
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 14, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, February 14, 1996, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP, (President)

His Honour Senator C. L. BOLDEN, (Deputy President)

Senator the Honourable R. R. FARLEY, (Minister of Industry, Commerce and Business Development) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Honourable P. C. GODDARD (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business)

Senator the Honourable G. S. H. MURRAY (Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE

Senator T. E. BARKER (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Senator Miss O. P. SYMMONDS

Senator D. T. GILL

Senator Miss J. C. ODLE

Senator N. A. LYNCH

Senator N. P. WELCH

Senator J. A. WORKMAN

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON

Senator S. P. BERNSTEIN

Senator C. LeR. TROTMAN

Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L. SPRINGER, G.C.M.

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS,

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Senator C. A. MASCOLL

Prayers were led by Rev. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. The Representation of the People Expenses (Amendment) Regulations, 1996.
2. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Barbados National Bank for the year 1996.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise on Personal Explanations. It would appear that the thrust of my speech relating to the Prices and Incomes Protocol during the last sitting of this Honourable Senate was misunderstood and, as a result, it was misrepresented to the public that I in some way supported downsizing as a policy. Nothing can be further from the truth for I have long argued that reorientation of job functions, training and adjustment of the business plan should be the direction to go in meeting the challenges of competition in a changing business environment.

Indeed, all too often I have seen the aggressive retrenchment result in a loss of efficiency and a general decline in the profitability of businesses. I am all too aware that a business is about people and the morale of the employees and the satisfaction of customers. Those who have dealt with me over the past two decades as a businessman or read my contributions to the public debate on this subject should have come to understand this by now.

Mr. President, the major thrust of my speech was to point out the reality of the global business environment and the fact that as a major player in the international business environment Barbados could not expect to be immuned to the impact of changing business activities. We could not play a modern day King Canoe by defying the ties to rise. To adjust to the new information era, I pointed out that it was imperative that the society focus on the education and training of its people as a national priority. Indeed, I called on the private sector to share a greater burden in this area by scheduling routine training events and participating in the education of its work force. No longer could the business community expect Government to shoulder the total burden of training and education. I further pointed out that Government understood this and that this was reflected in its policies on education and training. Recently initiated programmes by the Labour College of Barbados Workers' Union...

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I rise, Sir...

Mr. PRESIDENT: It is not the practice to interrupt a personal statement. Please proceed, Senator Goddard.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Recently initiated programmes by the Labour College of the Barbados Workers' Union reflected an understanding by that institution of the fact that the whole community including the business community should be involved in the effort. When Hansard is published, the record will be put straight, but in the meantime there will be no answers to these misrepresentations unless I take this opportunity to set the record straight. I pointed out that the true job security no longer rested in protecting specific jobs in perpetuity but rather it is achieved by an aggressive programme of continual education and training. It lays in creating an adaptable work force sector to adjust rapidly to the changing needs of organizations and businesses. My call was for a national effort to create a culture of learning that would provide the economic growth and job security of the future. I know of no Cabinet decision that was taken to protect specific jobs in perpetuity. The resultant "brouhaha" has clearly been the result of lifting a tiny portion of my speech out of context and applying creative interpretation if indeed there was a misunderstanding of what I said.

I thank you, Mr. President, and this Honourable Chamber for your indulgence.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, before the Clerk introduces the first item, I would just like to lay an explanation, with your leave, to indicate that there has been a little mix-up as far as the sequence in which the two Order Papers, the main Order Paper and the supplementary Order Paper were received by

some Honourable Members. Whilst the original Order Paper would have had three items and that should have been mailed in time to be received first, apparently some Members had received the supplemental Order Paper containing four items which we had proposed to deal with today.

Accordingly, some Members had concluded that the three-item Order Paper having been received last had in fact superseded the four-item Order Paper. In fairness to this Honourable Senate and its Members, I will propose therefore that we not debate Item 4 of the supplementary Order Paper of the White Paper on Education today because some persons did not come today anticipating debate on this matter and it really would be outside of the highest traditions of this Chamber to proceed on this occasion. So I would propose that we work from the first Order Paper that had been circulated with the three items.

ITEM NO. 1 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPUL- SORY ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VENDORS' MALL, PALMETTO STREET, BRIDGETOWN

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, this first item seeks Senate's approval for the compulsory acquisition of land at Palmetto Street, Bridgetown for the establishment of Vendors' Mall. This whole matter, Sir, of vending in Bridgetown has a long history and the action that we are taking today is but part of the wider solution proposed in this matter.
11.25 a.m.

The area on which we focus today, in terms of seeking the Senate's approval, is that area which would be the site of the former Trafalgar Hotel. The property of Griffith's Reliance Pharmacy Ltd. is being acquired for the purpose of construction of facilities for vendors in Bridgetown.

This Government recognises the importance of the small business persons in Barbados, particularly the opportunities which the small business sector provides for the economic empowerment of the wide majority, Sir, the broad masses of people in this country. The situation with which we are faced today is that the demand for opportunities to be involved in this particular aspect of small business, that is, the sale of fruits, vegetables, dry goods, clothes and various other items within Bridgetown and its environs has escalated over the years. In fact, the figures reveal that prior to 1980 less than 100 persons per year used to sell in Bridgetown and its environs as what we would classify as vendors, and these were the persons who were operating outside of the markets. By 1995 applications for licences had reached 1 250 per year, and this again is for licences outside of the established

markets. In terms of the situation with which we are faced, there are currently some 225 licensed vendors in Central Bridgetown, and this is in addition to over 150 others who operate outside of the wider Bridgetown area.

In terms of the number of unlicensed persons who are known to be doing business in the City, there are about 600 in Bridgetown and the wider Bridgetown area. The challenge really is to satisfy the demand for the opportunities for persons to make a living by being engaged in this category of business endeavour. The other matter which bears more specific relation to the acquisition of this particular property is in relation to a situation that has developed within the general area of Swan Street, Palmetto Street, Marhill Street, Rickett Street and the upper Bridgetown area.

We have a situation in which a vendors' mall, as it was described, was established in 1986 in Swan Street as an experimental exercise. In 1988 a decision was taken to relocate the persons in that area to an area to the north of the Careenage. Plans were prepared, but the project was subsequently not executed due to lack of funding. The temporary situation continued for a while longer, but then the fire in Swan Street in 1993 highlighted some of the problems that had developed but had not been addressed up to that point. Those problems largely related to the fact that the optimum number of businesses which were to operate within the mall had been exceeded, and in addition a number of the arrangements that had been put in place on the establishment of the mall had not been followed through on the various sides. These related to the method of disposal of garbage, both by the persons who operate stores in the area, as well as by persons in vendors' malls; the fact that the display carts that were used were not moveable and were really left overnight and over extended periods; the fact as well that a number of heavy concrete pots had been brought in to act as stabilisers for the umbrellas which were used to provide shade in the area, and as well to the absence of sanitary facilities for use by the business persons operating in the vendors' malls.

The result was that the overcrowding created problems as far as the circulation of pedestrians in the area was concerned. The fact that the display carts were not moveable presented a particular difficulty during the fire of 1993 in terms of the access to the area by the Fire Service and resulted in considerable delay, because the carts and the concrete pots had to be moved. Also, Sir, the absence of sanitary facilities basically created some problems, both in terms of the general aesthetics of the alleys and associated minor roadways which had become used for purposes other than to-ing and fro-ing, I think they had been used for other types of passing. But also in terms of the fruit and vegetable business persons, the unavailability of sanitary facilities would put both themselves and their customers at some particular disadvantage.

Arising out of that experience in 1993, a series of meetings were held by the interest groups in the area, namely, the association representing the vendors as well as the association representing the persons operating out of buildings on Swan Street and the Government.

A communique issued arising out of a series of meetings that were held indicated the acceptance on all sides that the arrangement was in fact, as had been decided back in 1988, a temporary one and was one which was used as an interim measure to provide the business persons with the opportunity to do their business until better arrangements could be put in place. It recognised as well that the new facilities which had been delayed due to financial constraints should be treated as a matter of priority. It also recognised the importance of all three sides to the matter being provided with the opportunity to conduct their business in the best possible conditions. What has been done since that time is that a property has been acquired between Palmetto and High Streets, a former building that had been burnt out some time ago and that had been identified to be the Palmetto Street Mall. That project would have been able to house some 57 businesses. That, obviously, Sir, would not have been enough to provide opportunities for all concerned. It was decided therefore to expand the project first of all by also acquiring the burnt out Basix building, which was adjacent to that original High Street Mall which, as I have indicated, Sir, lies between High Street on the West and Palmetto Street on the East, the Basix building being on the Palmetto Street side of that property.

11.35 a.m.

Also it was recognised that even in addition to expanding the project by inclusion of the burnt out Basix site that we needed to provide even more opportunities. It was therefore decided that the property in question, which is the subject of this Resolution the site of the former Trafalgar Hotel, should also be acquired and that a suitable building be constructed on that property to provide an even larger number of opportunities for these small business people. The provision of the improved facilities is part of the wider programme of provision of expanded and higher quality facilities for small business people.

We are also in the process of refurbishing the Cheapside Market. That building is a very central location. In fact, the environs account for the largest single site for small business persons in Barbados, especially on weekends. In fact, Sir, I believe the figures indicate that around 450 persons are provided with business opportunities in the area of Cheapside and are engaged in the sale of fruit and vegetables, clothing, arts and craft, jewellery and several other things. They are accommodated in that general area.

Unfortunately, Sir, due to the present condition of the building many of those persons are accommodated on

the outside, both in the forecourt of the Cheapside Market in which some 84 vendors operate as well as the north side of the car park which some people might describe as the police car park and others may describe as the Kirpalani or Mrs. Ram's car park. The one on Princess Alice Highway where on the north side many vegetable vendors operate, particularly on weekends, there are some 76 or so persons who now operate there.

That area, Sir, because of its central location, its long history of providing opportunities for persons all over the island to do business there as well as the striking architectural features, will continue to provide, when refurbished, excellent opportunities for business people.

In addition to that, the Fairchild Street Market is to be refurbished. I believe that the details of the project are yet to be finalised. I believe that the opportunities there would be substantially expanded to provide an increasing number of opportunities for business persons as well as increased customer comfort and a quality and level of service which customers have grown to expect and demand. We recognise, Sir, that our responsibility in this matter is to provide the best possible opportunity for these business persons to succeed in their business endeavour. The fact that the Fairchild Street Market is only currently half occupied even on weekends but that persons will operate in the forecourt and also that some persons who have space in the Fairchild Street Market who continue to pay their rent for the space actually ply their trade on Fairchild Street or on Bridge Street and wherever people may happen to be suggests that what we need to do in creating these facilities is to ensure that there is a high enough concentration of activity as well as the quality of amenities and an interesting mix of products and services available that would be able to attract customers to those locations.

It is our view that with the establishment of the 2 Palmetto Street Malls – which is what they will be as there will be one across the road from each other – with the refurbishment of the Cheapside Market, with the refurbishment of the Fairchild Street Market as well as the provision of opportunities for sale outlets in other parts of the island, for example already opportunities have been provided for persons in the area of the Oistins Fishing Complex. If you passed that road recently you would have noticed on the eastern side of the original fish market building that a number of shops have been established which are being occupied by small business persons who are selling various types of clothing and other articles.

In addition, Sir, it has already been announced that a number of areas off the ABC Highway, not on the highway, but off the highway, have been identified and will be used to provide some opportunities for vending activities. A number of areas which are along the trails

which have become used by tour operators who are providing visitors with island tours and going from interest point to interest point have been identified which will provide comfortable rest stops as well as appropriate parking and can also be used to provide a number of selling opportunities for our industrious people.

Sir, this land acquisition request that is before this Honourable Senate must be seen within the context of expanding the base of opportunities for these very industrious people. It must be seen as providing them with expanded facilities and opportunities for growth. It must be seen, Sir, in the context of providing them with the opportunity to do their business with just as much comfort as other persons who may start with more means and are therefore able on their own to procure properties of some substance and comfort. We do not believe that it is to the advantage of the hundreds of persons involved in vending activities in Bridgetown to have to endure the sun, rain, absence of toilet facilities and so on, not to be able to store their materials appropriately, and in some cases not able to attract a large enough customer base as would improve the viability of their businesses. We do not believe that those things are in their best interest. Rather, we believe that the provision of expanded facilities, both in terms of quantity as well as quality provides wonderful opportunities.

11.45 a.m.

For example, these two Palmetto Street malls, because of their central location, their proximity to the area which is already used by the small business persons operating in the vendors' mall on Swan Street will result in no dislocation when the move occurs. Furthermore, because of the concentration in a central area we see exciting opportunities for some common approaches to business. We see the stability that is offered by a permanent location in a choice spot in the City to allow opportunities to develop for the business persons there to engage, for example, in joint purchasing and thereby have greater bargaining power as far as the cost of their inputs are concerned.

We also see them, Sir, being able to engage in joint marketing. I look forward to the day when I can turn on the television or radio and hear or see advertisements inviting customers to come to the Palmetto Street Mall because there is a 10 per cent special, or they have two Honda Accords to give away, and whatever specials there might be. But the permanent location, the level of facilities that we offer will provide those kinds of opportunities for persons to expand their business.

Furthermore, Sir, you will well understand in terms of the financial security both of the business as well as the individual that the opportunity to operate in an approved and permanent location will remove one headache that plagues several of these business persons, and I will

explain. Bankers are generally conservative people. They have to be because they are managing other people's money and they need to be able to produce that money on demand. One of the criteria which they will consider in assessing loans to business, and even individuals, but let us stick to business, is the whole question of the stability of location. You would agree, Sir, that a banker would be acting in a fairly reckless manner to lend money to a business person who does not have any guarantee in terms of whether he will be at his present location the next day, or the day after that, or the year after that, from two perspectives. One is that if you do not have a location at all then you cannot do business and there is no income. But also, the projections you make as far as your sales and subsequently your revenue largely relate to the area in which you operate. Even if you could secure another location, there is no guarantee that the same level of sales could be generated from your new location.

These vendors in Bridgetown, when seeking finances for their business endeavours, expansions and so on, would be in a stronger position as far as their drive to seek finance for their operations by being able to assure the banker that they have no problems as far as being moved off the street or having any business interruptions because, for example, if they are operating on the street and there is major sewage work to be done and the road has to be dug up for some reason then no business can be conducted. We believe that the viability of these businesses would be enhanced through the easier access to financing by being in a more stable location.

Sir, we will not stop at the provision of facilities for these persons. We will also seek to provide a series of business services to these persons operating in these malls. Through the Ministry which I have the honour to lead at this point, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Business Development, we will send our officers into these newly created malls to work with those business persons there to help them improve their record keeping, their business planning and generally assist them in developing the business skills which will be necessary for them to grow.

In fact, our hope is that while there will always be these vendors' malls providing opportunities for small business people, our hope is that their level of growth will be such that over the years we will not be dealing with the same individuals over and over again. In other words, we would want to see a situation in which those facilities provide an opportunity for start-up, for growth and provide them with enough wealth that they would be able to go out and acquire larger properties, their own properties, and move on to larger endeavours as opposed to being relegated to forever remaining small. We see small as a good point to start but we do not have any romantic notion

that small is so beautiful that you never ever want to go away from being small. We just see it as an interesting point to start.

Sir, in recognition of the fact that these business persons being the chief cook and bottle washer in their business really cannot leave their business to go to the various institutions, be it the Small Business Division of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, BIMAP or any of the other agencies that offer entrepreneurial development and assistance, they really cannot leave to go to these services, we believe that these services need to go to them. So that as part of the facilities we will be seeking to provide these types of opportunities.

In fact, Sir, in order to facilitate this, you would be pleased to note that in terms of the physical layout of the building, in addition to the provision of selling space, for example I think in the first Palmetto Street Mall which is now under construction between Palmetto and High Streets, on the ground floor will be primarily fruits and vegetables and on the upper floor dry goods and services. But there is also provision for a meeting room and the other facilities which will be necessary to allow the business persons to get together and plant their common strategies. The room can be used for training and entrepreneurial activities which we plan to introduce into that area.

We recognise the enormity of the challenge with which we are faced with respect to the provision of opportunities for these business people. We have identified this matter as one of high priority. We have already started working and the first building is currently under construction, not on the one on this site. This is the one on the other site. The proposal is that when that first phase is completed some of the persons engaged in vending activity on Swan Street will move into that area.

The second phase will be the construction of the building on this site, which is the subject of the debate, the site of the old Trafalgar Hotel. When that is completed the persons who are currently accommodated in that area, including Palmetto Square, just outside of these Honourable Chambers, will be located there. I believe that in a short time the work on the Cheapside Market will also commence.

11.55 a.m.

In conclusion, I would indicate that we recognize the enormity of the numbers with which we have to deal. The demand which we have experienced in this area is 1 250 applications in 1995 versus 100 applications in 1980. It is really a phenomenon which is associated with economic difficulties on the one hand, as has been seen in the expansion of demand for this type of business activity in Trinidad and Jamaica which occurred around the time

of their difficulties, but also, Sir, a greater recognition on the part of many young and not so young Barbadians that there can be no greater reward than to establish one's own business, to see it grow and, hopefully, to be able to pass both the accumulated wealth in terms of the monetary value of the business, as well as the accumulated wealth in terms of the information which one has gathered in the conduct and operation of that business, to one's offspring.

This Administration is prepared to rise manfully to that challenge. We will work with the small business persons in Barbados, in this particular case, the vendors of Bridgetown to provide the facilities.

In fact, you would want to be assured that the decisions we have arrived at in this matter have been taken in full consultation with those persons. Several meetings were held, not only on the level of the association of the businesses, that is, the Wayside Business and Vendors Association. A meeting was also held some time around the middle of last year, in the Queen's Park Steel Shed, where the architectural plans for the Palmetto, High Street Mall were revealed. Suggestions were made. The architects were on hand and the persons who do business on Swan Street, Marhill Street and Rickett Street made recommendations and suggestions to the architects concerning everything from the size of the booth to the nature of the construction to their design. Their ideas have been taken on board. They are happy and we are happy. I believe that the public of Barbados will be happy that they would be able to patronize these businesses, Sir, at a level of comfort that has, hitherto, not been seen.

We look forward to the establishment of this new facility, as well as the refurbishment of the expanded facilities.

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

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Mascoll.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, we are becoming very familiar with a practice of prolonging discussions on Resolutions that are pretty minor in terms of the ability to deliver these Resolutions, not in terms of the import of the Resolutions. This seems to be a recent strategy to deny the Opposition access.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: You interpret it as you see fit. We would hope that in time...

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. I really think that the Standing Orders and, certainly, you, Mr. President, are there to

ensure that everyone has appropriate access. Certainly there can be no deliberate decision of this Government to deny anyone access to the Floor of this Senate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is no point of order. The Senator did not finish the sentence. I was not sure what he was referring to. Perhaps, he might want to finish it. I just hope that you would not be reflecting on the Chair.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I must admit that I am becoming pretty skilful in getting Senators to say things that they would have to apologize for some time after. Again, without even finishing my sentence, the goodly Senator rises.

On the issue of small business, there is no doubt that the Democratic Labour Party supports any move to enhance the opportunities for small people, in this country. This is explicitly stated, in fact, in the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party at page 19. I quote, Sir,...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL:

"A Democratic Labour Party Government will implement, expand and refurbish and upgrade the market facilities at the Cheapside, Fairchild Street and Eagle Hall Markets as a matter of urgency. An area has already been chosen to locate a facility in Bridgetown to permit vendors access to first class accommodation and provide for easy access between clients and vendors without causing traffic congestion and breaches of the law."

That area happens, in fact, to be Palmetto Square. We are not at variance on this issue at all. I am concerned though that it is not just a question of providing small businesses with a location, although I must admit that location is, perhaps, the most important factor in determining the success of a small business. This is beautifully exemplified by, maybe perhaps, our largest supermarket outlet to date, Julie'N. There is no one who can deny that that facility does, in fact, provide an example of excellence for small businesses to emulate starting as a one-day shop and moving to the kind of megamart which it now is, and it is beautifully located at Haggatt Hall.

In fact, it only demonstrates the extent to which planning is necessary for success in business. If we were to look critically at the location, we will see that you can get access to that location from St. Lucy in less than 15 minutes, from St. Philip, Christ Church, St. Thomas, almost any part of this island. What I am here demonstrating is that, with effective management and vision, the small

businesses can, indeed, succeed. Beyond that, the environment up ahead may be encouraging to small business. I will get to that later.

But, more importantly, let me suggest that small business is not a business to please or to satisfy any political objective, on the part of any Government, or to demonstrate that Government, for the first time, recognizes that a small man is in need of help. This is all politics, but what is more important is that any small business must have an environment where they can, in fact, gain profit. Because, at the end of the day, without profit, the small businesses would not be surviving. They would not be viable.

Therefore it is in that context that I wish to address some issues which I think would be pertinent for the existence of small business in and around the Palmetto Square area. The kinds of goods and services that are provided by these small businesses are mainly in fruit vending. They are now also in the area of garments and the like. But that is important because in order to recognize the kind of services and goods that they provide, it is important because we need to anticipate the kinds of competition that they may encounter up ahead and whether or not they would remain viable in a new trade environment. I have every reason to believe that, with the removal of non-tariff barriers, with the lifting of these kinds of measures which have restricted access to certain kinds of garments, with the changing towards a Value Added Tax system which is going to lower, substantially, the taxes on many of the goods such as grapes and apples, which these vendors presently provide, that they should become far more competitive in an era of value added tax system. So that from the point of view of the kinds of goods which they are now selling it appears as though the move in terms of tariffs, of the non-tariff barriers and the changes in our tariff structure will in fact be rather more conducive to the needs of the small businessmen. From that standpoint I will laud the Democratic Labour Party for having set the agenda in terms of ensuring that small businesses do in fact have an environment in which they can operate and operate profitably. That is the kind of business that they provide.
12.05 p.m.

From the point of view of the kinds of pricing systems that they can use, there is no doubt in my mind that when you relieve the small businesses of the excess burden of taxation of the kind which they have had to endure over the last couple of years we will see that a small business in fact would be rather more favourably disposed to compete against the larger entities, and in that regard the reduction in taxation would, in fact, make these small businesses rather more viable from the point of view of the prices which they can charge. Again too, the environment is there to provide for them.

The whole question of costs. I would hope that in an area where job No. 1 is jobs that the Government is hoping that these small businesses can expand to the extent where they can enhance job opportunities for other Barbadians. Therefore the Government is not thinking that they are providing an environment in which small businesses would for evermore remain small. Therefore one is hoping that there is a much longer term development or strategy for small businesses to get out of being small forever and moving more towards medium-size businesses and becoming not only the retailers of grapes and apples and oranges and the like but also holding on to the more lucrative part of being the distributor. So opportunities can be provided in fact for small businesses where they can become, not just the guy at the corner of the street selling the item, but also the guy who is there distributing and making pretty handsome profit. So there can be opportunities for upgrading the status of small businesses to ensure that they can move from one stage to another.

As I said earlier, the example provided by Julie 'N is indeed an example worth emulating. Those of us who wish for evermore to criticise small black businesses when they expand, believing that they expand only because of some malpractice and not because of their own ability to manage and the vision which they bring. We must rid ourselves in Barbados of that thought that small black men can only expand because of some kind of malpractice. It is amazing that we can have that.

Certain remarks made by SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL were ordered to be struck from the record by Mr. PRESIDENT.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: In fact, I withdraw the comment but I made the point to suggest that even in the area of business, when we have individuals who are developing, when you have that kind of expansion, that we assign all kinds of ulterior motives to such individuals. Therefore, I make the point to suggest that even in the area of small business we cannot deny certain individuals that opportunity to expand and to believe that every time they are expanding there must be some other reason why they are expanding rather than their own ability. Those of us who have not heard these comments do not live with our ears close to the ground.

