation. The Corporation already vested in that Corporation is the Hilton Hotel which has a value of well over \$50 million, \$60 million on the market. What we are talking about here today and engaging ourselves in is vesting about 15 acres of land.

If we are saying to the Corporation that you are a statutory body independent and we want you to do a job then of course you will give it the necessary tools. I do not see how you could not argue about vesting \$50 million or \$60 million for a hotel in the Corporation but would argue about 15 acres of land being vested. It is utter nonsense. I

do not think that somebody with the calibre of Senator Barker should try to mislead this Honourable Chamber in trying to say if you do x then you cannot do y in this context.

All you are saying here is that as a Corporation you want the flexibility to do what any normal Corporation is free to do. The Prime Minister of this country has been clear, *vis-a-vis* what he intends to do about the Hotel. That is, it will not be sold. In terms of privatisation from day one the Hilton Hotel has been privatised because it has been fully managed by a private corporation. If you understand the meaning of privatisation this will be evident. I know you do not, because based on your discussion, you could not have known that and then make the statement about privatisation. The mere idea that there is an extant agreement between the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation and the Hilton Hotel for the management of the Corporation, that is privatisation.

On the question of access to the beaches, Mr. President, it is the policy of this Government that all beaches in Barbados will remain public beaches with fully marked, clearly marked access to the beaches and will remain that way. In terms of the work being done at Rockley in Christ Church; at Reeves Bay in St. James; and at Paynes Bay in St. James, at all of these sites access will remain to the public. So there cannot be any question about that.

I do not want to detain the Chamber any more on this, Sir.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT
HORSE HILL, ST JOSEPH FOR ROAD
IMPROVEMENT

Order No. 2 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Horse Hill, St. Joseph for road improvement.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Thank you, Mr. President. This Resolution concerns the acquisition of 38 parcels of land actually used in the Horse Hill Road Improvement Project.

In October 1987 the Cabinet of Barbados set out proposals for the wide scale improvement of the road network serving the Scotland District. It was agreed, amongst other things, that there would be 3 main routes into the Scotland District. One of these routes would serve traffic from the central area of the country and would proceed along an upgraded Highway 3 by way of the East Coast Road and Horse Hill. Following Cabinet's approval in principle the improvement of Highway 3 from Horse Hill to the East Coast was set out and established. In addition notices under Section 3 of the Land Acquisition Act were published in respect of parcels of land estimated to be required.

As surveying information was collated certain discrepancies were discovered which necessitated the publication of amended notices as well as additional notices under Section 3 of the Act. Consequently notices required under Section 4 of the Act were duly executed to correspond with the changes made.

This Resolution is seeking to acquire land which has already been used. By acquiring it, it will facilitate the payment of compensation to the owners of the land.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, that concludes Public Business for today and there being no further business, I move that the Senate adjourn *sine die*.

ADJOURNMENT

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate sine die at 12.35 p.m.

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