In this area of small business I wish to issue a warning that it is well understood that many small businesses in fact have been accused of not making their payments to the National Insurance Scheme, and this is an area where there should be increased vigilance. I am warning now that there might be a plan on the part of Government to ensure that small businesses and all kinds of businesses in the informal sector become registered with the NIS and that we may have a situation in which, almost overnight, we can see an increase in the employment

figures of Government only because of a position by the Government to ensure that all those persons working in the informal sector become registered by the NIS.

There is nothing wrong with it but what we have to guard against, given the anxiety that is associated with 30 000 jobs, that these kinds of techniques are not used by the Government to shore up the job employment levels by only a change in some legislation. This has happened before in the early eighties where there was a redefinition of the voluntary idle in order to shore up the levels of the employed in the Barbados economy. So I am issuing the warning that we on this side will be very vigilant of any attempt by Government to increase jobs in this island mainly as a result of changing some legislation, requiring small businesses and those in the informal sector to in fact register with the NIS.

In that area too, what we are asking is not only for small businesses to become registered at the NIS but for small businesses to be given the opportunity to explain their cases with the IMF in the event that they had difficulty in making such payments. So I am asking for perhaps a more compassionate approach towards this small sector.

So that is a question of costs in the area of labour costs. The whole question of capital costs. We have recently been told that a Venture Capital Fund of \$2 million was established. It is a good move but it is a move that also follows on the coat tails of the Democratic Labour Party's public enterprise fund. A sum of \$32 million which was made available because of the privatisation programme of the Democratic Labour Party we now see that a mere \$2 million will be provided for venture capital fund.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I am saying that this was an opportunity to give the small business sector, including the small hoteliers, a far greater share of the proceeds that Government in fact put aside out of the privatisation programme.

12.15 p.m.

I am saying, yes, a venture capital of \$2 million may appear to be a bullet move but it is only as a result of the Democratic Labour Party's policy of putting aside those funds into a public enterprise fund to make them available for small businesses. Therefore, it is not a big thing. We had in fact identified those funds for even greater expansion within the small business community. So it is not anything to make a fanfare about. What is more important though is for Government to make sure that the funds which they make available to the small sector are in fact utilized in the way they should be utilized and that

they can be fully monitored by the Government. I am only hoping that you just do not put aside a fund and get certain signatures without expecting the need for some kind of accountability.

There are some other projects as well in need of the kind of assistance that Government should be trying to provide in the Deacons Farm area. There is certainly a project in that area where I am a member of that community where some benefits can be derived as a result of Government making available a greater level of funding to ensure that that particular project gets off the ground. It has in fact stalled since the change of Government. What we are hoping for is, within the coming months, to see greater attention being paid to that particular project because it offers the youth in that area a very great opportunity to become involved in some self-help projects. So we are asking for the allocation of some significant proportion of funds to that particular project in the Deacons Farm community which is going to be worth its weight in gold but it needs to be given the kind of capital inflow to ensure that it is a viable entity. So far the majority of the labour services have been provided almost free of cost by the youngsters in the area and there was substantial development up until 6 months ago but it has stalled.

There are other areas where there is going to be need to assist small businesses in the area of management. There is no reason why certain provisions cannot be made for Government to have some kind of management system for small businesses who cannot afford these kinds of systems to be assisted by management. There is no reason why in fact we cannot have a separate entity to look at this issue. The BIDC has not really done its job effectively in assisting small businesses. We have heard a lot of talk about that, but they have not really done their job in terms of transforming the landscape for small businesses. We need a much better initiative. We do not need to hold onto the old coat-tails. There is time to be visionary and to look forward and to do things far more meaningfully for the small sector. To tell me that there is in fact a section within the BIDC that looks after small businesses is to deny that it has not been fully successful so far in its attempts to assist small businesses. So it is another bureaucratic structure which does not fully assist.

There will be particular needs among small businesses of the kind which we will have in Palmetto Square. You are talking not about managing an entity of, say, manufacturing, you are talking really about managing cash flow, understanding how to buy, how much to buy, how to appreciate the market demand for the particular product, especially since they are perishable. Therefore, to a large extent, it requires a lot more skills in terms of a day by day assessment of the management needs of those small

entities. They cannot stock in the way other entities can stock and, therefore, I am saying there are far more high risks than other entities and, as a consequence, I am saying that a more hands-on approach will be required to assist these small businesses in terms of managing their entities rather than the standard typical approaches to managing retail outlets or manufacturing entities or other areas where there are non-perishable goods.

Sir, we have to look at an entire package which is designed not only to assist these guys to get higher levels of profit, not only to assist them to be able to move from retail outlets towards distribution outlets, not only to be able to deal effectively with the whole question of cost but also to have access to certain forms of capital especially in the case of these small entities. There is no reason why you cannot have small businesses of this kind having maybe a demand account at certain commercial banks where they will be able to manage their cash flow much better.

What presently is now the practice is that almost everyday after the cost is determined in terms of the cost of the fruit, in terms of the revenues collected and there is a perceived profit, we have every reason to believe that these guys treat that profit, take it at that particular point and almost squander it without understanding the need for a more long-term approach to ensure that they can truly identify when and why the small entities are making profit.

There is not much more to be said in terms of this debate because in all fairness we are not at odds at all in terms of the treatment that has to be given to these small entities. But what is more for us to recognize is that we cannot have a system in which we believe that these small entities have to remain and not give them any hope to becoming bigger and profitable businesses over some medium to long term. So I am asking for a little more vision in terms of how we approach the whole question of giving opportunity to small businesses in Bridgetown. I am asking for Government to consider especially in light of its job creation programme which is yet to be defined that there may be some scope within this area for greater participation.

But on that score this question of job creation, there is no one that can deny in fact that so far Government has failed because from September 1994 to September 1995 the evidence provided by the Central Bank will show contrary to all of the debate that 2800 jobs were apparently created. What is fascinating about that statistic is that at the time the Prime Minister said that 10 000 jobs were created in a nine-month period, we had rebuttals from the other side in order to ease the Prime Minister's position by the likes of the Attorney General suggesting that there were almost 3 000 jobs. Then we had some other interventions giving us all kinds of figures on the job creation over the first

9-month period of the Barbados Labour Party's administration. Now we are seeing in the December publication of the Central Bank a quotation of 2800 jobs which is considerably lower not just the Prime Minister's position, but considerably lower than the position that was being bandied about by the then Attorney General who obviously tried to upstage the Prime Minister on that particular issue knowing fully well that the Prime Minister would have returned to the island two days after.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think you are going a little far on that one.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I am suggesting that now in terms of a strategy for job creation which has not even yet been outlined by the Government, where there is no evidence that there has been a switch in job creation from the public to the private sector, we are in fact seeing a situation where only very limited attempts are being made to ensure an increase in job creation among the self-employed people in the area of Bridgetown.

Sir, I support the initiative but I hope there will be a greater level of vision brought to bear in terms of what is required truly by these small business people of Barbados and especially those who would be located in the area of Palmetto Square and other such designated areas for small businesses.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I rise to support the Resolution and just to comment very briefly that I do not know why small businesses only seem to occur in Bridgetown. I saw the Leader of Government Business in the Senate strayed as far as Oistins but we stayed within the urban areas of Bridgetown. What is happening in rural areas? Do we not have small businesses in the rural areas? This is where job creation can occur at very low cost. We have heard of job creation in other areas of the economy costing from \$100 000 to \$200 000 per job created. In the rural areas, you can create jobs for very little money but the major problem is the marketing. What are we doing about this Rural Development Commission? The Bill was passed in this Senate after considerable comment by people on this side of the Chamber about the need to look at this Bill more carefully. The suggestion is that this Rural Development Commission has not been appointed. We have seen some cosmetic things done like put in street lights and roads. These are not rural development projects. These are political developments not rural developments. What we have been doing in looking at these small business markets is that we have been meeting and, for example, in Belleplaine last Sunday we invited farmers to tell us what it is they wanted to do. We are saying at the Agricultural Society that we have certain services which we can offer such as technical and marketing services, particularly marketing services. It was very interesting to see how much response we got from

farmers there about creating a Market Day in Belleplaine and we plan on Easter Sunday to have the first Market Day in which I hope people from all over the island will come and buy things produced in the St. Andrew basin. I think this is very, very important. We are not looking initially for any infrastructure to be put in by Government, but certainly we would like Government to observe this type of growth. We plan to do this in other parts of rural Barbados, because we think this is the area we really need to do small business development.

Thank you.

12.25 p.m.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, I wish to support the Resolution before the Chamber. I want to do so for many reasons. Quite naturally, any effort that is being made by the Government of the day to look to the matter of work should be something which would cause very great satisfaction to all of us in this Chamber, and I am particularly proud to see that we are trying to establish an arrangement which deals with the matter of work.

Mr. President, I believe that all of us would take time at this stage to recognise the importance of the right to work and I use the occasion to speak about the Protocol as it relates to the upliftment of work and the preparedness that there is for the private sector, the Government, the Trade Unions and the employers to work in sync in this particular area. If, therefore, the Prime Minister speaks to the matter, we would not expect to see newspaper articles following the agreement between the social partners on a particular Friday suggesting that there is a position of an individual in Cabinet different from that.

Having said that, Mr. President, I wish to go on to make the point. Senator Laurie in fact has made a point which has an area of thought I would want to associate with, that is, the point which seeks to address a desire that we should endeavour at all levels, by orientation, by influence and by whatever means might be possible, to establish linkages between the malls which we will have in Palmetto, Cheapside and Fairchild Street and the production process which is taking place in the country, and that as much as is humanly possible – because we cannot limit it to local – to endeavour to see the extent to which what is being sold in the malls which we are now developing will be the sale of local products. I believe that whether it is in the area of fruit or vegetables, or it is in the area of textiles, pottery or ornaments, it will not be to the overall advantage of Barbados if the items by and large are imported for resale. There has to be some correlation, some development of the rural areas, or within the urban areas of those trades in the urban areas which can take place in order to provide for further employment within those areas for skill of the artisans, or for development by the agriculturalists which then could correlate with the malls

and allow for that interlinkage of business which is so much required for Barbados to benefit from the activity of work.

I would hope that the Senator who just spoke before me, having recognised the relevance and importance of that particular idea, through his very influential associations, might be able in discussions with those people who are setting up their businesses in the malls to establish some formal or further informal arrangement which will allow for that kind of development of local products.

An important thing which I think would be necessary, Mr. President, in our examination of this subject and of our development of structures to accommodate this arrangement, will be the conditions under which these persons will work, will ply their trades and where those members of the public who go to visit might be able to conduct the business with them from time to time. We have to be concerned, for example, with matters of the environment. We have, therefore, to ensure that not merely will we provide a space, but that the aesthetics that are provided will be of such a nature that they recognise that Barbados is still primarily dealing in its tourism product and that our tourism product is not merely European product but it is also Caribbean product, and that when people therefore come to our malls they must be able to see something that is pleasing to the eye. We have to be very careful to ensure that within that framework provisions are made for proper, adequate structures and for proper, adequate waste disposal.

One of those things which I think have completely undermined ventures of this sort from time to time has been that people have plied their trade and they have gone away and left the effects, the result to become eyesores from time to time, and we have to be careful to ensure that this does not take place and is not allowed to take place and that the Government in discussions with these people set up an arrangement, because they are business persons and I am sure they will recognise that these things have costs attached and that it is not left to chance. In the final analysis it is our environment and the beauty of our country that is going to be the greater selling point for us at all levels of our endeavour, whether that endeavour is in industry, manufacturing, or even in this informal sector. I want, therefore, to suggest that we make every effort to work in that direction. I am sure that the small business persons will be quite amenable to discussions of this sort, but it has to be done up front and must not be left to change or left to corrective measures towards the end.

I wish to say, furthermore, Mr. President, that while I welcome the idea of there being a growing informal sector, I would want to be cautious that we do not

as a people reach the stage where we begin to believe that our economy must be structured around that said informal sector. Those economies around the world, to my experience, which have had to rely on the growth of the informal sector as a central factor in their development, have been economies which have ended up suffering deterioration. One of the problems, for example, in the African economies is that the informal sector runs somewhere between 60 and 75% of the overall economy. I do not believe we can have an economy that is going to be based significantly in such great proportions on the informal sector. I am not for the minute suggesting that we in Barbados are using that as our policy framework, and while I am welcoming the idea of seeing more people become business persons and work for themselves, I am merely saying that that should be an adjunct to the formalised sector because it is within the formalised sector that security of endeavour takes place, and it is within the formalised sector that we are able better to establish the framework and the basics for development of any economy.

Within that security of work, Mr. President, we have to be able to recognise that both in the formal and the informal sectors the Government has a significant role to play. In the informal sector the role that has to be played is the role of securing the physical facility and in ensuring that in the provision of that facility there is a certain security and permanency that is attachable, so that anybody who goes into the venture as a small business person in these areas might be able to believe that he or she is into something which is not going to evaporate overnight. In the formal sector, we call that security of employment and job protection and a means of preventing ourselves from falling prey to undue downsizing.

12.35 p.m.

Aside.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: This is not a call for the union now or any constituency that any member on either side might be trying to groom. This is a comment intended to have us look towards an awareness that there has to be in this area as in all others security of the work environment, security of the possibilities and the opportunities for the parties who are involving themselves in this exercise.

Not only must Government provide the physical facility but Government has to be careful to assist many of these persons who will not have the wherewithal. Government has to be able to assist them with the kinds of linkages that we spoke about earlier where there is some recognisable linkage between the source of materials and the product which the persons are going to put on the market. To that extent, I am suggesting, Mr. President, that there needs to be more local product. I am suggesting that

the Government will need to work for the Barbados Agricultural Society in trying to promote an arrangement where more local products will in fact go out into these areas.

I want to suggest to the manufacturers who seem to be a little reticent in this area that there is nothing wrong with having them recognise that it might be useful for them to get out of their own offices or stores or the outlets which they currently use for manufactured products and to use institutions of this sort as a means of promoting their product, because I do not believe, Mr. President, that there is any indication or limitation that I have seen that suggests that one can only sell vegetables or fruit. It might be quite possible that in proper structuring, an arrangement, in which the mall is extended, that some manufactured products might have an opportunity to catch the eye of both the local and visiting public and we might be able to do more in terms of how much we promote and what we promote, using the opportunity of the mall.

In that regard, there are manufactured products which do not have to be like chairs, benches or tables but we are talking to those manufactured products which one finds in the supermarket and I am grateful for the suggestion that hot sauce is one of them. Whenever I travel I try to promote the country by taking some as a gift and the Government might want to consider giving me a grant since I do have to travel from time to time to help to promote that area of the country's development.

I don't mean having the hot sauce, I mean having a grant to buy the things to take away.

Aside.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, now I hear that from Senator Rickinson, I will endeavour to have her assist me to get these things. I find though that the best thing to promote Barbados is rum. If she is saying I can get it free, then I will look for the areas. The people I have are a large number, so I cannot take miniatures.

In the area of the refurbishment of the Cheapside and Fairchild Street Markets I think this is coming not a moment too soon. I believe that those persons at Cheapside and at Fairchild particularly will be pleased to hear that plans are afoot to have corrections and upgrading and refurbishment in these areas. It seems to me in any event that there may be some need for a complete replanning of the Fairchild Street Market because one does get the distinct impression that there is now an arrangement where there has been some degree of *ad hocism* attaching to the efforts at developing that market area with the other business activities which have come around from time to time, and I would like to suggest that the Government will need to look not merely at refurbishing the market

but looking at the entire area that there is and see whether we could not get some proper designer or town and country planner or some other person with the requisite skills to redesign that entire area so that we can do business and at the same time bring a greater degree of beauty and aesthetics to that particular development within Fairchild Street.

I think, Sir, that this would be useful for us and the tourists and at the same time the planners and designers may have to carry forward the original plan that there was in the early 1960s for damming the river and I am sure we can manage to beautify that especially on the River Road side so that it becomes much more palatable to the eye and would be able to be an attraction for people to walk on evenings with their families and thereby beautify the country even more than it is.

I wish with all these comments to indicate that I support the Resolution and I hope that the programme for the establishment of markets would go well. There might be a nicer thing if another Sunday rather than Easter Sunday had been chosen.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I am going to be quite brief, but I wish not only to support the Resolution but to congratulate the Government on its vision. The Barbados Labour Party has always been noted for its vision and I am sure that a distinguished trade unionist would agree with me that where there is no vision the people perish.

Senator Mascoll talked about setting the agenda, but he forgets or maybe he does not know that when the Democratic Labour Party Government moved a Resolution to acquire compulsorily land in the area of the Wharf that it was to house only 40 vendors. The present plan is to accommodate all vendors or a far greater number. It has already been stressed that there were no proper, if at all, washroom facilities. It may not have been the intention or feeling, but it certainly showed great callousness and indifference not to have provided any sort of washroom facilities.

Then there is the question of scraps of food and peel left after a night's sale that would encourage rats and other rodents. Statistics are available to show that there has been an increase in the incidence of leptospirosis. Certainly last year there were more deaths than there have been in the past 8 years and this should be a considerable concern to those involved in health.

Mr. President, these vendors are small businessmen, as Senator Farley has pointed out, and they belong to a noble band of small entrepreneurs like women who throughout the years have been selling pudding and souse

and coconut bread and mauby, fish cakes, sugar cakes from their homes and men selling coconut, cones or what we used to call snowballs. This type of activity enabled many parents to support their children to send them to school, build homes and buy land, even motor cars. This mall should also increase their earnings.

I have bought fruit in Swan Street from time to time. I have no quarrel with the vendors as far as courtesy is concerned and willingness to serve, but certainly the clutter was not appealing and the overcrowding did not encourage anyone to go there.

12.45 p.m.

I have recently been buying from vendors in Palmetto Mall and the atmosphere is so pleasant. As other speakers have said, the aesthetics are far more attractive and the fact that there is more space will allow a greater and better display of their work, especially craft vendors. Therefore, again, I feel that the reservation of land space represents a thrust which is most commendable and again, I am pleased to support this Resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, I see my role as an independent Senator, while I am giving support to Government in these measures, as I do support this one at the moment, also is to make recommendations to improve what has been proposed. I hope when we have some of these new ideas coming into the debate that somebody takes note. I am a little concerned that the Press seems to conclude that once matters have reached the Lower House and have concluded there that is the end of the matter.

I say that, Sir, to say that I am able to support both the Resolution and the contributions made by Senators Trotman and Laurie first as how to expand on this proposal and reach out into the country area of Barbados, not only on a Sunday but all days of the week. Those of us who have gone abroad know there are places in Canada, for instance – that is the one I know best – where one could drive out of the urban areas for 30 or 40 miles and have bargains in summer, bargains on water melons and other fruit.

I think there is no reason why we should not have a similar trek toward the fruit belt of Barbados, where people have not changed a lot, because when I was a boy there was a custom to see women, more so than men, and it was very unfortunate, with bunches of bananas on their heads heading toward town to have them disposed of in some way. I say it has not changed much except that at the moment they can now get them into mini vans and so on, but at a cost. It seems to me one of the things we owe to those people to do for them is to take the buying

public to where they are able to sell their goods without going to all that trouble and expense. I hope that along the tourist routes we will have dotted some of these depots similar to the ones referred to in this Resolution.

Sir, there are two questions that occurred to me. I do not know whether they can be answered today or in due course, but I hope the Leader of the Senate will address these two matters. The first is the matter of the selection of persons for the depots. We have been told that there are some 1 200 applications as against 100 back in the 1980s. I would wish to know, Sir, what process of selection there will be, because I am sure Government is aware that not only must there be justice done in terms of how people are selected and who they are, but it must appear to be done and I hope that matter is addressed.

The other matter I hope will be addressed is this. The Minister has said that at some stage there is the hope that people will move from being small business people and graduate. They would become in due course bigger business people or big business people. I am not sure which. I hope that will be the case as well but one needs to know whether the vendors themselves take the initiative to say: "I am graduating now. Somebody can have my place in the depot" or whether there will be some organising body that monitors it and then decides it is time now for somebody else to get a place because somebody has moved on or is about to move on.

I hope these questions, Sir, will be answered. With that, I support the Resolution.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I will be brief. I rise to support this Resolution and to say that I am a supporter of Cheapside Market. Every Saturday at 6.00 o'clock in the morning I buy my vegetables there. The vendors who grow their vegetables in the country and sell to the supermarkets bring their vegetables to Cheapside Market. Every Saturday at 6.00 in the morning those that are on the outside of the market are able to set up their stalls from which I purchase. However, the market itself is not open until quite late and I would really like to see that when it is refurbished that efforts are made to open the Cheapside Market by 6.00 a.m. because those on the inside are at a disadvantage from those on the outside. They are just sitting there with their wares waiting for somebody to come and open it. But, Mr. President, I must say that at Christmas time it is open at 6.00 a.m. At Christmas and Easter time they open it very early.

I am also glad that efforts are being made to move the vendors from Swan Street and put them in an environment that is conducive to the development of health in our country because you have admitted that there was the absence of sanitary facilities and we know that people should wash their hands after they go to the toilet. I know

this is very desirable and essential. I hope that during the planning stages the Public Health Inspectors are consulted regarding the development of the programme that is being planned.

I hope there will be facilities for cold storage, because vegetables are perishable items and if you do not sell all of them in the same day they really need to be kept in a cold storage so that they are not only healthy but the vendors will not lose the vegetables very quickly. I hope that enough cold storage will be made available for our vendors to be able to store their goods in the Palmetto Square Complex and the Cheapside Market.

I do not think anybody should worry about people not going to these various areas because once they are publicized they can be marketed. One could assist the small vendors with the marketing of their produce. I really did not know about Cheapside Market until about two years ago. Someone took me there and then I realized this is where I could get lovely vegetables. I am sure there are lots of other people like me who would like to go to the market and buy their week's supply of vegetables and GIS should be able to advertise them for our small vendors.
12.55 p.m.

I should also like to support the areas on the ABC Highway that have been identified. I do not know which areas but I should like to say that I hope that you would be able to have some rest rooms where people can go and refresh themselves. I was driving in the country the other day and I was most surprised to see persons who had their hot sauce, different local products lined up on the various walls outside in the country areas and I had not seen this in Barbados before. I was very, very surprised and encouraged that people are now realizing that if you are not employed there are ways and means you can find and create employment to make what we call a dollar to assist with our development.

With no more ado, I congratulate you and I hope you would be able to complete the refurbishing of the Cheapside Market, which is a very excellent market, and also the Fairchild Street Market, as soon as possible.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Gill.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Mr. President, Sir, I guess I am the only person at this Table who can classify himself as being a small business person.

Aside.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: I am sorry, Sir. Senator Odle, I am sorry. But, Sir, I want to say that small business is defined not only by the numbers but by the capital base. I know Senator Odle has a small staff. That much I know.

But, Sir, I could not allow Senator Mascoll to leave this Chamber and go to lunch without reminding him of what transpired in Barbados during 1971 and 1976. That was a period where small businesses were literally thrown out of business, if he was too young to remember. I do not think he was too young between 1991 and 1994.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I presume you will tie this into the mall on Palmetto Street.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Certainly, Sir. Because it was during that time, Sir, 1991 to 1994, where these vendors from around the City had to be running helter skelter from one spot to another to evade the police. Even if he were not knowledgeable in 1976 as to what happened, I am sure that he would have known of the policies which were put into place during the 1991 to 1994 period.

The same vendors who Senator Mascoll seems, at sometimes, to embrace and be putting forward a case for are the same vendors who, at all of the market places, be it Fairchild Street or wherever, were without a home, a facility. I see it quite strange that Senator Mascoll should have taken such a line in this morning's debate.

In the Palmetto Square Mall, Mr. Griffith of Griffith's Reliance Pharmacy is a small business person. I hope that when the time for compensation does come, that it is done quite speedily and with little or no interruption, because that pharmacy has been doing business there, Sir, for almost 20 years and it has served the public well as a small family business. We know that, as the experts would say, the type of capital which these small businesses have is referred to as love capital, and it is more than just the love capital but the sweat capital of small businesses which really make small businesses effective as they are. It is the long hours – and we are not only holding it now to the selling of vegetables and fruit – small businessmen have to perform janitorial services, accounting services and they have to be shareholders. This is the type of business structure which is the very embodiment of a small business. I should like to remind Senator Mascoll of that.

Sir, it was because of the circumstances during 1991 to 1994 which probably predisposed the business which I referred to earlier on to be put up now for compulsory acquisition rather than by private treaty. The private pharmacy has reached the stage today where it has taken on more of a welfare face than, let us say, 10, 15 years ago. With the rampant lay-offs during the 1992-1993 period, this has forced the general public, the working class to which Senator Mascoll has referred, to downsize. It has forced the public to downsize small businesses and not the small businesses to downsize themselves.

Bearing this in mind, I am indeed pleased to see that small businesses such as the vendors would now be having

somewhere decent with all the modern facilities to call their own and I am only too pleased to hear of the wider Bridgetown expansion which should be coming on stream fairly soon. At the same time, Sir, I hope that the owners of Griffith's Reliance Pharmacy would be compensated in a very speedy manner.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Odle.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Thank you, Mr. President. I am going to be very brief as well but there are just one or two points that I wanted to expand on or bring to light.

I must say, as usual, that the Leader of Government Business, in my opinion, did an excellent job of presenting this Resolution here today. I would only want to make one or two points. This is really a message directly to the vendors, and by vendors I do not only mean of the fruit sort but all the other sorts, the vendors and the crafts persons of this country. That is, I think we ought to be more diverse in our creativity. My observation is that we have excellent talent out there but everybody seems to be doing the same thing. Because of this the financial returns will be small.

If, perhaps, artists did not copy – and I do not want to be cussed for saying that, they all copy – but I believe most of us realize that a lot of the merchandise is very similar in nature. If they could be a little bit more creative and diverse in their ways, I think they would do so much better. So that when they are moved to the Palmetto Square Mall we would not have to worry that all items would be look-alikes and that they would do so much better. I would also want to urge vendors not to limit their potential. This is coming from the aspect of being a small business person although the impression out there seems to be that I am not thus. Big thoughts will grow and I want to urge them to stop seeing themselves as wayside vendors and fruit sellers. To consider themselves entrepreneurs with potential to go anywhere and as far as they want to go, because it only starts with a belief as small as a mustard seed, with dedication and hard work, and they can grow to any size that they want to.

1.05 p.m.

I would also want to take this opportunity, since I am thinking now about fruit vendors, to look regionally towards other areas of the Caribbean for our actual importation of fruit. Apples, grapes and strawberries are wonderful but realistically \$10 for a box of strawberries is way over the top and I do not think anybody in their right mind should be purchasing it when there are such exotic regional fruit, for example, melons in Trinidad to throw away, pomegranates to throw away. For a long time now I

yearned for pomegranates and I only get them when I go to Trinidad. The point Senator Mascoll made, and I agree, do not consider yourselves just to be the vendors of, but perhaps to be distributors of; aim for distribution of more exotic regional fruit and in that vein also your profit margin would be significantly increased. You would not have to be dealing with the Ex Caricom costs, you would be dealing with the Caricom in terms of those exotic fruit.

With those few points, Sir, I would just want to say that I really do support this measure. Thank you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, this is not a minor Resolution. I want to make that clear from the start. Anybody who would want to suggest that this is a minor Resolution, I would agree, Sir, that he is a minor. This is an important Resolution in that we are seeking to develop small businesses, not in the way that the last administration, of which Senator Mascoll was a chief cook and bottle washer, did, where they indiscriminately put people in a situation in Swan Street without the necessary facilities and for eight years never sought to improve the physical amenities of the area. Our thinking has to be different, Sir, because in this day and age many of us in here have travelled and we have seen vending in other countries and we claim to be number one in the developing countries. We claim to be this and we claim to be that but when we look at how our vendors in Bridgetown are operating it does not do justice to our boast to be number one developing country.

This Government, Sir, has seen that and I want to go to our Manifesto because this is already a document of the House and we, Sir, must be judged by how we carry out the promises that we gave to the people in 1994. It is a binding contract as though it were law. It is binding upon us to govern the country according to how we said we would. Sir, to show the importance we place on small business, a page and a half of our Manifesto, plus other bits and pieces, was devoted to small businesses. Our philosophy is summed up in our Manifesto as it relates to small business. I am going to quote, Sir. Page 9 says that Barbadians must be encouraged to own their own businesses as part and parcel of efforts at economic enfranchisement. It goes on to say:

"The Barbados Labour Party recognises the increasingly important role which small businesses play in the Barbadian economy. It is envisaged that with the right thrust from a Barbados Labour Party Government the small business sector has the potential to grow at a faster pace than other sectors of the economy."

This, Sir, is our philosophy and this Resolution, which is a major Resolution, not minor, is part and parcel of our

efforts to implement our Manifesto and the Government must be highly commended for its efforts.

Sir, we inherited a situation and we say it is intolerable that in 1996, as we move towards the dawn of a new century, we still have vending in backward conditions. Sir, vending is part and parcel of the economic activity in this island and for years and years to come vending will be an important part of the economic life in this country. Therefore any Government worth its salt must ensure that the facilities are put in place where vending can be done in a modern hygienic situation. Sir, the emphasis must be on modern and hygienic because you are selling food and we would not want for our population and those who frequent our shores to suffer as a result of any unhygienic practices. This, Sir, is a giant step forward and I will repeat for the third time, this is no minor Resolution.

Sir, the plight of the small businessman is underscored by the fact that he has been marginalised over the years. Sir, when I was a boy, and that was not long ago, every village had two or three shops and, Sir, all of us, especially those of us who are from the country and from a working-class background, know that our parents depended on these shops. Many days my parents sent me to "trust" from the village shop. It is the way how we survived. What have we found? We have found that that entrepreneurial class is disappearing and it is being replaced by mega stores and mega businesses. Now, Sir, some may say that is improvement but I am not sure if in the long run that the small working people are going to benefit from this so-called advance. Sir, we are marginalising a lot of people and we are putting them on the fringe of economic activity and unless something is done it can lead to social unrest and all sorts of problems. We have, Sir, to ensure that the small man has a stake, that he becomes a shareholder in the economy. Therefore, Sir, we have, in the last 15 months, put in place measures to ensure the viability of small businesses. Sir, if you read the Budget of last year, you will see important measures relating to venture capital funding, a special tax regime for small businesses among other measures which are part and parcel of our Manifesto promises. We are well on the way of ensuring that in a couple years time all of the revolutionary promises that we made are kept because it will undoubtedly redound to the benefit of the small entrepreneur as well as the society.

Sir, one of the things that we have to develop in our country is an entrepreneurial spirit and if we look at the Manifesto again, on page 18, it says that we will develop a youth entrepreneurial scheme to stimulate employment among young people by allowing them to establish their own enterprises in order to incur a sense of business among young people.
1.15 p.m.

It will have available to it a package of assistance, grants and technical assistance to help convert ideas into economic activity and that scheme is on the way. Not only are we developing the culture or a psyche even, Sir, in which our young people can develop this spirit which I must say that our grandfathers had. It is in danger of being lost unless we make sure that steps are put in place to reinforce it.

Sir, it hurts me that there are a lot of black businesses in Barbados that up until the forties and fifties were existing and today they are no more. To me that is a problem because the continuity is not there. I am suggesting, Sir, the culture of the fifties and sixties encouraged the bright young men to become professionals such as doctors, lawyers, priests, teachers and nurses and so on. They saw business as an activity that they should aspire to. We have, Sir, to turn that around. Yes, we need our doctors, lawyers, engineers and nurses but we also need people who have that entrepreneurial spirit to help them develop themselves.

Sir, this is a giant step forward. We said in our manifesto on page 10 and I must quote this, Sir, because we must not forget. These are important things. We said that the existing produce markets will be refurbished and brought up to modern day standards of retailing. Craft markets would be established in Bridgetown, Speightstown and Hometown. I commend this document to Senator Mascoll and he should read it because if he reads it he will understand a few things, because I know he has the ability to understand a few things. I recommend, Sir, that if he reads this he will not talk the sort of things that he is talking.

Sir, I am not going to be long. I just want to make one additional point, Sir. A point was made that street lighting was a cosmetic exercise and that we provided that under the Rural Development Scheme. But, Sir, in this day and age, even chickens get light. Pig pens have light. Do you mean people in the rural community are not entitled to have lights? Sir, when you improve a man's physical surroundings, you are improving the man. He feels differently and he behaves differently. I take offence when something as important as street lighting is seen as cosmetic.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, you are waxing warm but you are not speaking to the Resolution.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: With all due respect, Sir, it was mentioned before by a past speaker that it was a cosmetic exercise and I felt that it was my duty to represent the Government in this matter. Because I feel that in representing the Government, I am also representing the 200 000 people who want street lights and who see

themselves as part and parcel of the whole development thrust.

Sir, I want to alert the Senator that, in spite of the difficulties posed by the last administration, a lot of small people are still making steps in the right direction. Only recently we heard of an entrepreneur who took advantage of the climate and put in a bird park in Ashford, St. Thomas in a rural district. All of these things must be commended that in spite of all the difficulties the small businessman is still out there taking knowledge of the fact that the Government is committed to their development and going ahead with workable schemes. Sir, these efforts must be commended.

Sir, I am told that in the last Independence celebration in Belleplaine, the first time we had a community celebration of Independence...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I must interrupt you. You are straying from the Resolution and I will not permit you to do so.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Sir. I was just talking about vending, which is important to me, and I want to call on Government not only to think of Bridgetown in terms of vending but expand the facility in other areas. It is true, Sir, that Oistins is a thriving area now and Speightstown must have facilities for vending and Belleplaine so that when the tourists are driving around and so on we must as a matter of course set up proper facilities all around the island for people to engage in this all important activity of vending.

Sir, with those few words, I want to commend Government. They are doing well and will continue to do well in spite of the talkings of the Democratic Labour Party. We will continue to put the interest of the country first and develop every aspect of economic life, to make Barbados the modern society that it must be.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Mr. President, once again I rise to give my own support to the Resolution joining the visionary architects of the Barbados Labour Party who continue to bring revolutionary ideas to this country. Sir, we have well stated in the social contract that we have made with Barbados in the manifesto of 1994 that we want to push the small business sector to play a deeper and greater role in the Barbados economy. With that in mind, Sir, we have brought to Palmetto Square and taken away part of the social stigma that exists regarding small vending and vendors' malls in this country. The point must be made that in most of these malls without a serious re-organization people of a certain ilk do not want

to deal with small vendors in Bridgetown and this Government is giving the small vendors the framework in which they can operate both hygienically and positively. It is with that in mind that the Vendors' Mall in Palmetto Square has been brought to this Chamber.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party has long felt that economic enfranchisement of the masses of this country must be brought to bear and brought to the fore in a significant way. It is no doubt set out in the manifesto that the small business must be encouraged to play a deeper role in Barbados' economy. Sir, with that in mind, the Private Investment Fund was created to help a lot of these small businessmen and no one can scoff at the \$2 million that has been put into the Venture Capital Fund to help small businesses in Barbados. I do not know why certain people believe that small business must only lie within the region of the distributive sectors of buying and selling. It is important that people understand as well that there are some small businesses like some small hoteliers who are also important as well to the economy. Even though their capital base may be a little bit bigger and even though they may have a stronger human resource base, it is still important to realize that some of these are still small businesses and out of that money, Sir, \$10 million was also earmarked to help them. Sir, I believe what is most important regarding small vendors like those in Palmetto Square must not only be where the Venture Capital Fund stops, but Government has made a commitment to helping them get access as well to capital. One of the major things in running a small business and getting into small business must be the removal of the restrictive practices of access to capital for small businesses to set up, thrive and to function.

1.25 p.m.

Therefore, Sir, Government has already said that it will put in place a regime to create a system to back access for Government funding from financial institutions which traditionally have not made their resources available to small business. It is important that this is stressed, that small businessmen in Barbados have been for the longest time restricted from having access to capital that they need for setting up, for growth and for expansion. Government has done this in the past for other institutions, which are even bigger than small businesses, and it is important that Government creates a bond system, which they say they are going to create, to assure Government backing for funding from non-traditional organisations.

Sir, it is also important to note that the rechanneling of this small business sector is important, that small businesses must move away – and on this matter one can agree with the removal of the Common External Tariff and other licences – that it is going to be difficult for these people to survive in a new world. It is important that we rechannel small business into ways where they can have

access to the whole globalisation process. For example, we have already said that corporation tax relief for small business enterprises in Barbados must come on stream and they must be encouraged to come together and to grow not only as small businesses, but also as medium sized businesses and then go on.

It is also important to note that even within the agricultural sector, while the small business only has to reside in Bridgetown and in Palmetto Square – and in that regard I can agree with Senator Laurie – we were told since the 1930s that diversification of our agriculture was important if we were ever to really and truly take our space on the world stage, but in the area of agriculture and agricultural development for small businesses this has never been pushed. I also believe that the Senator should be very much concerned with the fact that the Barbados Agricultural Society must encourage this, because only recently the Small Crop Farmers Association pulled themselves away from the B.A.S., and I believe it is necessary for some of these institutions also to help Government to create the climate for small business at this level.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party, as I said before, has always been insistent that small businesses form a fundamental part of this economy. The Palmetto Square mall is just in keeping with the social contract we have made, a contract that we understand means something to the people, not other parties who do not take their Manifestos seriously. They cannot expect the people to take them seriously. The Barbados Labour Party has once again risen to the challenge and whenever the country is in doubt we come back to the Barbados Labour Party and whenever we are flagging we come back to this same party of visionary architects.

Sir, I have no problem in supporting this Resolution. I thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I regretfully missed some of the earlier presentations on this issue, but my role now from what I understand was an impressive presentation, particularly by the Leader of the Senate, will be just part of the mopping up operations. I intend to do that, Sir, but in order to do that I first have to pick up from a point Senator Barker made where he quite rightfully emphasised that this was not a minor issue, as has apparently been said by Senator Mascoll, but a major one. To fully appreciate what Senator Barker is saying, one has to see this measure in a historical context, not in isolation, but given the past behaviour of the Barbados Labour Party.

Sir, from the very beginning, the Barbados Labour Party never saw vendors as vendors *per se*, they saw them as business people who were indulging in vending

activities. There was no particular mind set that said these people were vendors and therefore should go no further than being vendors. We saw them as business persons. The same thing obtains today as regards the Palmetto Mall as obtained way back in the 1950s.

Sir, because of my slightly more mature age than some of my colleagues here, I very often have to indulge in a certain measure of political history. Barbados' political history is rich with the contribution made by the Barbados Labour Party towards the upliftment of the vendors as business people. Like I said, we never saw them just as vendors, we did not, like the Democratic Labour Party, seek to put them in the street and create a mendicant attitude and atmosphere in which they were staked out in the hot sun, exposed to the elements, having to do their business in whatever receptacle, crack or crevice that might come along. We are seeing them as business people who therefore need to have their status at all times upgraded and to be treated with dignity, to be given a vision of themselves and to have them create a very positive self-image.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: The Honourable Senator wants to know what we did. In the 1950s we built the old Oistins market, the present Fairchild Street market, the Cheapside market, the Eagle Hall market and the Speightstown market. That was up until 1961. After that, between 1961 and 1976, nothing more was done for this category of business persons. Fortunately, after 1976 the Barbados Labour Party came back to the fore and we built for fish vendors the new Oistins, then the Bridgetown Complex. We had one planned for Speightstown, but that great political guru of the Democratic Labour Party who saw St. Peter in these words, "that Boscobelle is off the map and Black Bess is behind God's back", cancelled that project and now we are trying to pick up where that has been left off. In that kind of atmosphere then, we have to see what we are trying to do in Palmetto Square. We are not prepared to leave them in the sun, we are not prepared to put them outside the gates of other people's establishments, feeling that the mere fact they are in front of buildings means that they too are of equal classification in business. We are trying to move them into a category where, like I understand, for example, in the Palmetto Mall they will have fax machines to place their orders and mail boxes. These are not things you will find in the middle of Swan Street, when you have to compete with the garbage and pedestrian traffic. We are trying to take them off into a whole different environment. We are moving beyond this attitude where the Democratic Labour Party seems to think that certain categories of persons must be treated with condescension and with a certain patronising attitude, because they feel if they keep them as vendors *per se*, if they make them believe that all

they are are vendors, they have to be satisfied, as the old Bajan saying goes, with all the "humps and grumps" of life and the other business people and that they will go no further. Fortunately, we have come again to the rescue, not only as regards the fine plans that are in the offing and are already underway for the Palmetto Mall, but one can also see a more tangible demonstration, even at this stage, of our different attitude to vendors.

We went into Oistins and found a facility which we had built before we went out of office in 1986, on the skids. We, among other things, have created the Oistins Fish Fry Bay Garden and Vending Centre, which from all reports, is now a thriving centre of activity. On Friday nights and Saturdays particularly there is a lot of activity that represents what Baxters Road used to be. 1.35 p.m.

I am told, Sir, that some fish vendors sell as many as 200 steaks of fish at night. People make an average of \$900 a day. I understand that so heavy is the patronage in this new atmosphere created by the vendors because they have proper facilities where people can sit and relax – you don't just go and buy in the middle of the road and eat – that a certain fast food outlet is now contemplating possible relocation elsewhere because their business has declined considerably. The whole atmosphere has transformed Oistins now into a major activity in the South.

We also have other plans for Speightstown. I understand some reference has already been made to Cheapside and the work to be done there and again when work begins at Cheapside market at a cost of \$5.5 million, we are not going to just leave it. We are not going to put the vendors in the middle of Cheapside Road. We are not going to block off one end of Cheapside and block the other end by St. Mary's and say this is a mall, come and sit down in the middle of the road and sell. We are going to transfer and relocate the butchers and the other vendors to the Fairchild Street market while we create a better atmosphere for them to return to. Again, Sir, we are demonstrating how elevated we see them and we don't pay lip service to them as so-called small persons, because we feel that small is only a temporary connotation. We do not feel that...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY:...That can be discussed later particularly on Valentine's night when some people are very needy.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Is this on the Order Paper?

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, we are moving, as I said, at all times to ensure that where black businesses are concerned, the kind of black business

that we like to see – we don't feel that because you are small you have to be black. We want when we say a business is a black business it is a business whose finances or whose books are in the black, represents success, growth, development. That is the kind of black business we aim at, that all businesses should succeed. We are creating the atmosphere for such.

This mall is also a step in that direction. We are creating job enhancement opportunities, economic opportunities for other people to get into the mainstream of economic activity and we have no doubt, Sir, that the vendors in Palmetto Mall when they have been given all that is their due reward and all which they deserve, will rise to the occasion and rise to the challenge as has been demonstrated at Oistins. I invite all those present when they have the time or at least make a point to pass through Oistins. During the day you see the colourful atmosphere with the clothes people are selling.

Oistins used to be known for the stench of the offal. Now it is known for the colourful atmosphere, the colourful robes being displayed. A stroll by day or at night makes for a very relaxing, aromatic atmosphere through all the street fragrances that come from the delicacies prepared by the vendors who appreciate and have taken full advantage of the new environment, which will compare very favourably to what is being created in Palmetto Square. I believe that the vendors in Palmetto Square and all those vendors for whom we are busy making provision in Speightstown and Eagle Hall which is going to be redesigned to sell not just vegetables or newspapers or fish or coconuts, but also art and craft and the work of artistes will appreciate it. This will therefore be generating other linkages with other aspects of our society or the creative skills of our society, tying in no doubt with the youth enterprise initiative of the Ministry of Education and Culture and tapping into the effervescent atmosphere and outlook of entrepreneurial spirit that is now pervading Barbados.

With those words, I want to lend my fullest support to this measure and look forward to doing more of the same for other places in Barbados. I thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this and to say that I do so from a personal historical point of view. I remember that my grandfather used to walk around this country buying animals and bringing them into Bridgetown for sale until such time as he managed to get a spot in Cheapside market where he established himself as a small butcher. It shows that from small business can rise large business. That led to the establishment of a company that is reckoned to be the 10th largest in the Caribbean.

This shows that all things are possible and that this Government intends to provide the services and the

environment where small business activity can take place in the new market places being developed with the assistance of the Ministry of Industry to develop themselves into medium size businesses and eventually large businesses. I feel that the small business people of Barbados are going to be well served by the Minister of Industry and Commerce who understands this process who is intimately involved in it and who will give the process leadership. I think that the emphasis being given by the Government to the development of small business through the establishment of vending sites and also more importantly in the establishment of facilities that will lend expertise and develop business acumen and responsibility and accountability to themselves will assist immeasurably in the growth of business activity in Barbados.

It will set an example where entrepreneurial activity will take place and people will survive and benefit from the market forces that will be developed as they learn to respond to the market forces that will generate the growth of their business activities. I think that people should become proud to graduate from small to medium sized and medium sized to large. It will mean that we will have to have a cultural change, because too often in this society those that succeed try to minimise their success so that they do not attract too much competition or the attentions of the Income Tax Department.

True growth will come about when they recognise that this cultural change has to take place and this is at the heart of the development of the new vending facilities and the upgrading of the market place.

Mr. President, I heartily commend this acquisition. I commend the Government's policies in this area and I particularly commend the Minister of Industry and Business Development for this initiative. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I would like to make a brief contribution.

Senator Goddard said that he spoke from a practical and historical perspective and I too will speak from that perspective since I am the offspring of a female vendor in Barbados. For all of my early life I assisted my mother as she made her coconut bread, her pone, her pudding and souse and many times on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings I assisted her on the roadside in the country in selling her wares. I am not speaking on this in a hollow and grandstanding fashion but as a beneficiary of that kind of initiative and pride of enterprise.

1.45 p.m.

I cannot help though but reflect on certain comments made today and to remind fellow Senators that the Democratic Labour Party had embarked on this

programme. In our Manifesto on markets development we set out our plan for the refurbishment and upgrading facilities at Cheapside, Fairchild Street and Eagle Hall Markets, page 19, and that an area had already been chosen to locate a facility in Bridgetown to permit vendors access to first class accommodation, and provide for easy access between clients and vendors without causing traffic congestion and breaches of the law. So we too had the vision and foresight to deal with this matter.

Further, Mr. President, on page 21 under "Nurturing Young Businesses" in recognition of the need to make sure that ordinary Barbadians, those who were not exposed to the more sophisticated forms of education but who still had a meaningful contribution to make to life and national development, the Democratic Labour Party said that:

"For too long the corporate community has been controlled by a narrow elite as evidenced by interlocking directorates of major businesses. In 1991 we announced our intention to establish a New Enterprise Administration to ensure that a larger number of persons participated in the decision making process as it pertains to the economy.

A Democratic Labour Party Government reaffirms its commitment to this idea. The structural reforms of the last three years have delayed... "

We admitted and we accepted that.

"...the implementation of the New Enterprise Administration but they have strengthened the foundation for its development and it is more urgently needed now than when it was first conceived.

A Democratic Labour Party Government is firmly resolved to tackle the problems affecting small business development, and will implement programmes to address the following issues:

- scarce venture capital
- deficient management
- technological obsolescence
- resource fragmentation
- exorbitant cost of capital."

I thought, Mr. President, I needed to show my fellow Senators that the Democratic Labour Party also had a programme for the development of small business people in this country.

I have no difficulty supporting this Resolution, because from the debate on the Vagrancy Act I stated my position on small people in this country who set out to earn a living in the only way they know how, and I resented any legislation in this country which sought to place those individuals against the law, so today I can stand with all conviction and speak from the depth of my heart as I support the Resolution to improve and enhance the facilities for vendors in this country.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I just want to ask the last speaker when she was referring to the...

Mr. PRESIDENT: You cannot ask questions. Please take your seat.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I would also like to make my contribution from another perspective. I am sure my fellow colleagues are aware that the development of small business people is a part of my day-to-day activity and there are a few areas I would like to highlight which many of us speak of in a cursory way, but since I deal with this intimately there are a few things I would like to share.

There is a certain attitude that we need to cultivate among small business people, especially vendors, because many of these individuals have been thrust into that position because they could fit into nowhere else in society and they seem to feel that they are the outcast of the society and they are not respected for what they are doing. As a result, many of the normal business practices which obtain in the regular business sectors are not present among these small people, particularly vendors. For example, many of them say they do not believe in having a bank account. I interview them. They do not believe in that. Many of them believe that they can do turn over trade. They sell and make some money. They tell you all the ways in which they set it aside but they do not understand the importance of establishing that relationship with the commercial bank that their inflows and outflows can be monitored and the bank would have some broad idea of the history behind their business activities. This is something I have to constantly draw to their attention.

Many of them do not understand the importance of insurance. They do not see themselves as breadwinners probably the same way as other people out there see themselves. It takes a lot of energy sometimes sitting and explaining to them the economic losses which their families could suffer should they encounter a grave accident or death. Many of them have not yet started to project themselves into the future where they can think of retirement and therefore as a result they do not contribute to the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme. They see this as an expense. They do not recognise

that in this Scheme are benefits which they themselves can derive, their survivors can get and provided they go on to an old age they can benefit from.

I think Government in its programme, in its attempt to embrace vendors, to embrace small business people, should bring these programmes to them. I do not believe we should have officers come to them. I heard Senator Farley say officers will be visiting them. I would like to suggest that since the profile of the vendor has changed, we must admit that within the last five or so years the vendor in Bridgetown is no longer an individual who has dropped out of school. If we go on Swan Street, I know at least five vendors on Swan Street who attended secondary school who have CXC subjects but because they could not fit in, they could find employment nowhere else, decided they wanted to live a life free of crime and they would resort to vending to earn a living.

Mr. President, I would like to see the Government develop a small business education programme somewhat similar to what the Leader of Government Business stated. But what I would like to see in that programme is emphasis on human relations and interpersonal relationships. We have already accepted that tourism is going to be pulling this country. I am going to use tourism as the locomotive for future development of Barbados. Therefore, the way these individuals interact and interface with the general public, Barbadians and non-Barbadians, is very important and we have to deal with that. I know they do not intend to be offensive. They do not mean to be so outwardly aggressive but I believe sometimes the thought that they are rejects by society causes them to behave in this way. I would like to think that any programme that is going to enhance their livelihood is going to take these considerations into account.

Mr. President, I would like to see these businesses grow from small businesses. I support that. It is something I try to encourage. In particular I would like to feel that those individuals who are now vendors who have immediate relatives, including children, would reach the point within themselves where they feel proud about what they are doing to the extent that these businesses are businesses they can pass on. I think we have to develop in Barbados this culture of family business and continuation of family business and that is why I liked when Senator Goddard referred to himself, because I was planning to do so. I am glad he did it for me because too many of our small businesses in Barbados die when the founders of these businesses die. I think all the talk we make about economic enfranchisement would be hollow talk unless we can train our people, culture our people in a way that they understand the importance of business continuity. This is something I would like to see a lot of emphasis placed on in Barbados.

1.55 p.m.

I am not sure that the vendors for whom we are making these provisions today feel the way about themselves that a lot of the talk here today is about. I repeat what I said during the debate on the Tourism Authority and the Vagrancy Act. It is time we get the kinds of programmes going where these individuals can be brought into the mainstream. We could have a seminar, weekend, Saturday, Sunday, whatever day, Sunday is better since Saturday is a good business day for them, where they are in a setting where they can interact with people from the Tourism Authority, Ministers of Government, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, where they can see that these individuals really feel that they are important and are a natural part of the national development.

I should like to see them band themselves together in a group which will afford them the opportunity to qualify for group benefits; Group Accident and Health Insurance, Group Life Insurance for their dependants and Group Pension Benefits for themselves and their dependants. We must not associate smallness with paltry outlook. I think we can help to enhance them and the way they feel about themselves, if we encourage the co-operative spirit, the group mentality where they can pool funds.

Here is where I am going to speak to the Government who recently introduced a Society With Restricted Liabilities Bill. A little emphasis was placed on the exempt section of that legislation.

One of the problems we have with small businesses in Barbados is that most of them are sole proprietorships. The only liquidity the individuals have would be very limited resources. The Society With Restricted Liability is the ideal framework for me, as I see it, within which these people can operate because it gives them protection, it is a legal entity which will allow them to separate their personal assets from the business. It has a life of 50 years.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Therefore when they approach a commercial bank, they can approach them as business people, as a business entity instead of a sole proprietorship only.

I want to encourage the Government, as it sets out to improve the life of the vendors of this country, to expose these people to all of these mechanisms which can help to enhance and improve the business environment in which they operate.

Mr. President, with those few remarks, I support the Bill wholeheartedly.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Farley.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I think we have had an interesting and healthy debate on this important matter and I therefore just propose at this time, Sir, to beg to move that this Resolution do now pass..

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AT APES HILL,
SAINT JAMES, FOR HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT**

Order No. 2 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Apes Hill, Saint James, for housing development.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Farley.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the next item of business seeks the Senate's approval for the acquisition of 2 parcels of land at Apes Hill in St. James for the purpose of housing development. The 2 parcels consist of just over 3 hectares in the one case and 4.5 hectares in the other.

As has been indicated elsewhere, Sir, the proposal is to have a major housing development consisting of something in the region of 1 000 houses in that general area to be constructed, obviously in a number of phases and by a number of different arrangements, some being in relation to sites and services, others being completed houses ready for purchase and the like. This is but the first stage in that particular process. That is, Sir, the acquisition of the land to give the Crown clear title to the land to enable the Division of Housing of the Government to proceed on the other aspect of this housing development for Apes Hill in the parish of St. James.

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

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Laurie.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, Sir, I should just like to say that this is a further Resolution to acquire more land at Apes Hill. This is not just a thing by itself. This is, also, more agricultural land, approximately 17 acres – for those of us who think in acres – of land that is in active agriculture that is going to be taken out to be put in housing. It is a matter of policy that I think the Government must start to address.

There are alternatives. There is land at Plum Tree just across the gully. There is other land around that, surely, must be available rather than taking land that is in active agriculture and putting it into housing.

I see that we have an Amendment to the Town and Country Planning Act and that is just, again, some sort of cosmetic thing to do with water coming off of houses. But we should have a serious look at this Town and Country Planning Act that would look at this question of whether or not we should be having some rules that would prevent this gradual alienation of agricultural land into housing.

I should like to say that I could not support this, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Mascoll.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, Sir, I rise to support the concerns of Senator Laurie in this Resolution.

At this stage in our development there is no reason why there cannot be a better land use policy. Certainly in Apes Hill, which we all know is the highest rainfall area in Barbados, where agriculture is still a very active economic activity that we could have considered some other area for housing development.

In fact, I am beginning to wonder if it is not true that this part of St. James is being developed to increase the population in this area so as to divide the St. James constituencies up into 3.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Farley.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Honourable Member is imputing improper motives to the Government by suggesting that the purpose for preparing a housing development in an area is in order to have some political advantage, in terms of the numbers of persons in the constituency.

I would ask that those remarks be struck from the record.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think there is an improper motive being suggested here and that the statement is out of order and should be withdrawn.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Let me withdraw that comment. But let me put it the other way, that an increase in the population in this part of St. James will facilitate any effort on the part of Government to divide St. James into 3 constituencies. That is all I am saying.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It is a little concern of mine that we can understand the need to keep agricultural land in production, especially in light of our new rural development strategy that this Government has embarked on. I am beginning to wonder, how can you pursue the

path of the rural development without having a comprehensive land use policy in place, first to determine where you are going to have your schools? In fact a Member of the Lower House made an extremely valuable point when he tied the whole education reform debate to land use policy and people fail to understand it. But in terms of the whole question of population distribution, if you are telling me that the rural area is going to be developed to the extent that it becomes a viable alternative to the urban area, then we would expect some de-urbanisation, that is, we would expect population to move from within the urban and suburban areas towards the rural areas.

2.05 p.m.

Basically what we are saying is that the rural areas have remained undeveloped and that you are now seeking to develop them in order to bring them more in line with the kind of growth that we have had in the urban area. If that is so, and if indeed you succeed, it means there would be population growth. If there is population growth, it means that you have to consider zoning the location of schools all over again. In fact there is quite a tidy correlation between the whole question of land use policy and education, especially economic activity. I intend to deal with that in the education debate. I was deprived today because of some mishaps.

I am suggesting, Sir, that as it relates to rural development, we have seen some kinds of contributions when we can have such a fertile area being taken out of agriculture and put into housing development. I do not know what could have inspired Government to do it. I do not see it is an area which one can consider to be cheap in terms of market forces. That area to my mind is extremely picturesque, it is a beautiful area to drive through. Certainly in terms of cost of land it must now be far more valuable than it used to be and therefore to a large extent we are saying that the decision to put it into housing could not have been a result of any greater benefit for Government, because if indeed it had become such a useless piece of land as it relates to agriculture, then I am saying that the private sector itself would have pounced on the opportunity to develop that area and develop it in such a way that they can get very good market value for the land.

If Government is saying that it is no longer in fact valuable for agriculture, then why is it that Government does not insist more? Why is it that Government is seeking to take this land out of agriculture? Because there is no evidence. I have seen no study. I have seen no evidence as to why they believe that this land is going to be put to better use for housing as opposed to agriculture. In fact it is at variance with what has been suggested in the letter from the Government to Dr. Iglesias in the IDB, because there seems to be a contradiction of sorts where Government is saying that the Town and Country Planning

will now make decisions to allocate land on the basis of its economic value and not on the basis of any power being given to a Minister to cut up land willy-nilly. Therefore it is difficult to understand.

The Julie 'N matter which I would like to address in terms of policy and land, there is the owner of land below Julie 'N who has in fact cut it up quite usefully and will benefit substantially from it. I do not know who the owner is, but since the owner knows who he is, let the owner respond.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. President. I see the Honourable Member speaking and pointing this way but he knows very well all about Julie 'N land. He knows quite well all about the land below Julie 'N. It is owned by the Closed Brethren. I am going to let out all now. You have now roused me. When I get up I will talk. I apologise, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please proceed, Senator Mascoll.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I again succeed in drawing a Senator ...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: To whom are you speaking, Senator?

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: The Senator who rose on a point of order.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You cannot address him. You can only address the Chair.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: The issue is this, Sir. There is no doubt. It is clear policy now that the Government has given up the right to simply allocate land willy-nilly and has said that land will go to its best economic use or its highest economic use. I am troubled by that because I cannot see how this land could be put into housing on the basis of that criteria and I am saying that if it were so that the private sector would rush to acquire that land in order to get even greater mileage in use out of it than the public sector would do. So it is a little concern of mine as well, and in this context I support Senator Murray's position wholeheartedly, because we must not be seen on the one hand that we have a policy in place to develop the rural areas and that we are seeking to use economic factors to determine the allocation of land and then to take an obvious area such as Apes Hill and put it into housing development. There is something wrong in terms of the criteria that are being employed by

Government in this particular acquisition. On that score I would like to get some clarification as to what are the reasons for Government acquiring this land at this point in time for housing development.

It is not clear from the expressed policy of Government that this land should be acquired for housing development. It is not clear from Government's intention within the letter submitted to the IDB that this should be acquired for housing development and I make bold to say that this must be an error on the part of Government and has to be revisited in light of the concerns that have been raised by other persons within this Senate.

Just let me quote, Sir, to make it clear, from the letter. On page 6 of the letter of the Government to Mr. Iglesias:

"Land Use Policy. The Government believes that development of efficient land markets is crucial to the long-term growth and development of Barbados. For over 300 years a pattern of land use has been dominated by plantation agriculture. Now as the private sector adjusts to new structural production and exports under the medium-term adjustment programme new land intensive activities such as new tourist products will emerge. Land use policy and administration in Barbados will accommodate these demands within the context of water availability which certainly must be a concern within this area. Environmental constraints, the macro-economic policies and the national settlement strategy. I am yet to see a National settlements strategy. I know that Habitat 2 is in the offing sometime later in the year but I am not clear as to what the settlement strategy of the Government is."

I go on in terms of this letter:

"Recognising the need for greater land market efficiency the Government will embark on a programme to reform land use policy and to strengthen the administration of that policy."

2.15 p.m.

So, I repeat that there is no evidence at all, given what has been said in this letter, for Government to take at this point this piece of land at Apes Hill, St. James out of agriculture for housing development. On that score, I am merely seeking clarification as to Government's policy on land use.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bolden.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, it was not my intention to speak on this

Resolution but I have been dragged into this in a very unfortunate manner. In the first place, I sit here week after week and I hear a lot of discussions and they are discussions which have no fundamental thought given to them. Now the Government is saying that it is acquiring land to build a thousand houses in an area in St. James. The Honourable Member, Senator Mascoll, jumped up and said that it might be a policy of the Government trying to create sufficient people in that area to subdivide the area for election purposes.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That statement was struck from the record, Senator.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: In any case, Mr. President, I withdraw that aspect of it. But there is no way in Barbados that anybody can say at anytime that a thousand houses have been built within anyone or two years. If we were in North America where they have sophisticated methods of building, it could be done. As the Minister who introduced the Resolution said, there will be varying methods of housing which will be established in that area.

Another point is this, Mr. President. One has to give careful consideration about the connecting links between the existing housing area and the other houses which are to be developed. When I hear Senator Laurie talk about going across the gully, it brings back to me the same stigma and the same thought that had permeated this society that certain people must live across the gully and in the gully. That is all it is, but if the Senator would go back and check his agricultural history – but I do not expect him to check it because he is an agriculturalist who keeps dogs – particularly in this very area, he will learn something. Because I had great connection with Waterhall and Apes Hill from the time I was a little boy. He will learn that the land/houses in that area have shifted 3 times in 300 years. When the rainfall was good, they shifted the people in the rocky area to grow canes. In the years when you had the drought, they shifted them elsewhere. When rain came back again, they shifted them another place. Go down to Waterhall and Apes Hill and check your history and you will see. If Government today is prepared to take land and put people on it where there is already a housing area to carry forward a connection to save your expenses in terms of utility, you are going to talk today about land use policy and Town Planning and a cosmetic adjustment to the Town Planning Act.

Now people must talk but they must know what they are talking about. Senator Mascoll must think when he talks about land at Haggatt Hall. He belongs to the Democratic Labour Party. The land at Haggatt Hall was owned by the estate of C. A. Dowding. Four times I applied to have that land subdivided for housing development under the Barbados Labour Party and

four times it was turned down. But in 1986 immediately when the Democratic Labour Party came to power there was an application by a Member of the Democratic Labour Party. It was turned down by the Town Planners and it was approved by a Minister. The lots that Senator Mascoll talked about have been purchased by the Closed Brethren. They were going to put a church on it but, because of the development in the area, I have been told they want to sell it for other commercial purposes. But those lands were released by ministerial decision under the reign of the Democratic Labour Party. So do not talk foolishness if you do not know what has been going on. It is not the Town Planning Department. It is the Minister of Government who has overridden the Town Planning Department, because I wrote to the Town Planning Department and they wrote me back a letter stating that they were doing the best they can under the circumstances because they did not approve of that development at Haggatt Hall. But it was approved by the Minister and we can only do the best we can at this time. When you hear people talking, and I think this is dishonest in Senator Mascoll, because it is part and parcel of his Party's doing...

Mr. PRESIDENT: You cannot accuse the Senator of dishonesty. That must be withdrawn.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I withdraw those words, but I will say this, that he was at the top of the Democratic Labour Party when all of those decisions were taken and then the acts were done. So he is well aware of what is happening and he must not come to the Senate now and pretend that he does not know.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: On a point of order, Sir. I have been consistently accused of being the advisor to the last administration by all of you. I was never at the top of the last administration. So I think that has to be withdrawn. I was never at the top of the last administration. Mr. President, that could mean that I was the Prime Minister.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please proceed, Senator Bolden.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Well, the Honourable Senator says that he was never at the top. His top means Prime Minister. Well, then he was not at the top. But he has said in this Chamber over and over again that he was the architect of many of the plans of the Democratic Labour Party. So he would have to be in close consultation with the Ministers of the Democratic Labour Party and he would have known what was going on in the Democratic Labour Party. Because if I can remember well, Mr. President, in August, 1994 I was in my bedroom...

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I know you do not want it to come out. I was in my bedroom and I heard a lot of commotion to the south of me. When I did get up and look, I saw Mr. David Thompson, a crowd of DLP people and I saw who was then Mr. Mascoll, and I saw what was then thought to be the opening of the ground-breaking of the Julie 'N site.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: On a point of explanation. I never attended any such opening at any Julie 'N site. I have never been involved in such a venture. So pay me back again.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Before you continue, Senator Bolden, I think we have drifted somewhat from Apes Hill and I would like you to return to the Resolution.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I am dealing with Town Planning, Sir. The Honourable Member is saying that I do not know him now, but he was right under my bedroom window. I know you and I saw you there. The next night on the television I heard about the thousand jobs that were going to be produced on this thing that was being built. I know you. He was there.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, I wish to reiterate that I was not present at any ground-breaking ceremony at the Julie 'N site. That is inaccurate. I was never present.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Tell us where you were at the time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are not going to have any dialogue on that. Senator Bolden, please return to the Resolution before us.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Sir, when the Honourable Senator speaks about the letter to Mr. Iglesias, a letter which chokes him week after week, you will see why the Government of the day has written in those terms because certainly you have to do something about the land use policy in this country. I can say this, Mr. President. People look at certain lands and say that they are agricultural lands. But if they are agricultural lands with meagre production, or difficult to cultivate, and Government thought it best to use that land for housing development, there is nothing wrong with that. So I personally support the Resolution because I think that Government is correct. It is connecting societies together. You are more able to deal with young people growing up in these societies when they are connected. In the long term, you build a social centre which satisfies that entire community.

Let us look at St. Joseph that I represented for 16 years. St. Joseph is in such a terrain that you cannot

easily accommodate all of the people in St. Joseph. You would have to build three social centres under three plains. Are you saying now because you want to connect all the lands together and build a number of houses that you must go over the gully and build some over there? So we will have to put services over there and services over here and you have a break of a gully in between. Take Blackmans. Look how Blackmans is divided from the other part of St. John by a deep gully and those people are as foreign as Bajans are to Trinidadians.
2.25 p.m.

Government must take into consideration what the long-term benefits would be and how best to manage its society. Thank you, Mr. President.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 3.30 p.m.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to, and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I wish to make my small contribution to this Resolution. I am no expert on land and types of land. But I strongly feel that I have a commitment to say something about this Resolution. I was made aware when I made some queries about this land that it is pasture land, rab land, that is now presently in use as a pasture.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: It is agricultural land and in active use.

Mr. PRESIDENT: We will call that a point of elucidation.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: I support the position Sir, that every Barbadian wants to get the opportunity to own a piece of this rock. Therefore I support this Resolution in the light that generally people in the rural district prefer to use the small savings that they accumulate for ownership of land. They start from the back, like most of the people have done in the tenancies, and at the end of the day it belongs to them. I have come along with that tradition and I share that view.

I am aware, Sir, that the National Housing Corporation cannot accommodate all the needs of people who have made requests for spots or rental units. Every

day I am bombarded by individuals, even though I am not working in that department, asking me if there is any way I can help them to get some assistance with applications submitted since 1975.

Sir, I am also aware that rental of houses, that is, tenants find it extremely difficult to meet the demands and the rent is extremely high. For a small 2-bedroom apartment people end up paying some \$500 and so a month, and it is not always within that person's range to be able to be accommodated at such an expense. I, Sir, am of the view that if the land is under pasture, and in the light of some of the comments made by Senator Bolden, where people are going to get that opportunity to live in communities where one community centre can serve a couple of hundred people, it is better than having to have a group of people here in one district and then a community centre here and another group of people over there and another community centre there, because it is a waste of resources.

Let me say, Sir, that I give my support to this Resolution in the light that I learnt last week of a lending institution which is willing to give a 95% mortgage. I trust that some of the individuals in these rural districts will get opportunities to be able to achieve at least that one small opportunity to buy a small spot to start their own home ownership. I trust that as time goes on other individuals will be able to acquire such an opportunity.

I am happy, Sir, to have been privileged to see those people leave the tenancies and acquire their spots through the vision and the implementation of the Freehold Tenancies Purchase Act, not only people living in rural districts but some in the urban districts. I know of the serious difficulties people experience as a result of that Freehold Tenancies Purchase Act where individuals now tell you they cannot now rent the little spot that their mother just died on because they are afraid that at the end of the day that house spot may be taken away from them and then they lose that opportunity.

I want to support the Resolution again, Sir, and I trust that what I have learnt, that it is rab land or land in pasture, is correct and the people in that area and in other areas who show a particular interest will get an opportunity to acquire their own little homes.

SENATOR Mrs. N. P. WELCH: Mr. President, I rise to lend my support to this very necessary position the Government and Minister have taken in their efforts to provide housing for ordinary Barbadians. The record of the Democratic Labour Party over the last 8 years was such that except for a paltry effort in Church Village, housing was on the back burner as a national priority, in spite of the fact that during that time there were occasions when we had 2 Ministers of Housing, for what reason I really don't know.

I need to state at the outset that I want to lend my support to this Resolution. Thousands of Barbadians are on the waiting list as a result of the neglect of the Democratic Labour Party for affordable housing. Any effort by this Government so early in its political life to address such a serious issue must be commended. Only last year I spoke in this Chamber about plans for the extension of the housing programme at Pondsides and the other areas in Barbados where land has been identified and housing projects have been identified to meet this very dire need in this country.

There are a few concerns which I have and which I am sure will be addressed in this housing project. These matters are environmental and developmental in nature. This country continues to be in a situation where particularly in the dry season there are water shortages and in some instances water has been off for days. I know that Government in its budgetary proposals last year had made certain provisions in a conservation programme and I am urging Government to ensure that those provisions are adhered to in this housing project.

It is a massive project involving over 1 000 houses and we must recognise that one of the things that might tend to limit development in Barbados is the availability of water. We have been classified internationally as a water stressed country in much the same way as Jordan and Somalia and other countries in Africa and I am hoping that plans will be made in such a massive development to ensure that adequate planning is made for the provision of potable water in this particular area.
3.35 p.m.

As I have said before, Government in the last Budget addressed this problem by making provision for the Barbados Water Authority to provide water saving devices on, for example, shower heads and aerators for kitchen sinks in an effort to bring some measure of conservation to a very scarce resource. Our water resources amount now to about 250 000 cubic metres per day. I believe such a massive project would bring some stress on our limited water resources.

I also want to look at an area which I think has been neglected for a long time when we look at housing development in this country. For too long people, particularly in the private sector, have seen the division of land and the provision of housing as an area in which they can maximize their investment without taking any consideration for the environmental impact that such might have on a community. I am hoping that adequate consideration will be made to provide green areas such as tree lined avenues and adequate facilities for play parks.

I also am hoping that another area which, in my opinion, has been neglected in the past would be addressed

in this housing development. I am very concerned about the plight of the physically handicapped people. I hope some provision will be made in this housing project to ensure that a small percentage of the houses are equipped adequately with ramp facilities and other things that would ensure that people who are of this ilk can have the opportunity like other Barbadians to share and partake in such a housing development.

It is with these few comments, Mr. President, that I wholeheartedly support this Resolution.

Thank you.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, while I agree with those who are somewhat concerned that we should not take the best agricultural land and put it into any other use other than that, I think there comes a time when we have to weigh the one against the other and we have to determine the need for housing. The location of housing is of such importance that we cannot take the chance in using land that could well be earmarked for agriculture. As a matter of fact, I think we only need to become somewhat nervous about using agricultural land in this way if we were at a point where there was no more agricultural land available. It seems to me that there is a lot of agricultural land in Barbados lying around unused....

Aside.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: There is a lot of rab land, yes, but I think in this case there could well be seen some benefit from this particular housing project in this particular area. I think we are well aware that the plantocracy of old had good sense. They did not always behave in the way we would wish to agree with and support today but they made sure that their work force lived within reach of the plantation. It seems to me that if we are going to be talking about getting people back to agriculture, the fact that there is a residential area close by an agricultural sector is a way of ensuring that there is work for some of these people. Not all of them will want to work on the plantation but that there is a work force available not far off I think has to be seen as a benefit.

The other point is that housing in the rural areas of his country has been neglected over the years and in spite of the fact that the urban areas have been becoming overcrowded, we continue doing this thing in that way. It seems to me that it is not a bad thing to move out from the thickly populated overcrowded areas even at the risk of using a bit of land formerly for agriculture, and house people to relieve the pressure on the built-up areas. I think we have to let people who are in the country areas know that they are important too and that in order for them to find somewhere to live they should not necessarily have

to move into town in order to do that. I am saying that what is happening here could be seen, and ought to be seen, as somewhat of a benefit to the country.

There is another point, Sir. Recently I saw in a television programme an experienced real estate well-known Barbadian who was making the point congratulating a former Minister of the present Government saying that he did a wise thing. He knew what he was doing when he was responsible for the construction of Kensington apartments in Passage Road. I thought, well that is all right, pleasant apartments, pleasant surroundings, *et cetera*, but there could be something lacking in that type of apartment structure for the Barbadian. The person I referred to went on to say that the old idea of having space around the house and building outward is gone and we now have to think in terms of going up.

I would utter a warning against that for Barbadians because part of our culture is to have a little garden, a little backyard, even if we cannot own anything more than that and I do not think that people should be discouraged or placed in a position where they cannot have that little garden. I go to New York from time to time to see an old aunt of mine who lives in the middle of Brooklyn, a built-up area, and she takes pride in the summer months of taking all who come to the house to show them her little garden which is not even as big as half of this Senate Chamber here, but that is in the blood. She is a Barbadian and she grows her okras, cucumbers, tomatoes and all that. Perhaps, some little person in the backyard of these houses having the little extra space might be moved to get into agriculture and provide some of the help that would be needed in the surrounding areas.

So, Sir, let me say what I started out saying. I do feel that we must be careful and go easy and have a watchful eye on the whole scene so that we do not rob ourselves of the land that is there potentially for agriculture. But in some cases, and this is one of the cases, I see that having weighed one against the other there is no reason for me to object to this particular project.

I support the Resolution, Sir.
3.45 p.m.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution. Sir, I note that every time we talk about land, especially agricultural land, there is an emotion that sets in.

I have said in this Chamber on many occasions, especially when I was on the other side, in criticism of the then Administration that the integrity of our agricultural land must be preserved. I still maintain that we have to preserve the integrity of our agricultural land. This is not

to say that agricultural land is a sacred cow. It has to show that it can give the economic returns which are comparable to other uses of the land. We are a small society and all of us know from our own experiences that places like Grazettes, Eden Lodge, Deacon's Farm, Waterford and all the rest of them were all agricultural lands. But there comes a time when you have to weigh the pros and cons of the situation.

I am glad that Senator Laurie is in here because, obviously, he is going to give his perspective on things. We on this side are never afraid of hearing another view. What I want Senator Laurie and his agriculturalists to do is to make sure that the agricultural land that they have lying idle in St. Thomas, a high rainfall area, St. John and St. Andrew, where there is land now lying idle, when they bring that into production then I will hear them with even greater intensity when they talk about agricultural land going to other uses.

They must, first of all, demonstrate to the country that they are willing to farm the land. I am told that 8 000 acres came back into production recently. The Government must be commended for the stand it took on the sugar industry, because we made some very important decisions. As a result of that, I am now hearing that 8 000 acres are coming back into production.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Therefore, Sir, why should we be criticized when we took 17 acres? Eight thousand acres just came back in that were probably lying idle. Seventeen are going into another use which the country is in need of. I do not understand the quarrel. The fact that 8 000 acres came back in and still a lot is not under production means that the country has to make sure now that, given that there are other uses for the land, all of the available agricultural land is brought back into production.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Do not forget, Sir, there is a notion that housing must only be on rab land. That is foolishness. Is rab land the only place that people can live, wherein the Barbadian spirit of entrepreneurship and agricultural activity is wasted? All of us like a piece of land in the backyard to do something on.

What I am saying, Sir, is that housing should not only be reserved for rab land. There comes a time when one has to make conscious decisions because there are people in this community who send to school their children from backyard garden activities. If you reserve rab land for housing, how then can they carry on these activities and augment the income that they get from other sources?

A lot of us here have existed on that type of activity, where your father goes to work and he has a piece of land in the back which augments a very small salary. To say that housing is only for rab land has to be the wrong policy. I do not think I can support that. Again I repeat what I said, that we need to weigh the pros and cons of putting housing in what was previously agricultural land. You have to weigh it carefully and do careful analysis. But do not come and say that the only land that you can use for housing is rab land. I do not think that that is a good policy.

I want to back up Senator Springer on what he said about people living near agricultural activity. That is very important. Because what has happened is that we have transported a lot of people in the past from wherever to massive housing developments – I mentioned Eden Lodge, the Pine and so on – in a culture which is a little bit foreign to them. A lot of them come from the rural districts. We put them in a sort of setting which is culturally foreign to them. The result, Sir, is that you can end up with social problems in some of these areas, especially people who are not accustomed to that sort of life. It is something which we have to be very careful about.

I urge the Government to make sure that we have these small communities in the rural areas like Apes Hill. This development makes sense. It is good to have these developments. Seventeen acres in a rural setting and you go to another part and have a few acres, again, in a rural setting. But I am not sure that the country benefits from having the concentration of population in the urban sector.

There are things like these that we have to talk about and discuss in full because, no one has all the knowledge.

I am very glad, as I said before, that Senator Laurie always talks on agriculture. We must not see it as a sort of sacred cow where every time you touch it hell is going to come down on the perpetrators of such an injustice. We have to be very careful about our total land resources and only take land out of agriculture when the economics and the sociology of the situation demand such a move.

I support this sort of development and urge the Government to look around Barbados for other areas and not only rab land but to put meaningful housing development for the people of Barbados.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Rickinson.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I have a few queries but before I start, Mr. President, I should like to refer to the Barbados Labour Party's 1994 Manifesto, page 29:

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Yes. It is a powerful document, Mr. President, and it said:

"We will pursue a land use policy that will protect arable lands against the depredations of greedy speculators."

I am not an agriculturalist and I am not pretending to know the difference between the different types of land. But in this debate I am hearing on the one hand that it is arable land and on the other hand that it is rab land. I do not know which is correct.

The Leader of Government Business did not go into very much detail about this land. Therefore I am not sure what to believe. However, the Leader of Government Business did say that the plan is to put 1 000 houses on this land. That is a lot of houses. I am not sure how much this land is, which means that you have to look at an environmental impact study. Has one been done? Are you planning to do one?

Mr. President, one cannot on one hand talk about an environmental impact study when you want to take the dump down in St. Andrew and then when you want to put houses somewhere else you are not willing to do an environmental impact study.

We need to have a look because we are not in full agreement. I feel that if...

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: The Leader of Government Business did not talk about an Environmental Impact Study. Perhaps he can clarify that when he is winding up the debate.

What I am saying is that when a Resolution is brought to this Honourable Chamber talking about building 1 000 houses on land, I should like some more information so that I can wholeheartedly support the development of housing in Barbados. I feel we need more houses. I would love to support it and I am going to support it hoping that you are sticking by your Manifesto pledge that I have read. I hope you are honouring your word.
3.55 p.m.

Mr. President, in connection with one thousand houses, that will lead to all sorts of changes that one must undergo. I am aware that each Barbadian would love to have a house of their own to live in, to have their back garden, *et cetera*, and therefore one is not going to have a problem selling these homes. However, Mr. President, I feel that if one is going to discourage urbanisation

and promote rural development, just building houses is not enough. We need to encourage the industries to relocate into the rural parishes so that the persons living in these areas will not have to try to get one, two or three minibuses to get to and from work. I am all for promoting the development of industries outside the urban area of Barbados to cut down the amount of travelling.

Mr. President, I have before me a paragraph to substantiate what I was saying. I did not realise it was in the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto, page 116 which says:

"Change of use applications involving major projects will be considered by the Chief Town Planner only after an environmental impact assessment has been undertaken. Where a favourable decision would be in conflict with the land use policy a public enquiry will be held."

Mr. President, I would like the Leader of Government Business to tell this Honourable House whether or not an environmental impact assessment has been undertaken in this area in which it is planned to build one thousand houses. If that has not happened therefore we need a public enquiry on the use of the land.

Mr. President ...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, try not to be distracted by the asides.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Why I am being so vocal about agricultural land is because I feel that our import bill for agricultural products is far too high. As I said before I really do not know about the different types of land use and I feel that Barbados needs to encourage, by some form of incentive, people to return to agriculture and help to reduce the import bill on agricultural products and if necessary have some for export.

Why I am saying that, Mr. President, is that a couple of months ago one had to pay about \$5.00 per pound for sweet peppers and sometimes \$6.00 per pound for tomatoes. This is Cheapside Market, where I do my shopping, that I am speaking about. It is time that we should have ourselves so organised that each bit of land that is available should be used to its full capacity.

There is not much more that I can say, Mr. President, other than I support the Resolution, pending the answers to my queries.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, in spite of the note on which this debate started there have been two or three eminently sensible speeches made so far, one by the last speaker, Senator Rickinson and previous to that, one by Senator Springer. To a large extent Senator Springer brought a sense of rationality and objectivity to the discussion and displayed not only an understanding and appreciation of things spiritual but also a similar realisation for things sociological and I was very impressed by it because he brought sanity back to the debate.

I understand, like Senator Barker said, the sensitivity...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Is that word too big for you?

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think you are speaking into the record, so you should make it clear ...

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I am sorry, Mr. President. Sir, I understand the hypersensitivity in the Barbadian psyche about taking agricultural land or alleged agricultural land or pseudo agricultural land and putting it into housing. After all we have had such a sordid record by the Democratic Labour Party in this regard that we have all right to be sensitive and to be fearful and to be anxious that this Government would seek to do the same, not that it would, given our track record and given our commitment to what we put in the manifesto which to us is a sacred document and a social contract not easily repudiated. For after all, who can forget what the Democratic Labour Party did in Neils, Rowans, Sanford, Mangrove and Cottage? There are numerous examples all over Barbados where vibrant, fertile, successful agricultural lands were overnight, willy-nilly, placed into, as the Manifesto says, "the greedy hands of land speculators who make enormous fortunes overnight". That has never yet been an accusation that has been levelled at the Barbados Labour Party and I am sure that it will not be levelled at this present one.

Senator Laurie, I think was the alarmist in this grouping on this issue talking about "active agriculture". Fine, that is a very emotive phrase and I am sure a very important phrase in agriculture and even in economics. But one would have thought that Senator Laurie, given his professional commitment to agriculture and being the head of a very important agricultural institution in Barbados, would have come with a little more information than that. He talked about active agriculture but he did not tell us, for example, when last was it active in agriculture.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: No, I will get to that. Cool it.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, please address the Chair.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I am sorry, Sir, that was not meant for you, Sir. The tonnage realised, what was planted, what was grown, he just used this phrase of "active agriculture" and occasionally throws in rab land. Sir, I took the trouble to make some phone calls to a number of Government institutions and also people in the private sector in St. James near Apes Hill and some officers from the Town Planning Department told me that when they visited the area last year in 1994/95 they had to tread through cow droppings and all sorts of things. It was in grass then and it is in grass now and from my information it has not been in productive agriculture. It has not produced agriculturally since the early 1990s. It is under grass. Apart from that there has already been established a housing development around the area so you are not invading any virgin territory or violating any principles held so dear by the agriculturalists or whatever.

Senator Laurie himself vouchsafed the information, although indirectly, that so far in the last year or so some 8 000 acres of land were brought back into agriculture under this Government. What further proof could you want, Sir, of this Government's commitment to agriculture? We have never yet made light work of agriculture. Our record speaks to it. Even the fact that the highly successful sugar crop that we are going to get again this year, after many years of deprivation and degradation by the last Government, is indication of what can be achieved very quickly when there is a serious commitment to agriculture. So serious has been our commitment, Sir, that once again it seems that Barbados, after many years of not being able to eat Barbadian sugar will now be able to do so and I am looking forward to it with great relish. Senator Rickinson, as a nurse, I believe knows that this is one of the best sugars you can have and we are all looking forward to having some.

Sir, a phrase that is being bandied about is this environmental impact assessment. I suspect that it is a phrase....

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, I did not deny its existence, all I said is, it is being bandied about. It is a phrase which has come into current usage since Mangrove and Greenland etc. Anybody who knows how the Town Planning Department operates knows that when an application is made to put up a house, to change land use *et cetera*, you might not call it an environmental impact assessment study in the frame but there is always an assessment and evaluation as to what effects the

development, the housing, the project, would have on the area around it and that is undertaken systematically with every single project no matter how small. You can shake your head at that. I know it for a fact. I have worked with it closely. At one time I was a member of the Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee which worked to review people's appeals or grievances against town planning decisions, so I know what I am talking about. One does not say, well I have 10 000 square feet of land and I want to build a house and it must not be more than 40% of land area, and once it is that that is it, and you multiply that by 100 houses. One looks at the impact on what that will mean to the entire environment. Therefore there is always some attention paid to what effect the project will have on the environment.

On page 16 of our manifesto, Sir, like Senator Rickinson said, we state our land use policy. The return of the 8 000 acres of land into agriculture, the fact that we offer incentive to the agricultural sector for people to get back to the land means that we have a deliberate policy about agricultural land use and about agriculture. But it does not mean that because we have such respect for and we realise the importance of agriculture to our economic and social activity and to Barbados' long-term future that, as has been said by Senator Springer and Senator Barker, no housing must take place. Housing must take place because there is a demand for housing. When one considers, apart from the natural and almost inherent and traditional desire for Barbadians to own their own houses, the fear of drought which they went through in this area for the last 8 years of the Democratic Labour Party, where they virtually eradicated the idea from people's minds that they could own their own houses or build houses to assist those who needed such treatment, one can understand the desire for housing.

In talking about our land use policy we make the point that you have to weigh the demands for housing against agricultural and other use and we have to realise that there is a critical mass of land which will determine the future of agriculture. There is no point in saying that all agricultural land must remain untouched because it is agricultural land. There is a minimal amount of land that would be useful to produce viable agriculture. We say, Sir, demands for other land use will generally be satisfied without any reduction in the acreage that is determined to be critical for a vibrant agricultural sector. It does not mean that because you do take some lands out that what you are doing is that you are forever destroying your ability to produce agriculture. Therefore, I think that some of the concerns are understandable. But given the Barbados Labour Party's track record in agriculture and in sticking to its manifesto pledge wherever it is humanly possible and not describing it and spitting on it and tearing it up in public or otherwise, they can trust us on this one and

that we have no intention willy-nilly of going back on our stated word on agriculture or in housing. Therefore, while the concerns are understandable, to me in many instances they are exaggerated and I give this my fullest support. 4.10 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Odle.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Thank you, Mr. President. I will be very brief in my remarks. A lot has been said here today and I would not want to till old soil, but it would be very remiss of me not to take this opportunity to put in a plea. Because on a daily basis I am confronted with individuals who are desperate for places to live and, if it is young people who are trying to make a start in life and do not have the wherewithal to afford expensive land, I think this will present a great opportunity to make housing lots available to those individuals. But more importantly, I think we need to take into consideration that Barbados is an aging population and we have a lot of old people who are in need of somewhere to live, primarily because they used to live with relatives and they have moved on to other places, and now they find themselves in a very difficult situation. I have some figures which I consider to be alarming as far as welfare goes. We are in desperate need in this country for land to place Welfare houses. The figure to date certainly for the National Assistance Board on a priority list is 26 priority and 733 others who have been waiting for God only knows how long and I am sure it is over the past 9 years to find somewhere to put the welfare houses. This is a very serious problem because it is not always advisable to parcel old people off into a home. I think wherever possible we need to create some land mass within our housing estates to position old people because if you leave them alone, as Senator Rickinson will tell you having worked in the health care system, dementia sets in or you call it what you like. I am putting in a plea here and now in this Development Plan and others to come because I hope there will be many more Resolutions of this nature where we will be acquiring land for housing, so that our senior citizens and our welfare citizens would have an opportunity for somewhere for their housing to be put. There are houses available but nowhere to put them and if this continues I shudder to think the reaction it will have on these old people. Remember, everyone of us around this Table is going to get there one day and we cannot escape it unless we have already made plans, and even then we may find ourselves in a situation where we will have to depend on the state for care in our evening years.

With that, Sir, I have no hesitation in supporting this Resolution fully. Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise in conclusion of this debate first of all to correct an error that I made. I believe that I was seeing

noughts today. I only realized after the fact that in my presentation rather than saying over 100 houses that I actually said over 1000. When I took a quick calculation in my mind, 18 acres really cannot support 1000 houses. On average you would get 8 to 10 houses an acre if you go 4000 to 5000 square feet and if you net out some allowance for roadways and so on. You certainly would not be able to use all 18 of those. So you will really be looking at just around 100 houses in this particular development rather than 1000, Sir. I apologize to you, Sir, and to the Chamber for slipping up on the zeros. I think that was as a result of a delayed lunch.

The debate, Sir, has been quite interesting. The question has been posed concerning whether this land is agricultural land or otherwise, Sir. The land is used as some pasture for grazing of animals. The reason for that, Sir, is that the persons who have been associated with that land and who have attempted to use it in recent times for tiling of other agriculture have spoken of the narrow depth of soil and the like, Sir. Government is convinced, Sir, that that fact along with the other fact that the land in question is adjacent to an existing community and existing infrastructure makes it an ideal spot for this additional development of just over 100 houses.

In addition, Sir, we believe that the people of Barbados must be given the opportunity for home ownership and someone mentioned the spectacular views that were associated with the area. We believe that the people of Barbados are worthy of being able to enjoy those spectacular views from the location of those houses. In fact, this reminds me of the debate over West Terrace where I believe that one of the criticisms then was that the income group that was being targeted for that development should not be able to enjoy that kind of spectacular view and the general ambiance of the area. We do not support that kind of philosophy, Sir. We do not believe that spectacular views must be reserved for 10 000, 12 000 or 15 000 square feet lots alone on larger properties.

Sir, we are satisfied that we are acting quite properly in this matter and that this area is ideal for housing development. It is with that, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question that this Resolution do now pass was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ITEM NO. 3 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A
RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AT AND IN THE
VICINITY OF CODRINGTON HILL,
ST. MICHAEL FOR ROAD
IMPROVEMENTS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, approval of the Senate is being sought for

acquisition of a number of parcels of land in the area of Green Hill, Codrington, Spooners Hill and Whitehall for road improvements. These acquisitions which are before the Senate number some 26 parcels of land and they really relate to the frontage of properties that lie in that area around the Codrington/Green Hill/Cave Hill junction. That particular project is already very much in progress. In fact, it is just about nearing the stage of completion. I believe the traffic lights are being installed and road markings are in place.
4.20 p.m.

The project, as you would recall, Sir, involved the widening of the junction from the National Stadium to Codrington Hill and the junction from that road onto Cave Hill or going in the direction of Cave Hill. That work necessitated a widening and straightening of the road, rebuilding of the wall on the NCC property at Codrington, rebuilding of the wall fronting Tyrol Cot, expansion of the junction by Cave Hill and a bit of widening on the eastern side of the road incorporating a number of frontage of the properties there.

These types of projects have been necessitated by the increase in the number of vehicles on the road. In fact, the latest figure is that we have somewhere in the region of 60 000 vehicles of various descriptions, of which I believe around 40 000 are motor cars. With the number of vehicles on the road and of course the ever increasing number of larger specialised vehicles, container trucks and other large transport vehicles, the hidden road junction and the very small road junctions that characterised the roads of Barbados in the past will have to be improved over a period of time in order to improve road safety. We hope, Sir, that this particular project will result in doing those two things, that is, increasing road safety and allowing for the ease of passage both in terms of the increased size of the special commercial transport vehicles we have, as well as the number of vehicles that are on the road today.

There will be one or two changes to the projects as they have been originally conceived, one of which was an expansion of the project in the direction of going down towards Spooners Hill where we thought it would have been incomplete to have widened the junction as described but yet have a situation in which after including a sidewalk in that part of the project that there would be students who are going down to the school around Spooner's Hill, the Lawrence T. Gay Primary, and they would then still have to walk in the area of Long Gap and beyond without the benefit of having sidewalks. The project has been expanded to include provision for sidewalks extending towards that school which would improve the safety of children operating in that area.

Sir, these parcels of land in the Schedule are by and large land frontage which has been needed in order to allow for the widening and straightening of the road junction in the area between Green Hill, Codrington Hill, Spooner's Hill and Whitehall Road Junction for the purpose of road improvement.

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

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, up front I wholeheartedly support this Resolution. I am also reading from the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto 1994, page 37 and it says under Roads and Drainage:

"We will improve traffic and road safety measures for the protection and safety of school children, elderly persons and other users of the road."

It also says:

"We will give priority to the improvement of road corridors, sidewalks and road construction and maintenance in residential tenancies."

which I support wholeheartedly.

I think the time is long overdue, not only for this area but throughout Barbados, for us to introduce a system of sidewalks. Mr. President, I will tell you why I am being so vocal today.

On Sunday there was a knock at my house, "Mrs. Rickinson, there is a tourist outside here in the road. Can you come and give first aid?" I had to go and give first aid. They had been all walking in single file. There was no sidewalk. I said to them, "I am very sorry this happened". We are trying to improve the road and when I go to the Senate on Wednesday I am going to make a call specifically for sidewalks from the top of Spring Garden Highway right down that Lazaretto Road to where we have not only tourists but school children, elderly people and everyone walking.

Mr. President, in that corridor on the Lazaretto Hill if there are 2 buses coming up and down, we local people teach their children and ourselves to pin ourselves against the wall. Tourists do not know they are supposed to do that. That's an abnormal action. This is very urgent. It is one of the most dangerous corridors in Barbados, and I am making an urgent appeal that you please put a sidewalk. If you don't have the money for the other areas, that corridor on the Lazaretto Hill where there are 2 big walls and hardly enough space for the type of vehicles we see on the road should be improved.

Mr. President, I have another concern about these commercial vehicles. I have a little car and they

nearly blew me off the road. Some of them are getting so big that when they pass on Spring Garden Highway the draught that they create is very frightening. They seem to be getting bigger and bigger and there does not seem to be any legislation to prevent it.

I am not straying Mr. President, I am referring to the ease of passage of commercial vehicles.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Resolution says in the vicinity of Codrington Hill so I dare say we are in the vicinity.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, after being exposed to the seminars those two days, I am being very careful as you will notice today. I am dealing with sidewalks and the safety of children.

I would like to congratulate you on improving those sidewalks going to Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School, but I would also like you to look at St. James and make another urgent plea, particularly for the area where it is very dangerous, until you can get enough money. I support the Resolution.
4.30 p.m.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I support this Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land in the vicinity of Codrington Hill, St. Michael for road improvement. I am aware of the situation in that area because I pass there almost every day and night in order to get to my humble abode. I have experienced over the last 20 to 25 years serious accidents at that junction at Codrington. I vividly remember an accident where a passenger stepped off a bus right in front of Tyrol Cot where there was no sidewalk and she got her head crushed. Therefore, I support this venture to have that street widened to accommodate the pedestrians in that area.

I know of that wall as well at NCC. I mentioned the Tyrol Cot wall where you really had to spraddle your body back to the wall in order to avoid being struck from the street as a pedestrian and in some instances because the road was so narrow, as a motorist, it really created some fear particularly with those large container trucks and others on the street. I am aware, Sir, that that area is densely populated.

I know that Senator Farley made mention of the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial in that area. That is one of our big primary schools. It houses over 600 students. I can appreciate that everybody cannot travel in the transport system and many of them have to walk to and from school, sometimes three and four-year olds on their own. I appreciate the effort to construct sidewalks and widen the road in an effort that not only pedestrians but motorists as well will be well looked after.

I also appreciate the effort to have proper drainage facilities put in place. Any day that one is walking on that street and it rains, the water gushes down. The gutters are always blocked. Slabs are missing from the various sidewalks so you have to keep walking and looking down to ensure your own safety. I support the idea of drainage facilities.

The traffic lights: That is another necessary element in that particular area as well as the pedestrian crossings.

Mr. President, I wish to laud the efforts of the Ministry of Transport and any other agencies for capitalizing on this opportunity and implementing such long overdue changes in that area. I also greatly support the idea to extend the sidewalks from the area of Tyrol Cot all the way down to the school because our children, like most children, will cross the street without looking. They will get involved in walking and reading, or walking and hopping a ball. It is sad to say that many of our motorists are not as cautious as they should be, even though some pedestrians think a car, bus or whatever the vehicle is, should stop. If they are on the street, many of our motorists seem to challenge them. I am one of the people who feel that at any time at all brakes will let go, something will go wrong with the vehicle and I will be injured but children, unfortunately, do not usually think like that. I am grateful for the idea to have that sidewalk extended all the way down to the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School for the accommodation of those children.

Mr. President, I think we in Barbados need to be more proactive. A lot of us react to tourists killed, or an old man killed, or a child killed on crossing the street. We react. I am happy that this situation will change as a result of this action.

I wanted to extend that point a little bit to say that the injuries that accrue, and the amount of deaths that occur on our streets daily, I personally feel could be avoided if our motorists and pedestrians become a bit more conscious and cautious of the dangers they will be exposed to. I am sure the costs that will be involved when it comes to medicine to look after those children with serious injury as well as the various liabilities, the money which has to be paid for persons who receive injury, will surely amount to more than that \$1.8 million, that is, the \$1.4 million for road development now plus the \$412 000 for the further extension from the area now being worked on all the way down to the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School.

On numerous occasions if any motorists are coming from the Long Gap area and want to move on to that highway, in most instances the motorists coming from the side road have to reverse because that corner is so narrow. I am happy to see that efforts are being made to have that area expanded so we can move more freely and safely on

our streets in Barbados. I want to commend those agencies involved and I trust that those individuals who have to use that area, whether it is for driving, walking or whatever reason, use it cautiously.

I also want to say that I would be happy as well for other areas in Barbados to have included sidewalks for every road that is being upgraded as well as ramps for the disabled, some of them using their walkers, some of them being pushed on wheelchairs and things of that nature. I think it is imperative that if we are looking at forward planning we should involve not only people who are well able to travel on their own and so on but we should be including in our plan the disabled and any other individuals so that their needs can be adequately met.

With those couple of comments, Sir, I wish to wholeheartedly support this Resolution and will be willing at any further date to lend my wholehearted support to any further development in the area of construction and upgrading of roads for the benefit of all Barbadians.

I thank you.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, as a politician you often hear people say that the Senate is a talk shop and that once Bills pass the House there is very little that can be done from this end and I am beginning to think the same thing. We have had several debates about land acquisition for road improvements in here and many Senators have spoken about the current philosophy in the Ministry of Public Works as to the design of roads, sidewalks and medians, that is, the centre piece in the road. This latest land acquisition in my view presents to me the same problem which I have aired in this House before. We have acquired a lot of land in the area in an attempt to improve traffic flows. Now, I personally believe that while there is an improvement in the area, that improvement could have been far better than it is.

Let me first compliment the contractors for doing their job in a very short space of time, because I pass there probably twice or three times a day, and they have done a proper job as far as the construction is concerned, but the design, in my view, is bad. I have no qualms about it. The design is bad. The design is poor. I repeat it, and let me tell you why. You have land to acquire. Coming from the north, the land on our left belongs to Government. It is Codrington. There is no slip road on that left side for traffic coming down the hill and turning toward the stadium. You have to come right down and then turn in line with the traffic going straight through into Bridgetown.

The slip road coming from Codrington to go down to Lawrence T. Gay is right at the junction. You literally have to be two vehicles from the junction before you get to the

slip road to slip into the left to go down the road, so while the traffic light is on red, everything is stalled until you get from there to the slip road down. There is no slip road in Cave Hill. On top of that, the median is again a very wide median reducing the passable part, in my view, to a very limited amount.

Senator Rickinson speaks about the large vehicles that are now on our roads. We are caught up in modern development, modern technology. Nobody is going to build a low loader or a container to suit Barbados. We have to fall in line with what is there in the commercial world. We cannot stop containers coming to Barbados, otherwise the cost of our goods would escalate.
4.40 p.m.

We spoke about the same problem at the bottom of Rendezvous in Christ Church where they built a wide road and put a large lump of concrete in the centre and reduced the area for vehicular passage. They have done the same thing on the 2A Highway. When you leave the restaurant up there above Redman's Village, the road is very narrow. You had a nice wide road before the sidewalks were put in. By the time the sidewalks were in you were left with just a 2-lane road with very little space between 2 vehicles. It continues in a narrow 2-lane road until it gets down to the junction with Simpson Motors where it flushes back out into a wide highway.

Somebody in the design department at MTW, in my view, does not understand what is happening in today's world. Before long, you will have to go and move them out again. If you are building the 2A Highway, why start with a wide road until you get to Bagatelle and from the time you leave Bagatelle, the road narrows itself right through Redman's Village until you get to Simpson Motors where it opens back? You have 2 lovely sidewalks on both sides.

We spoke about the roundabout at St. Thomas Parish Church. If you look at the sidewalk on the side to the church, there is just as much area for sidewalk on the side of the church and going down to St. James as there is in the main road. You have a roundabout as large or larger than this whole room in that junction. Somebody asked me if they are going to put a casino in there. I would not doubt it. But, Sir, this is no joke. If they are going to do road designs, we have to ask ourselves, are we spending money just for today or are we going to spend money to last us for a period of time? In that junction, the road could have been properly designed and better designed. I do not know who has done it, but in the same way you come to acquire the land here, you could have acquired the land for a slip road into Cave Hill. You could have acquired the land for the slip road on the left to carry you across by the Stadium and you would have produced a far better design than what you have. The slip road could have started higher up, slip across and you would relieve the traffic at that junction.

But it is said those of us who know traffic law or anything about road design will tell you that the worst method of controlling traffic are traffic lights. We have a problem with this now. I understand there is a gentleman who has been brought to Barbados from the United States as a consultant on our roadworks, *et cetera*. There used to be a flashing light in Government Hill that when there is no traffic coming from across the Pine Road, Belleville, you could turn right and the traffic on the street could go through. I understand this gentleman says he does not like it and that when he comes to these lights he is scared because he is a retired employee here in Barbados as a consultant. That flashing light is off. There is no traffic going in that lane. You have to sit down there and wait until the traffic lights turn in order for you to go through.

In England, at all of these traffic lights, there is what you call a pad in the road. If there is no traffic coming from the other side, as soon as traffic hits this pad, the lights turn green and give you the right of way. Also, in other countries...

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: You do not understand. The man has disconnected them.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: The gentleman has disconnected all of them. You all must know what is going on in this country. The gentleman has asked that all be disconnected. In other countries there are laws where you can turn on red lights at certain junctions.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: The Dems brought him in on a contract. I would hope that when his contract comes to an end that the Government does the rightful thing.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: But, Sir, all I am saying is that, in my view – nobody might agree with me – you will find that these latter roads that are being designed in Barbados are not designed for any length of time. They are not taking into consideration the increase in vehicular traffic that will make itself felt in Barbados in the years to come.

There is no point, as I see it, in spending money to redesign a junction or a highway to find that you end up with just what you had with pretty new material on top. That is my view and I hope, at least, that the Minister can

go back and tell the Cabinet my concern and find out whether these are the instructions.

Somebody else has raised it, I know, with Town and Country Planning. The story given to him is that when you borrow money from the international funding agencies they say you must put in sidewalks where there are residential areas. But if that is so then you increase the width of the road by 4 or 6 feet to give easy passage. There was a time where we used to have a lot of accidents with a right head lamp hitting a right head lamp. The roads were too narrow. If you open up the road, you avoid that kind of accident. But if you build a road and then turn around and put a big lump of concrete down the centre, you reduce the area for vehicular traffic.

I think somebody should look at it. If I am wrong, tell me I am wrong but, in my view, I have never seen roads designed like the last 3 or 4 that have been built in Barbados, wherever I have travelled around the world.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Thank you, Mr. President. Obviously, I would want to support this Resolution, Sir, because I am also intimately connected with the area. As a matter of fact, I pass there every morning around 5 o'clock...

Aside.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Not on my way home, on my way to the National Stadium. I have to be very clear on this. I am one who knows the area very well because, Sir, having grown up in Bush Hall Yard Gap, I went to a school called Edghill Memorial School which is in Cave Hill and therefore I used to have to pass there. I had the privilege of going there early because my mother taught there. I then had an opportunity to go to Grace Hill Primary which is now the L. T. Gay.

But, Sir, I also want to support it for this reason. When it was first being built, I thought that we were about to put another roundabout in that area. I have said in this Chamber on more than one occasion that I am one who believe that the Ministry of Transport and Works needs to rethink its policy very clearly about the roundabout situation. I do not agree totally with Senator Bolden that stop lights or traffic lights are the worst ways of controlling traffic. One knows and one is very, very clear on this. There is a school of thought that once there are light pads in, and once we change the laws to reflect that, one could turn either left or right at a stop light when there is no traffic. It is done in the United States and in England. You can turn right at a traffic light, if you are in that lane, once there is nothing approaching from the other side. It is about time that we rethink our laws regarding whether or not you can turn at the stop light when there is nothing coming.

But, Sir, apart from that, the traffic pads in front of the university, for example, still work and work effectively. Once you approach the pad and it is working, you can go forward. There is a need to rethink the entire issue about roundabouts because what has happened, in recent time... We know that in the United States and Great Britain roundabouts are expansive things which one can turn on. The one thing that dictates a roundabout functioning properly is if there is a constant flow of traffic.

From the time you back up traffic on any area of a roundabout, it causes immense traffic problems. We have that problem at the one in Grazeettes there by Rogers quarry. We have the same kind of problem at a very small roundabout in Sayes Court. What happens is that the Ministry of Transport and Works has also started putting pedestrian crossings virtually inside of roundabouts. This is apparent at the one at Government Hill. What also happens is this. If you come to a roundabout, first of all, you cannot see what is on the other side and then you find children or pedestrians crossing virtually inside of the roundabout. In terms of traffic, it blocks traffic for immense periods of time. I experience that every morning in the Pine Road with the roundabout that is there.

It is about time that we rethink the entire policy as to whether or not we have enough land space available in Barbados. One is not saying that roundabouts are not good. Now the Codrington junction, for example, if you were going to put a roundabout there you could see the kind of problems that would cause because of the land that you are using and it is necessary for a lot of the roundabouts in Barbados which are not on expansive pieces of land to rethink the policy of whether or not we cannot put in traffic lights as well at some of those junctions. It is my opinion that it would aid traffic significantly and that the Ministry of Transport and Works needs to study it and look at an alternative policy with regards to roundabouts in this country. I thank you.

4.50 p.m.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I join this debate with a great deal of pleasure because like the last speaker this is also part of my own neighbourhood and while Senator Lynch grew up in Bush Hall Yard Gap, I grew up in Chapel Gap, Spooner's Hill, although we used to take care of and control Bush Hall Yard Gap. As a matter of fact, he could not run about there until I gave him permission. So I appreciate the identification he has of this project.

Sir, I join in commending this project first of all because of the tremendous improvement as given to the roadway and to the entire environs in that area. It means therefore that both vehicular and pedestrian traffic have much easier access and greater facilities and greater ease of

way. But my pleasure goes beyond the mundane though necessary features such as traffic and the mention of traffic regulations and traffic procedure.

I, Sir, am supportive of this Resolution because it involves a project which is also very dear to my heart. It really is an integral part and can be said to have come about largely because of restoration of Tyrol Cot project. It has brought a new life physically to that area as far as traffic is concerned, but what it has done also for Tyrol Cot and the restoration of that location has tremendous benefit for Barbados tourism and Barbados' history and Barbados whole concept of heritage tourism.

As you know, Sir, Tyrol Cot is not only of great architectural interest and architectural significance but also has tremendous political and socio-political importance, having been the home of and birth place of, in one instance, our first Premier and Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation, Sir Grantley Adams, and his dear wife Lady Adams and of course his eminent son the late Right Honourable Tom Adams, Prime Minister of Barbados, all three of whom are deceased.

Sir, the restoration of this project therefore adds tremendously to what we can offer, not only tourists, but also Barbadians themselves, because anyone who has visited that project – and I myself have taken deliberate pains of going there long before the roadway was completed – one would be quite impressed by the memorabilia and the Barbadiana that have been preserved and restored and properly mounted and displayed in that house.

I therefore would urge everyone that we should not leave it to tourists alone to visit the project, not only Tyrol Cot *per se* but also the chattel house village. There is a nice shop there that sells some good ice cream, good mauby and some good ham cutters, all of which have been personally sampled by me. I did not want to bring in that to promote anybody, because I think there is one person who sponsors the shop. It is a good experience and I would urge all those freedom loving Barbadians to go there. Not only Barbados Labour Party supporters, but I think it would do a tremendous amount of good to the Democratic Labour Party supporters, particularly my colleagues in here from the opposite side, Senator Mascoll and Senator Thompson. I think they are broad-minded enough to go there and imbibe the historical significance of the whole project and learn something from it so that it would preclude me from having from time to time getting up here and giving them some rough political lessons. If they saw it for themselves they therefore would not necessarily proceed along the same lines they do because they would know better.

Therefore, Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this Resolution in connection with the road project

and I am particularly proud of the role played by this Government, in playing the leading part in seeing that the project which has been the brainchild of the Barbados National Trust, which has done a tremendous job, not only in this area but in other parts of Barbados. I think every encouragement should be given them, both financially and otherwise for the further realisation of their and the Ministry of Tourism's resolve to see that heritage plays a more significant role in the tourism product that we offer to the whole wide world. Thank you, Sir.

4.55 p.m.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging to see that this project is getting the kind of support that it is from the other side because this project is indeed the brainchild of the Democratic Labour Party. In fact, at page 43 of the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party the DLP promises to continue this programme of rehabilitation and maintenance under the five-year World Development Rehabilitation Programme including junction improvements at Codrington Hill, which is precisely where the thing is taking place. The whole question of the Tyrol Cot, the approval of that was done under the Democratic Labour Party. I am amazed to hear all of a sudden this kind of support for a venture which again is the vision of the Democratic Labour Party.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I did not intend by my comments to make this a narrow partisan debate but I must rise to say that I actually discussed this project with Prime Minister Tom Adams long before the DLP came into power in 1985. We talked about demolishing the wall at Tyrol Cot and that is something that we were against. So it is part of the continuity of the Government of Barbados and therefore cannot be accorded to any one particular Government.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I do not intend either to make this a partisan thing. But it must be said that the expansion of Codrington Hill started as a project under the Democratic Labour Party. This kind of partisan thing is making it seem as though this administration is responsible. It is amazing. The whole question of the project and its size, in fact, as correctly said is related to the Tyrol Cot project. There is no doubt that the acquisition of the land, excessive as it might be, was acquired really I hope to assist in the parking facilities that will be required when the heritage project is fully utilized. Therefore, that small pasture that used to be cultivated in vegetables has also been acquired. So let us not take this thing beyond what it is of a project conceptualized under an IADB World Rehabilitation Programme. In that context, it is really a project that is worth funding. But that five-year project also included Cave Hill, Pine East-West, Pine North-South, Thornbury Hill, Highway 7, Golf Club Road to Dayrells Road and in fact a whole range of other projects which we

have to state here clearly. Because I get the impression that Barbados started in September 1994 and that all of a sudden ideas and initiatives came to light. We all know, Mr. President, that this Government has inherited a whole range of ideas and initiatives and will hopefully carry them to a certain level of completion such that when we regain power we will be able to say that at least they did not disrupt the process too much, which is in fact the case. Even the economic programme has now been disrupted, all with the exception of the increase in interest rates and that sort of thing. We have actually seen some endorsement of the economic, labour initiatives and the Incomes Protocol have been initiatives under the Democratic Labour Party which have been maintained and have gone so far that they have accepted the rural programme. We come here every time to hear some idle boast about initiatives being taken and boasting about this Codrington Highway and then we had a former Minister of Transport and Works talking about criticizing the technicians in fact within the Ministry, criticizing because some system did not have a split road. We have reached this kind of stage where we see a project and understand its importance and then for some little reason something is said about the absence of a slip road. The thing about it is that it is then contradicted and, in fact, Senator Lynch chose a completely different view, that we should have a roundabout. So we are not sure what is the position in this Government even as it relates to road projects. There is internal chaos and soon from now we will see all kinds of apologies being made.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: On a point of order, Mr. President. I never advocated any roundabout. My statement was very clear that initially I thought that there was going to be a roundabout and I was happy to see that there were traffic lights that were utilized at that junction rather than a roundabout.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I will wind up, Sir. That explanation is as clear as mud. I will wind up by saying that finally it is a project which is really worth the expenditure on it and I am hoping that project at Tyrol Cot will in fact reach the stage where we can be proud and justify the expansion of the road in that area. Because anything that we can do to generate jobs in Barbados we have to pursue. I am very hopeful that Government with some kind of a plum will be able to tell the people of Barbados that we did this over the last 5 years and any initiative at all that can translate into job creation is in fact necessary. My 5-4-3 plan is in fact on stream and I will not digress on this occasion.

Just let me say that I support this road project fully and look forward to benefits being derived from it. I will also visit it. I also hope that this administration will see it fit to implement most of the projects that the Democratic Labour Party left behind, especially those that are in fact very useful. I have not seen any real initiative as yet

which I can say is full scale Barbados Labour Party even in the offshore sector. My friend, Senator Goddard, has really been holding on to all of the initiatives...

Mr. PRESIDENT: These matters I am sure will be subject of other Resolutions. Have you concluded? Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I just want to make a short intervention here. Of course, I support any measure that improves road safety. Sir, with your permission, I will say on this same Highway 2 where development is taking place just about a half mile up the road, which is not too far away from Codrington, there is a church called the Church of The Resurrection and about 50 yards to the north of that is a gap called Mahaica Gap where I was born. The road between there we call a cut rock which means that there is rock on both sides of the road and there is a large school very close. Therefore I am appealing that some consideration be given to acquiring some land in that area and building a sidewalk there because it is a bit unsafe not only for school children but for church-goers on a Sunday morning.

I thank you for your indulgence, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, under this Head I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Prisons Act and I beg to move that it be now read a first time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to move that this sitting do now adjourn until Wednesday, February 21st at 11.00 a.m.

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

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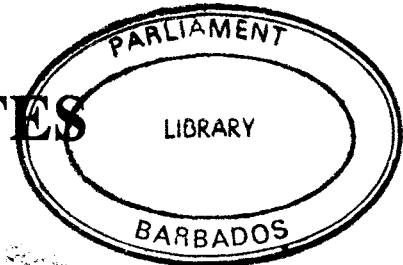
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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

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LAURIE, Senator C. K.
LYNCH, Senator N. A.
MASCOLL, Senator C. A.
MURRAY, Senator the Hon. G. S. H.
ODLE, Senator Miss J. C.
RICKINSON, Senator Mrs. P. E.
SPRINGER, Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L.
SYMMONDS, Senator Miss O. P.
THOMPSON, Senator Mrs. A. P.
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THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)



FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 21, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, February 21, 1996 at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP, (President)

His Honour Senator C. L. BOLDEN, (Deputy President)

Senator the Honourable R. FARLEY (Minister of Industry, Commerce and Business Development) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Honourable P. C. GODDARD (Minister of Foreign Trade and International Business)

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY (Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE

Senator T. E. BARKER (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Senator Miss O. P. SYMMONDS

Senator D. T. GILL

Senator Miss J. C. ODLE

Senator N. A. LYNCH

Senator N. P. WELCH

Senator J. A. WORKMAN

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Senator C. A. MASCOLL.

Prayers were led by Rev. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following before the Honourable the Senate:

Annual Reports of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation for the years 1992 and 1993.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to give notice of a Bill to amend the National Council on Substance Abuse Bill, 1995 and I beg to move that it be read a first time.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE PRISONS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: The matter before the Senate is a Bill to amend the Prisons Act to make provision among other things for the appointment of an Advisory Board as well as other incidental matters thereto to improve the general administration of the prisons.

Sir, these proposals to amend this Act are born out of a need to make some changes in the operation of the institution in order to address some current, real and pressing difficulties. The proposals also recognise that there are certain statutory powers which accrue to the Superintendent of Prisons which, obviously, will be left intact. It seeks to introduce this Advisory Board as well as make other amendments to allow the prison to benefit from the expertise of the individuals who will serve in this advisory capacity.

Sir, this whole question of the management of the prisons must be set in the appropriate context. In 1985, the prison population was some 330 inmates. That number rose steadily to the point where in 1995 the population of inmates was some 750. Clearly, therefore, one is dealing with an over 100 per cent increase in numbers within the same limited space and without a proportional increase in the number of staff which might be required to handle such a situation.

In addition, Sir, the matter of the management of the prison would have been exacerbated by a number of factors, including the recruitment policies which would have been in place throughout the years, where, I believe, that prison is, perhaps, one of those institutions that might have suffered in terms of the requirements specified for persons to become prison officers which would mean that over the years you would not necessarily have been able to benefit from persons with a certain background and training unless it was provided on the job for management of the prison.

11.25 a.m.

The flip side of that, Sir, is that given the nature of the recruitment policies, there was, indeed, an absence of a sustained programme for the development of the managerial capacity within the prison system. In fact, the whole question of promotion has by and large been mainly by seniority more so than having well-planned, well-defined career paths where training is provided to equip officers to handle themselves as they rise into these positions. The training for a prison officer, Sir, on the floor would obviously be different from his supervisor, the superintendent, and the like.

In addition, Sir, one of the major problems that has resulted in the numbers is an increase in the level of crime that has been committed in this society. In addition to that has been the absence of a coordinated penal policy. Unfortunately in Barbados, we tend to isolate the prison aspect of punishment and so on from the other aspects. In fact, by and large sentencing someone to a term in prison or imposing fines seem to be the only two options that are exercised as far as punishment for crime is concerned. What is really needed is penal reform which would ensure that a wider range of sentencing options are explored and that the limited resources that are available at the prisons would be reserved for those situations and crimes which would really and truly merit a prison term as the only meaningful solution. We must set these amendments, Sir, within that context.

There are a number of things that are happening along with these amendments that we are proposing. For example, in the area of penal reform, a reform committee

has been established under the chairmanship of Sir Clifford Husbands and that steering committee that has been appointed has been charged with the responsibility of developing a totally new penal system for Barbados, one that provides a wider range of sentencing options and particularly alternatives to imprisonment.

In fact, Sir, I think almost everyone would agree that one of the major problems with using prison as the main sentencing tool is that the prison ends up being almost an institution of higher learning for rookie criminals so that if you take someone who on their skirmish with the law in a relatively minor offence in terms of the range of criminal offences that one could possibly commit, that 3-month sentence in a prison, especially in Barbados there being a single prison for all types of offences, you will have a situation where you are exposing the individual to some of the harder criminal elements, those who have long graduated to the higher levels of crime, those who are perfecting ways of how not to get caught, and those who have contact in the criminal world which they can share with these raw recruits. Perhaps, having the single institution to which all categories of convicted persons are sent is a major problem in that it aids crime more so than necessarily acts as a deterrent as far as certain types of offences are concerned.

In addition, Sir, the whole question of recruitment policy as well as training on the job and for the job, you would be pleased to note that for the first time in August 1995 when a batch of 14 prison officers were hired, that they were given seven weeks' training before they were actually enlisted for work in the prison service. Prior to that, training was strictly on the job. As you would recognise, Sir, one of the inherent dangers with on-the-job training is that usually if you are going to hire staff, you hire them because you need them. Then the necessities of the job usually mean that the training becomes postponed, and further postponed, and eventually, as you are functioning in the job, an assumption is made that perhaps the training really was not necessary and there can be no better system than training persons before they are thrown into the job situation especially in a situation as difficult and as stressful as work in a prison.

We propose, Sir, to continue this programme of training before persons are enlisted for actual service. Also there are plans ahead to step up the level of training which is given to officers on the job. What is required is for officers to be multi-skilled. Officers need not only to be highly schooled in matters of security to ensure that inmates are kept where they are supposed to be, but if the institution is to act as a reform institution as well, then it also means that officers must be trained in areas relating to human relations and pedagogical techniques or those persons who worked in the educational aspects of

the prison, be it the workshops or classrooms. They need to understand criminology, the root causes of crime. They need to understand something about the inmates, where they are coming from, where they are going to and be able as the persons who, for whatever period the sentence might be, will be the only contact or the principal contact they will have with the outside world. They must be equipped with the tools which would ensure that the possibility for reform becomes a real one rather than simply being a remote adjunct to the element of punishment.

Sir, contact has already been made with a department of the United Nations back in April last year and two trainers were brought to Barbados to train prison officers in the Caribbean. Barbados basically initiated original training workshops for prison officers and one of the outcomes of that workshop, and this is one we insisted on, was that we wanted the two trainers who were sent to Barbados to function in the capacity of trainers of trainers, that is, their focus would be to train individuals who themselves would be able to train their peers after the experts had left. Each island that participated in that project, Sir, received a training manual which was relevant to its own peculiar needs and the laws within the region.
11.35 p.m.

Part of the project was for the participants to take a standard generic manual for prison operation and, as part of the project, and with the guidance of the trainers to adjust that training manual to the peculiar needs, interests and laws in the particular island.

These amendments that are being made which would have a direct bearing on the functioning of the prison, in terms of its management, its capacity to obtain guidance from other persons with skills in the area are but part of the wider recognition of the need for reform in this area and, also, Sir, part of the attempt to ensure that the Prison act just as much as a reform entity as it does as an entity for punishment.

To the particulars of the Amendments that are being proposed to the Prisons Act. It has long been recognized that there is a need to strengthen the management structure of the prison. It is also recognized that that has to be done without divesting the Superintendent of the statutory powers that are vested. The Prisons Act, as it currently stands at Cap. 168 makes provisions for a Visiting Committee and the main duties of that Visiting Committee, as outlined in the Act and the Rules, was that they should visit the prison frequently, they should co-operate with the Superintendent in promoting efficient operation of the prisons, they should enquire into any matter that was referred to them by the Governor-General and make an appropriate report thereon. They were also supposed to

have unlimited access to prisoners and receive reports from prisoners. They also could inspect the dietary arrangements and other aspects of the general care of prisoners.

There was also another Committee which was established by law and that was the After Care Committee. That was established within the prison Rules. I think it was Rule 29. The main functions of that After Care Committee were to review the cases of prisoners, from time to time, during their sentence. It would also consider recommendations from the Superintendent concerning any financial assistance that should be given to those inmates who were about to be discharged and they would also assist in finding jobs and housing for inmates on discharge.

But, Sir, we are of the view that those 2 Committees have been a little bit too limited in scope and because of the separate functions they have though the matters are related in that they all relate to the general rehabilitation process of which the prison is supposed to be a part, we are also of the view that that arrangement is defective.

In fact a number of different combinations have been explored in terms of correcting that deficiency. For example, one that was suggested was an amalgamation of the 2 Committees, the Visiting Committee and the After Care Committee. That was an attempt to widen the scope of operations and it would seek to improve the management of the prison, especially on matters relating to welfare, rehabilitation, discharge and after care.

We decided that we would want to take a different approach. We took the view that, perhaps, a Board which functions more akin to how the Boards of Management of a secondary school would function where the Board is not constituted as a statutory body, but it has standing, within the relevant legislation, to provide certain guidance to the management of the institution. That is the principle on which this Advisory Board structure is predicated. That is, we are not creating a statutory institution as one would have with other Boards. We are really creating an advisory function which, as I said, would function more akin to the way in which Boards of Management of educational institutions might function.

The matter was thrown out for discussion amongst interested parties including the Association representing the prison officers and it was agreed that the Board would do a number of things. One that it would advise the Minister on matters relating to the welfare of the prisoners, as well as, prison officers and those within the prison. But it will also advise the Superintendent on general issues of management and supervision of prisoners.

The Amendment would seek to merge the functions of the Visiting and After Care Committees of the prison into this new Board. It would also make provision for

the Board to carry out the function of the Minister, as opposed to making reference in the Rules to the Visiting Committee, for example, carrying out the instructions of the Governor-General.

There are some consequential Amendments, Sir, to the Rules which would be made as would be proper, after the Amendments to the Act have been passed. But, basically, the Board is intended to be broad-based and advisory and it will represent persons who have interest and knowledge of a managerial nature in financial administration, prison administration, security, religion, agricultural interest and a wide range of interests which, when combined, would be able to inject a level of knowledge and direction in the prison that may be quite lacking, at this point in time, Sir.

We believe that these Amendments that are outlined in this Bill will lead to an improvement in the level of administration of the prison. An efficiently administered prison, Sir, is very important, as part of the whole question of maintenance of law and order in society. As I indicated earlier, this is only one part of the wider process of reform which we recognize needs to be undertaken and is being undertaken within the term of this Administration.

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

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I should like to make a few brief comments on this matter, since we have been promised legislation which would really tackle or answer the problems which exist in our penal reform system.

I consider this Bill to be an act of window dressing. I do not know how far it will go in assisting the Government of Barbados to alleviate many of the severe problems which presently exist in our major penal institution.

I am a bit surprised though that, at this stage, we are almost 2 years into a new Government, that we are now hearing of all these Committees to be formed to deal with penal reform in Barbados. Because in the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, I note that all the answers are to be found there. As a matter of fact I thought that we should be in the implementation stage right now because in that Manifesto on page 35, dealing with the penal system all the proposals are outlined. A new department of correctional services to incorporate the work of the Probation Department, reorganisation of Dodds and Summervale into juvenile residential institutions, the provision of remand homes. I thought that by now we

would have started putting that kind of programme in place. Order for discipline and training of intermediate duration, reorganisation of a system of community service orders and the establishment of attendance centres to facilitate non-custodial sentences for non-violent crime. 11.45 a.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I am not saying that this could all be done at one time but I believe that to now, put us again in this committee stage which is a part of this administration, every day it is a committee or commission. This Government, when in opposition had all the answers for all the problems in Barbados. Crime is a serious problem today. We recognise that there is overcrowding at Glendairy. What is taking the Government so long in implementing some of these beautiful proposals outlined in its manifesto? Mr. President, I hope that the Government is learning that it takes more than mouth to run a country and that fancy words do not make action and the people of Barbados want action. I do not really think that merging two committees or setting up a separate committee to look after food and this and that answers Glendairy's problems.

I lived outside Glendairy Wall for several years. I am very familiar with the life of people in Glendairy prison. Mr. President, Sir, I think you will have to accept that up there is an institution for penal reform but for me it is a place where people are cast out of society for ever. I say that because when individuals placed in Glendairy attempt to re-enter the society we do not accept them. In the families they are not accepted. In the community in which they have grown up they are not accepted. In the business world they are not accepted and even if the crime is not associated with larceny, theft or anything like that, people just feel that once you went to Glendairy you are no longer trustworthy, you are no longer worthy to be a part of this society. I think we have to do a lot of work in that area. We have to show in some way, be it by Government Information Service, or by whatever method we use, that people in Glendairy are actually going through a process of reform.

I remember the Annual Industrial Exhibition used to highlight the work of people in Glendairy and I think a number of Barbadians developed an appreciation for these people and recognise that although they had been set aside from society they were still doing meaningful things which could probably assist them in their attempt to re-enter the society.

I would like for us to identify some medium by which we can get Barbadians to recognise that having gone to prison, having repaid the debt to society, does not

mean that they are no longer Barbadians. I want to say that one of the major problems with people entering Glendairy is associated with our educational system. The information available to Barbadians shows that about 80% of the people in Glendairy can hardly read, can hardly write and they are barely capable of communicating their personal problems or even to explain what is happening in the wider society.

It is unfortunate that you should become a prisoner of a system which has been put in place to enhance your life. That is a serious problem we have so I think building bigger prisons, getting more prison officers, and all of these things, are all well and good after the fact but I hope that at this time we would be seriously considering what is it that we have to do to make sure that people do not end up at Glendairy.

I know there are a number of things we have to do in this country. I know we have to try to rebuild this society. We need to get back to being our brother's and sister's keeper. We need to be more caring individuals. We mind our own business too much nowadays so when we are at home, closed up in our houses and we see a little child who should have been in school we no longer see it our responsibility to call that child and say, "Sonny, it is past school hours. What are you doing on the streets?" I think we need to be a lot more conscious of these things because that little boy is going to become the hardened criminal of tomorrow unless we work on it today. So my intervention at this point is really to make an appeal to my fellow Barbadians.

I would wish that we would never have a Glendairy. I am an idealist, people tell me that from time to time. I would wish that we could do without a prison but I am also a realistic individual and I recognise that in all societies from time to time there are people who do not conform with what is considered to be normal forms of behaviour in the society. I would like to encourage us to do whatever we can. There are too many of us who are too comfortable with the standard of living which we are enjoying and we feel so great about ourselves that we forget that outside our little walls are others who could do with our assistance and I want to encourage us to get out there in the communities and try to assist, in whatever way we can, our less fortunate brothers and sisters. This will continue to be a problem even after we have solved some of the problems inside Glendairy. Crime will continue to be a problem in Barbados unless we reach out and assist those in our society who feel that they are deprived, who feel that the system has failed them, who feel that they are rejects and who believe that the only way they can get attention is by lashing out at the society, doing whatever they believe would give them the highest visibility. They are not necessarily criminals in mind. These individuals believe that nobody cares, nobody is seeing them. What is

it they can do to gain attention. They know they will appear on the front page of the newspapers and they know they will hit the 7.30 news the night on television and so they set about to gain this attention. So I support any measure which attempts to make life easier for all Barbadians but I would like to see the Government really get its teeth into it and take a huge bite at dealing with this very serious problem plaguing our society. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to lend support to this amendment but I would also like to give some comments. I note that the Leader of Government Business mentioned a reform committee under Sir Clifford Husbands to provide for a wider range of sentencing options and alternatives for imprisonment. This is the first time I have heard about this committee and I feel that it should be publicised. One should invite comments from the society, because we do have views about different types of sentencing of various persons in our society. For example, I do not feel that if someone does not pay support that they should be imprisoned. Prison is not the place for such persons. Or if, for example, a business is not going well and you really cannot manage that you are put in prison even though you are trying very hard. I would like, if possible, for us to use the media and invite people to come and appear before this committee and give ideas about the different types of options that they feel will assist in our society.

11.55 a.m.

Mr. President, I would also like to say a few words about the Board and also prison officers. I would like to see the type of prison officers to include social workers and psychiatric nurses. I feel the time has come that we need such persons in our prisons to assist with some of the fundamental behavioral problems that are existing not only in the society but in the prison itself. I do not feel, Mr. President, that one should be sentenced to prison to serve a sentence and then be sent out without any form of assistance or rehabilitation. So I am making a plea for the employment of psychiatric nurses and social workers as prison officers to assist with the development of our prison and the rehabilitation of those persons who need it.

I would like to support the on-the-job training in human relations in addition to security and other areas that are necessary for the prison. I feel that this area is required not only in the prison but throughout the work force, because people seem to have lost their way on how to behave. They do not seem to know what is right and what is wrong anymore, what is professional and what is not professional. I would like to congratulate you to have started in this area of human relations. I really do not know very much about the disciplinary measures that are set out for persons working in the prison, but I would like to

hope that there is provision for prison officers who make mistakes that they could be counselled and be assisted to improve.

I would also like to comment on looking at promotion, not by seniority but by merit, and I would hope that this Committee or another committee will be set up that will be able to develop a continuous evaluation for the workers so that the workers themselves can see where they went wrong and where they need to improve, so that when the time comes for promotion they will know that they have not been overlooked.

With these comments, I support the Bill.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I want to lend my support to the amendment of this Bill. I know the Attorney General is working exceedingly hard in trying to rationalize and bring up-to-date several Bills which were on the statute book for a very long time. I believe the Prison Bill is one of those which is being amended today. But I firmly believe that there are a number of other Bills which need to be looked at urgently, because this is responsible basically for the overcrowding which we have in our prison today. We have to find a method of reducing the prison population, because where you have a disproportionate amount of prison warders to prisoners there is always the likelihood of something going wrong or an uprising or something which, even though it might be something very small, would scare the entire society.

In that respect, I want to look at what is basically our problem for overcrowding. For a long time I have noticed that business houses in Bridgetown are using the Police Force as debt collectors. Somebody writes a cheque to a business place in Bridgetown, the cheque is dishonoured, they go to the Police Station and the police go out and arrest some person and bring them into Court. Then you are told if the person pays the money we will go back to Court and say we are not worrying with the case anymore. Now you have a situation where the Police Force is really acting as a debt collecting agency. It is a waste of good police time and it happens daily in our Courts. You go in there every day and you will find a situation like this.

Now another thing that is also responsible for the number of people in the prison is the system of remand. For a long time we have been talking about a Bail Act and we have a situation where people are arrested. Sometimes it might be for serious matters and other times not. Then they are brought before the Court, and they are denied bail. You can sit down and count. They are denied bail on three occasions. The police will say if you grant them bail, they will interfere with the investigations that are still going on. How could you, in my view, arrest a man, charge him and

then tell me that you are still carrying out investigations? This means that you did not have enough to arrest him the first time. But you arrest him, bring him before the Court, and then you object to bail. I can tell you something. I had an experience where a chap came to me and said that he had to go to Court the next day. "I know that they are going to object to bail. But do not worry they are going to object to bail three times and then the fourth time they will grant me bail." So the practice is known out there. So if you have every Monday morning or during the week a system of remand, you must increase your prison population, and these are people who have not yet been convicted. You have to look at a Bail Bill urgently which would guide the presiding magistrate when to give bail and when to refuse bail. I am sure that will certainly take account of a number of persons who go to prison. Because after the third appearance and you are granted an adjournment, you are then granted an adjournment for about 6 months before the police are ready to present the case. So here will be somebody who spent 3 or 4 weeks in jail then to be let out for a case which will start 6 or 7 months after to determine the guilt or otherwise of the person.

The next Bill that needs to be looked at is the Maintenance Act, the Act by which fathers are ordered to pay maintenance for their children. You have a system in the Courts where, if a man does not pay maintenance for his children as ordered by the Court and the money accumulates and the Clerk sends out a Committal Order. The man is grabbed at the house and taken to Glendairy Prison and he is given 14 days for \$1,000 or something in maintenance that should go to the child. Now if you put that man in jail according to law that child loses that money, because he cannot pay maintenance when the father is not working. He is incarcerated.

12.05 p.m.

I cannot see in this day and age how you are going to imprison a father for not paying maintenance for his child, because the child is bound to starve. Alternatively the mother has to go to the Welfare Department for money, because the father is in jail. But this is the next big stigma when the child starts to go to school. Do not let us forget this is still Barbados where rumours and gossip run far, so if the child happens to make one of the secondary schools and somebody says: "Your father was in jail", and it goes home and asks the mother: "Why did my daddy go to jail?" The only thing she can say is: "He went to jail because he didn't pay maintenance for you", but her father is a jail bird. It is as simple as that. Similarly, coming back to the same debts, if there is a judgment or something against some person and the debts are not paid, the debtor is sent to prison. In my view these are the things that should be removed from the Statute Book. You should not imprison a man for debt, for maintenance of his children, *et cetera*.

What follows from here, Mr. President, is the conviction part. For a very long time in the United Kingdom you had a system that offences are written off after a certain time. We have talked about it for a very, very long time but nothing has been done. Sometimes a man comes before the court and the police would say he has an antecedent. They put up a card which shows the last conviction probably when he was a juvenile, but it is still on that card and despite what you tell me I am sure that has some influence on the presiding officer, despite the fact it might be 16, 18 or 20 years ago. Those are the things that need to be rationalised, that need to be dealt with, so that we reduce the number of persons who are sent to prison.

This is still Barbados, a very social conscious country, and everybody knows everybody's business. When you come out of Glendairy, it is very difficult to get a job. When I went to MTW a few years ago as a Minister, a chap came to me asking for a job. I asked him when last did he work and he did not answer. I told him if he wanted a job I had to know something about him. He said: 'Sir, I was in prison.' I called Mr. Cedric Archer, who was not then the Chief Technical Officer, and asked him if there was anyway we could help persons like those. He said there was a programme where they used to take those sorts of persons and put them to work in MTW shifts. I suggested that we increase that programme, because when a man comes out of prison Bajans are always going to feel that he will commit some other offence. They do not look at the reason for a prison, a prison is a rehabilitative institution. They do not say he might have been rehabilitated, he has paid his debt to society, give him a chance to start again; they hold him down as a jail bird, a prisoner. We have to look at that. Once you are incarcerated, provided we look at all the other things I talked about, we have to look at training in prison circumstances.

I keep saying that we are now a tourist resort. I go through Broad Street at least two or three times a week and I still see numerous souvenirs coming in from Taiwan, Hong Kong and those places. I am still at a loss as to why we cannot increase the teaching aspect in the prison to include more persons who can teach craft work. If a person is not intelligent enough to have passed his 'O' Levels, GCE's, *et cetera*, he can still use his hands and ability to produce craft.

I have been worried about something for a long time. Last week I saw in the newspaper that a report on the University of the West Indies shows the number of persons who have been resitting exams in that institution. I am probably bordering on the next matter, but I would like to see the dropout figures for secondary schools in Barbados, because they will have to be high. You go into the courts

any day and you will see benches lined with people no more than 22 or 23 years old. When they come before the court and the Magistrate asks; 'Where did you go to school?' The answer is Coleridge-Parry, Combermere, The Lodge School, Harrison College, from every school in this country there is great representation among the people out there who come before the courts every day. They are there for drugs and for all kinds of things. I figure something is wrong. We should know the dropout ratio, we should not be forcing people into secondary school, throwing them out, throwing them on the streets where they will end up before the courts. We have to look at this carefully. If they are in there, do not send them out as they went in.

I visited the prison one day and it was strange to see they kept me inside the green gate but behind the wrought iron gate, while Senator Symmonds came in and went right through. I said: 'I was waiting here longer than she was' and I was told she was going in to teach, so I know Senator Symmonds is a regular visitor to that institution, not having been committed there but for doing a proper social service. When people are in prison we should make sure that everyone of them is given an opportunity to learn some kind of skill. I know a lot of them do gardening, but as I say, when they come out how many people are going to trust them? We have to give them a skill, some craft they can do on their own and sell to the stores or other institutions.

Mr. President, with that contribution I have no problems whatsoever in supporting the amendments to this Bill.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I have to get involved in this debate if only because I am a prisoner of my conscience. My conscience will not allow me to hear such blatant disregard for the record, history and facts to go unchallenged, as enunciated by Senator Thompson.

Sir, when one hears Senator Thompson launching into histrionics about this Bill being merely window dressing, and having chastised the Government for not in 18 months fulfilling its numerous promises as laid out in its Manifesto, one would have thought that she would also have found some time to speak by implication on what one would have considered her party's illustrious record in this regard. We noticed that she was very strangely and noticeably silent on this matter. But who can blame her? Not when off the top of one's head any man on Broad Street now can record such outstanding issues and events under their system and under their tutelage and under their management of the prisons, as the case of that non-English-speaking South American prisoner who escaped quite easily out of the prisons and nobody knows how he did it. The man could not even pronounce 'Barbados' but it seems he was able

to get out of Barbados undetected; when one could talk about the famous Matthieson; there is also one Errol Niles and even Mike Simmons. These are some of the outstanding examples of their success and their unblemished record of success in managing the penal system and the justice system in Barbados. I understand why she would be silent on that.

Sir, page 35 of our Manifesto in dealing with the penal system says:

"The existing penal system is too narrow in its scope and results in too many of our young persons being imprisoned. We will provide a larger number of sentencing options and more diverse punishments. We will focus on punishment within the community."

12.15 p.m.

Sir, in setting out the details of what we would do in this regard, we promised among other things a young offenders' institution for persons between the ages of 17 and 24, provided they have not been convicted of murder, rape or armed robbery or other heinous crimes. Only last week, Sir, if the Senator had been as attuned with what is happening in this area as she seeks to pontificate on, she would have been aware that only last week the Attorney General visited a number of sites around Barbados with the objective of identifying a site for a location for what is called an intermediate home for youthful offenders, for those persons whom we realise are a very vulnerable group, between the ages of 17 and 25, the ones who are doing most of the killing and the crime. A location has been identified and very shortly an official announcement will be made so that we can go about acquiring it to bring that promise to fruition.

We realise, Sir, that the prison population of Glendairy is highly contaminated when one takes into account that there is a hodge-podge of the long-term, short-term, those prisoners on remand and first offenders which creates a very unhealthy situation for those persons whom we would seek to rehabilitate. In addition, it would be recalled that following the upsurge in escapes from Glendairy Prison, especially in the case of Bradshaw and Oliver, there was a Commission of Enquiry set up under a Mr. Smith, called the Smith Commission of Enquiry into Escapes from Glendairy Prison which made a number of recommendations. One of these recommendations has to do with the quality of the staff at Glendairy.

Our manifesto on page 35 also deals with Glendairy and says among other things that we will provide better training for staff.

As a result of those recommendations, it is now mandatory that staff, people who are being recruited as

prison officers, have to have 3 basic 'O' levels to enter into the Service. If they don't have that, they have to take a qualifying exam. People are no longer being recruited because they look big and strong and tough and think they might be able to manhandle prisoners in some antediluvian manner.

Apart from that, Sir, we also talk about providing better training for staff and last year, I think it was in July, again the Attorney General with the assistance of the United Nations in Geneva had to arrange a regional workshop on the training of prison officers. Out of this workshop came a situation where each country in the region that participated in this workshop was presented with a manual for the training of its prison officers. That manual evolved out of the work and the discussions and the exercise that took place at that regional workshop. Barbados, I am happy to say, has since then been following very carefully the contents of that manual as regards training.

Prior to this Administration, people used to be recruited to be prison officers and thrown into the job without one iota of training. Now, for the first time this year, there were some 17 new recruits taken on and they went through a seven-week period of both intensive and extensive training that helped to equip them for being the model prison officers that we think Barbados needs. They were not just taken off the street and thrown in willy-nilly and told to go and manage these prisoners; but they were being given the tools to do so.

Apart from that, Sir, the Government is busily working and developing a system of overseas training for prison officers and this is being put together and should very shortly begin to bear fruit both with the help of the Government's local training division and the Barbados High Commission in London working in close collaboration with the United Kingdom Home Office.

Therefore, to talk about what is being done in this Act, because you cannot really separate this Act from all the other attendant activities that are taking place as regards Glendairy Prison in particular and the whole question of the penal system in general. One can only assume that the Senator did not read the Bill, because the Bill in all its substance is really about the management of the prison. It is about trying to take positive steps to give the prison the type of management, the modern, scientific and trained management that we know has sadly been lacking in the prison for a long time. It is a well known fact on the street and in other circles that the senior management of the prison has not always been of the quality that it should have been in this day and age. This is all part of the process. Apart from the recruitment and the improved

levels of recruitment and training being given to persons coming on staff, this Board has to be seen as part of the attempt to bring proper and enlightened management to Glendairy Prison.

Sir, the Board will be broad-based. If the Senator would have turned to page 2 of the Bill, she would have seen it is not a window dressing Board that will manage it but page 2 of the Bill at clause 8(a) sets out very clearly some of the activities of the Board. The Board will among other things advise the Minister. The Minister will not hold himself up as being know-all and be-all and end-all of prison management, but the Board, drawn as I said from a wide spectrum of Barbadian society, will advise the Minister on matters such as:

- (a) the welfare of prisoners, including their conduct, standards of discipline and safety;
- (b) the conditions of work of the Superintendent and prison officers;
- (c) the conduct and standards of discipline of the Superintendent and prison officers; and
- (d) any other matter on which the Minister seeks the Board's advice.

The Board will also advise and work closely with the Superintendent to try to enhance the management of that office and the management of the prison in general.

It states in the Bill that the Board will advise:

- a) the management and supervision of prisons;
- b) the welfare, discipline and conduct of prison officers;
- c) the education, recreation, employment, discipline and welfare of prisoners; and
- d) any other matters referred to the Board by the Superintendent.

Sir, this is a broad-based Board as I said, and its scope is wide, taking into account a multifaceted approach to the whole question of the management of prisons. The Board will also deal with abuses that come to its knowledge so that the stories that one hears very often in the Press about abuses at the prison could not in anyway be swept under the carpet with this Board. There will be a mechanism put in place to deal with these matters.

There will also be a mechanism, Sir, to deal with the question of prison officers and their promotion and their transfer and their whole conditions of service to deal with

their complaints because prison officers, not only the prisoners, have gripes and complaints. We know too that the prison officers themselves have their share of grievances and their share of matters that need to be addressed.

Therefore, Sir, this is but one of many steps along the way to the achievement of what we have set out in our Manifesto. Again, I must point out to Senator Thompson and her colleague that she must not judge us in our approach to fulfilling the pledge and the manifesto by her party's historic renunciation of its manifesto as not being a social contract. Please do not judge us by your standards. We have always set higher standards and this Bill is one other step in fulfilling those standards.

I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

COMMITTEE

*On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN in the Chair.
12.25 p.m.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is in committee.

Clauses 1 - 14 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to HIS HONOUR the PRESIDENT the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ORDER NO. 1 - RESOLUTION WELCOMING THE WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION REFORM IN BARBADOS

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, this item seeks the Senate's approval on the Resolution welcoming the White Paper on Education Reform in Barbados and its endorsement for the proposals set out therein. I would, at this point with your leave, Sir, invite the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Senator Forde, to move the first speech in this debate.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I wish to support the policies and programmes outlined in the White Paper on education reform. I also wish to elaborate on a number of issues highlighted in the document.

Sir, education in any country should be geared toward nation building, that is, preparing its citizens with a wealth of knowledge, spiritually, economically and culturally. It has been traditional for Barbadians to have a very strong educational base for its population. A large percentage of our population has been facilitated by the high standard of education in our system. They have been given opportunities to climb the social ladder as well as return to share of their knowledge and skills with other Barbadians later.

On the other hand, Sir, there are numerous Barbadians who have been unable to take the best advantage of our educational system for one reason or another. I would mention some reasons why a number of our Barbadians do not capitalize on the educational facilities. Some, because of poverty, cannot get to school. They cannot get uniforms. They cannot get bus fares. Others cannot because of traumatic experiences they might have had in their childhood, whether it be divorce, death, separation, abuse (physical or emotional) or otherwise.

Unfortunately, Sir, over the last 10 to 15 years some very disturbing factors have surfaced. There is a trend where a number of our youth are flouting the law. Some of them show little or no respect for authority. They develop poor working attitudes toward their work. They display signs of illiteracy, that means they cannot read and write. If they can, very little. Some show no sense of responsibility towards their actions or fellowmen in their environment as a whole. Some become deviant and disruptive with their anti-social behaviour and some dabble in drugs and in crime.

12.35 p.m.

Mr. President, given these deficiencies mentioned, the system must now focus its emphases on preparing our students to think critically, to analyze, to explore, to be creative, to be active in their various activities, to know how to question, to know how to make inferences and to learn how to use their initiative.

Sir, the time has come for all Barbadians to participate in the higher value based aspects of knowledge and skill intensive industry. These acquisitions are necessary for our people to meet the various challenges in the labour market. Barbadians must be afforded, through the system, to keep pace with economic and technological changes in order to compete and survive in the global market.

Mr. President, it is a policy of this Government to practise and promote participatory democracy. It is our philosophy to solicit the opinions of Barbadians of all walks of life, to listen to their requests and, whenever possible, accommodate their needs.

The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture with the support of its competent staff, embarked upon some sessions which we call town hall meetings, where they went through the length and breadth of Barbados to discuss the various problems, concerns and changes. That means that teachers, educators, other employees in the schools like the ancillary staff and other interested Barbadians, got an opportunity to air their thoughts and their views and these have been articulated clearly. The Ministry of Education has compiled them in this very important document with much clarity.

Mr. President, I wish to pay attention at this moment to pages 2 and 3 of the White Paper – it is already a document of this Chamber – and to make mention of 10 very important objectives that are listed in this document. We trust that these objectives would be achieved and we know that they will redound to the benefit of all Barbadians. The 11 objectives are:

- (1) Preparing our citizens for the responsibility of nation-building;
- (2) revaluing the role of education in the sphere of national development;
- (3) reinforcing the concept that learning is a continuous, life-long process;
- (4) developing a work force that is equipped to adapt to a rapidly-changing environment, and that is readily retrainable;
- (5) ensuring equity in the delivery of education and equality of opportunity in the access to education;
- (6) enabling students to develop enquiring and creative minds;
- (7) helping our population develop positive attitudes, values and beliefs to enhance the individual and his/her position in the family, community and nation;
- (8) revaluing the role of teachers;
- (9) sensitizing teachers to the importance of catering to the individual needs of students;
- (10) fostering a greater partnership between the school, the home and the community; and

- (11) strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture to plan, manage and evaluate the education system more effectively.

Mr. President, I hope that we will be able to achieve these objectives during our term of office.

I share the sentiments expressed by many that individuals should be self-reliant, community minded, that they should develop wholesome attitudes, they should be law-abiding and they should be assets to the society. They should also possess other qualities in order for them to become good citizens who will, in turn, plough back into the society what they have achieved through this educational system. We expect that when people are able to achieve, through the system, they will come back like Senator Symmonds did. She went to Glendairy and used her skills with the prisoners and helped them to develop. We expect that any really well-educated individual, any rounded individuals would plough back some of what they learnt, some of what they have achieved into Barbados to help the youth and others in this society.

I also share the view, Sir, and I support the theory, that we must move away from the clutches of dependency and welfarism that were reinforced by the manacles of slavery. We must prepare our people educationally so as to help them to receive that self-reliance that is mentioned. Too many people sit back and wait for the Government to give me, for the church to give me or for whatever organization to give me. It reminds me of a funeral I attended recently where the priest said everybody was saying, "Give me, give me, give me." But nobody was saying "Take this."

I think that we need to look towards self-reliance, helping ourselves at least to a particular stage, even if we get a little surge forward from some other agency, at least that attitude must be within. The ability must be there to want to assist oneself.

I agree that the aid from donor countries has assisted us ably over the years, but we will not, however, be bound to some of what they would want to request. I remember in the early 1990s where the IMF and the World Bank, during the structural adjustment, introduced some really serious draconian measures. Things like increases in bus fare, water rates, house rents and payment of tuition fees were suggested. A document was signed regarding payment of tuition fees at the tertiary level. Massive lay-offs in the public and the private sectors, cuts in salaries like the 8%, services and benefits where, when you went to the polyclinic you could not get plaster to cover a sore. There was little or no medication in there, as a result of those draconian measures, Mr. President.

Such measures would take us back in history. We have come a long way, as Barbadians and I want to see all Barbadians surge forward together. We do not want to leave pockets of poverty where people have to come out and steal at night in order for them to survive. We want to see all Barbadians surge forward. That is why it says each one matters. Every individual in Barbados matters. Our emphasis is on the children but the teachers in the system, the education officers and all others that are connected with the educational system matter to us because, without their commitment, then we would not be able to get our job done successfully. We are not going to leave it to chance for anybody to run the system for us. If we are the Government, then we are to take the bull by the horns, as we have done in this education reform paper. We are going to make the suggestions because we think that every Barbadian child matters. We are going to look after their interest as best as we can.

I am impressed to learn of the numerous developments in the informatics and offshore sector and the benefits that Barbadians have accrued, as a result of the environment. I thank God that we have been able to remove ourselves from the clutches of the World Bank.

Mr. President, in the past, that is, in the 1950s and 1960s, the private secondary schools played a very outstanding role. There was limited space in the public secondary schools to accommodate a lot of our children. We know that a lot of males in our society got that opportunity because we had feeder schools particularly to the boys' schools. Remember Buxton School was a feeder school for St. Leonard's Boys' and, automatically, if that child did not pass what we call the Screening Test, then, that child still got an opportunity to get secondary education at the St. Leonard's Boys' School. It was a technical school which turned out very outstanding Barbadians.

Mr. President, successive Governments have viewed education as a very basic factor in the development of our people and therefore, they have built schools to accommodate the large numbers of children so that every child can get an opportunity.

The schools have also been equipped with materials and other forms of equipment to look after their needs. It says that we have reached the stage, in association with the private secondary schools, to afford every Barbadian child of secondary school age an opportunity to pursue their secondary education.

Now that we have reached the stage of quantity education, we have placed our emphasis on quality education. I will mention our theme again and by now, Honourable Senators would know and nearly every child

in the schools of Barbados knows that our theme is "Each one matters, quality education for all." Quality education can be determined by the output of the schools with the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture being the facilitator and regulator. Our aim is to ensure that at the end of the primary school child's life that child has developed competency in reading and writing, that it can reason, it can speak and express itself with clarity. That it learns in some way how to resolve some of the conflict it experiences and that it is able to get involved in a number of activities, art, music, drama and so on and develop its self-esteem. The child sees himself or herself as an individual who can make a contribution without fear of any comments anyone would make.

12.45 p.m.

The inclusion of flexible transfer and partial zoning in the White Paper was done for historical recognition. These two areas are identified in our Manifesto and we felt that we needed to fulfil them. We, Sir, will continue to perform. We will put forward the pledge and we will try to achieve that goal. We believe in promising and we believe in performing to fulfil the promise that we have made to the Barbadian public.

Mr. President, the flexible transfer and the partial zoning would have been amended in this Honourable Senate in December 1995, as all of us know. We participated in the debate. Sir, it says in flexible transfer that the child will write the Barbados Secondary Schools Examination when he is ready, that is, between the ages of 8+ and 12+, so we no longer call it the 11+.

In order for the child to move forward at 8+, however, he has to be able to cover that syllabus, that is, he has to master the skills and understand that syllabus for that particular year. Traditionally, Sir, in our primary schools our children have been promoted because of their ages and I have tried to put together a little scenario. Some children are ready, they develop certain skills early, they develop certain concepts, they are given assistance at home and at the nurseries and therefore some of them get the right foundation and they continue to fly. Others however get lost by the way. We are recommending, Sir, that students should be promoted from one class to another in the primary schools according to their mastery and understanding of skills. For example, little Phil and Jan at age 7 for class one may encounter numerous difficulties. They may be unable to count to 50 in the sequential order. They may not be able to add 2 and 3 and get 5. They may be unable to read "the cat is on the mat", they may be unable to state facts in any sensible order about a news item and things of that nature. We see it, Sir, as important that rather than being promoted to the class 2 where the syllabus is going to be a bit more difficult, more

challenging, we find it difficult for that child to have to go forward to class 2 not being able to master the various concepts of skills and therefore we are suggesting that the children remain, with the permission of the parents, and repeat that year but be given enrichment programmes so that they would be able to get objects that they can manipulate, perhaps a computer. Individual attention would be paid to them and their needs in order for them to develop those skills that need upgrading.

Mr. President, it does not mean that Mary and Jane who may be grasping the concepts and sharing a special urge to want to continue to go forward should remain. Mary and Jane can go ahead and continue to be given meaningful activities because I find that a lot of us assume that we did rote learning in school, we learnt all the memory verses, we learnt all the tables and we did everything by rote but the child that we have in front of us nowadays, Sir, is in dire need of some kind of activity, some kind of manipulative activity in order to be able to bring out that particular concept. So we would expect that the ones who are surging forward would be doing it in a meaningful way so that later they can transfer that knowledge into a new situation. There is no point in acquiring the knowledge and keeping it in any isolated position. The child must be given an opportunity to show that when I add these two bananas and the other three I get five and when they go home and they are counting and so on they can count to five. Five marbles, five of whatever. So we are of the view that if children are given enrichment and meaningful activities then they will acquire the necessary skills and concepts that will help them to get a better understanding and they can continue to surge forward.

Mr. President, we are of the view as well that the child at 11 years who would normally have written what we had called the 11+, if that child is lacking in certain skills that child would be given the opportunity to remain in the primary school in an enrichment programme to be able to acquire those skills that are lacking. That also calls, Sir, for individual attention and I always say that no two individuals are alike. They are going to have different personalities, different things will bother different people, different colours will affect different people. There are numerous things. The individuality is what we are placing emphasis on.

As I am aware, Sir, it looks to me as though there will be about 500 children who will remain behind, if the parents volunteer to have them stay behind. It means that those 500 children divided up among the 79 schools in Barbados, each school would only have about 7 or 8 children and some schools are so small I am sure the number will not be so large.

We are of the view, Sir, that if these children remain behind in the second year they will be able to acquire those skills and would be better able to settle in the secondary schools. They would not be top notches but they would still be able to acquire enough skills to be able to express themselves, to be able to add, to be able to count, to be able to do a number of things that would be expected. They would be functionally literate.

Mr. President, we have, and this has already been made a document of the House, prepared brochures for individual parents of children who are writing the Barbados Secondary Schools Examination and these have been delivered already to the parents, the teachers of class 4 and the guardians. The Ministry has also started to distribute copies to other parents because we feel that other individuals whose children are 9 years old should also get a copy in case those children have been scoring consistently in the 90% or more range so that if they are interested in putting up their children for the examination, with the support of the principal and the class teacher, then so be it. So this process is already on stream and our examination is scheduled for May 22, 1996, that is a Wednesday.

Now, Mr. President, it is not normal traditionally for the examination to be held on a Wednesday, usually it is a Friday but with some of the changes that we have started to look at it says the children will write the exam on Wednesday, May 22nd. There are some changes in the English Paper because numerous educators have always been questioning why more than 3/4 of that paper has to be multiple choice. So we have started to put in some free response questions and therefore that is the section 2 of the English Paper that will be a little longer because we have to give the children an opportunity to write the whole response as to the reason why the cat sat on the mat or why the tree fell on the house, whatever the question may be. In order for the child to be able to express itself carefully it would need a little more time and therefore the correction of those papers would also need extra time so on the 23rd of May, the day after the examination, a Thursday, the officers in the Ministry and the teachers would be working at the standardisation packs. On the Friday they will meet together in one central location in order to be able to correct the various scripts that the children would have been working on so those other 2 days added to the 22nd of May would be all delegated to working to get the examination results organised.
12.55 p.m.

Mr. President, partial zoning has also been a part of our commitment and we are all aware of the numerous problems that develop. Sometimes some of us are not too interested because our children are not in the system and therefore it is not our concern, as mentioned by Senator

Thompson. I feel that we should all be community minded and look after our children in the neighbourhood and in the community as a whole. Therefore, we know of poor attendance by the students because of the long distances that they have to travel and the truancy that comes about as a result of leaving home and nobody knowing them in the new environment of the school. Punctuality, the inability to attend the extra-curricula activities, poor performance in the school because they get to school tired and they cannot perform effectively and so on and a number of other things.

Sir, we have divided the island into 3 zones – zones 1, 2 and 3 and the students who are going to write that examination will be given an opportunity for two open choices anywhere in the island and then to select 7 schools from that zone in which the child lives. The brochure clearly outlines the zones and the diagrams in the White Paper in case the Honourable Senators want to have an idea as to what it entails. There are 23 secondary schools, Mr. President, from which individuals can make their choices and we had started to place a lot of emphasis on it in asking that 30% of the students be drafted from the school in the zone in which they live. The principals of the secondary schools have been asking us to make a slight adjustment. Nothing is cast in concrete. If we accept their recommendations this year, we will try to accommodate them to take in the children and to give them that opportunity. Of course, the 30% going in from the zone would mean that some teachers need to be a little more creative in order to be able to take care again of the needs of that child that might come in at a lower mark than what perhaps that school formerly drafted in so that that child does not get lost in the system.

Mr. President, the School Transportation Study has been put in place and the pros and the cons of the system have been recommended to the Ministry. In order that the parents and guardians may make informed decisions for the schools that they can choose, we have made it our business to invite firms to prepare videos that will run for like 2 minutes so that parents can visit the school and along with that special booklet they will get the profile of the school and they will be able to get some background information as to what the school has to offer in the area of excellence, perhaps in printing, cadets, industrial arts, computer education or whatever the area is and those 2-minute videos will be run so that the parents can get further education.

Some of the principals of the secondary schools have had their visits already and they have invited the primary schools in the catchment area, and when I say catchment area now, take for example Alexandra School. I would be referring to the Roland Edwards Primary School, St. Albans School and Gordon Greenidge School. They have

opened their doors for all the students of the class fours to visit the school's compound and have a firsthand knowledge of what the environs are like so that they too can make their choices to say: "Mommy, I like this particular school because there is a good netball team, steel orchestra", or whatever, going. The principals have already booked the dates. Some schools have already accepted the students and I understand from the information reaching me that a number of children have been happy to get that opportunity. In the past, it never happened. The children just went to school when the school opened. It was a whole new environment except for that small orientation when they went to pay for the textbooks. So this time around they have had an opportunity to visit the school to get that information in order that they can help them to make the informed decisions that are necessary.

Mr. President, we in the Ministry set up a Remedial Education Unit in October, 1994 because we felt that we should pay attention to our children's needs. Some of them are illiterate, some of them are semi-literate and nothing was being done. There are 6 teachers in the Unit under the leadership of an Education Officer, Mr. Donald Padmore, as well as two other officers, and those officers are doing an extremely wonderful job. They were given the opportunity to test children in the primary schools in classes 2, 3 and sometimes 4 during the last school year and the revelations are appalling. I know that time will not permit me, Sir, to really touch on a number of the deficiencies that were identified. However, profiles were prepared on those students and delivered to the respective primary schools with not only the children's strengths but their weaknesses as well and possible activities that the teachers can pursue with the children in order to upgrade their learning.

We have also set up in the primary schools, and this is already happening in the 59 schools, particular classrooms where teachers specialize in remedial education, some in mathematics and most of them in reading. From the reports that I received last week Thursday, those programmes are going well and the children are getting individual attention, some for the first time, and they are extremely happy about it. The computers that were purchased for the programme have been delivered and I understand that the children would love to work on those computers all day long.

Mr. President, they are not just working on the computer but there are various games that help them to add, subtract, divide and spell and so on. It is not that they will sit there and play all day long. But, of course, the children have their computers in their homes as well. They have their various listening devices that they use and we must be more creative in our approach. The chalk and talk cannot work alone. That is necessary still but we need to

give them other activities to get involved so that we can motivate them and create an interest.

Mr. President, the Unit has also tested a large percentage of those approximately 1050 children who wrote the examination in May 1995. Those profiles have also been delivered to the secondary schools so that those teachers at secondary level will get a better idea as to what stage those students have actually reached from the primary level. Sir, that has never happened before either. In the past we took children straight from primary level and sent them into secondary level with only the marks from that examination. That was all that the teachers had to go on. This time around the ones who scored under 30% we are gradually going to accommodate the needs of all, so that reports or profiles on every child who is transferred from primary to secondary will be delivered to the school so that the teachers will get to know who the children are, not because they want to spread news about them but because they want to know them as individuals and to look after their individual needs.

Mr. President, the profiles have been delivered at the public secondary schools as well as the private secondary schools and the principals of the schools met us in the Ministry and gave us their assurances. The officers from the Remedial Education Unit have been visiting the schools on a weekly basis and they have reported that some schools are doing exceptionally well because they have included in their programme special classes in the First Form where teachers who have their masters and their various degrees in Remedial Reading and Mathematics are working specifically with those children. So that they do not see a different teacher every 45 minutes. Some teachers stay with them 2 and 3 hours so that there is continuity when the mathematics is done and it is integrated with the language arts, social studies, health science and so on, so that their learning will continue to be meaningful.

If you will allow me, Sir, I can make mention of at least two schools in particular, the Grantley Adams Memorial School and the St. George Secondary School. Those two schools are working in close association with each other. They are sharing the information. The teachers have prepared reports on every child so far to say where the child has gone from the profile and where it is up until today. The St. George Secondary School has a printing system and they are sharing the various teaching aids with each other. I think that is extremely important that we twin our schools together so that there is a sharing of the skills. I think that in the rural area we are all resourceful.

Mr. President, Sir, the diagnostic testing will continue because it is our view that every child in the primary school should be tested at age 7 to find out its strengths and its weaknesses and to implement a programme that will look after its individual needs. The testing will be done

a standardised fashion, because you will agree, Sir, that if I write a test and Senator Thompson writes a test, it may be the same subject area, but depending on the questions that are placed in the test, or the responses that are needed, at all times we do not get the same results. What I might set and mark 90% for, Senator Thompson might set that test and mark perhaps 70% or 50%, depending on the responses that are given. Therefore, we are of the view that it should be a standardised assessment at seven years to find out where the children are, how we can help them to improve and then again at nine years old to find out what stages they are at and to get them into those enrichment programmes to help them to be better able to read, write and express themselves.

1.05 p.m.

Mr. President, we have also started in six of our secondary schools to deal with problems that our children experience, certain deficiencies. A lot of our children have problems hearing, numerous of our children have problems with their sight, a number of them have speech problems, not to mention other traumatic experiences they might have had. They might have experienced a serious killing or accident that will set them back in some way and inhibit them. They have psychological problems, emotional problems. We have embarked upon that testing where Mr. Stabler and his team have already completed six of our primary schools. Mr. President, between 6% to 8% of those children are either deaf, half deaf or have some form of ear infection that is inhibiting them from hearing well in the classroom. We know of situations where it has not been a medical person doing it, but some teachers have been able to point to children who seem to have visual problems and have been able to get those children checked, and sometimes you find the child is totally blind in one eye. Mr. Stabler and his team have been doing a very important job and we have now started the follow-up where we are soliciting the assistance of the principals, teachers and parents to get that follow up activity going where, if that child is deaf in one ear at least the child will be properly tested and have some kind of hearing aid. The child who cannot hear well cannot speak well, therefore the learning is inhibited, and we need to look seriously at our children. We have already identified another six schools for the children to be tested and we want to solicit the assistance of all Barbadians.

We have joined together with the Ministry of Health where there are nurses who have also come into the programme and there are ten teachers who have been trained in doing the tests, so that we will be able to deal with larger numbers and we will not be able to lose a child that might slip through from us now in this examination and go into secondary school where the problem will be amplified.

Mr. President, to facilitate the psychological needs of the children, all of us are aware that there is only one psychologist – who is very overworked, but doing a fantastic job – in the Ministry of Education. We have put forward our plans in this year's Estimates, and we trust that they will be approved, for us to get some assistance from two other psychologists in the Unit so that they can attend to the various needs of our children.

Before I forget, Sir, those secondary schools that have taken in the children who have scored under 30% – have tailored the curriculum to look after the needs of those children, so emphasis is being placed on Mathematics and English in particular, where we expect that they will get at least ten periods per week in Mathematics and English each, and then Art, Music, Drama, all the other things that will help them to develop that self-esteem, all the other things they can do that will help them to learn how to resolve conflict, in their health exercise, in religious education, as well as all the other things that would help them to know how to deal with the conflict they are unable to cope with at this time. We expect them to be doing physical education, industrial arts, and so on.

Mr. President, another Manifesto pledge of ours is for our citizens to assimilate our culture and that of other countries. Therefore, at page 19 in our Manifesto it says:

"We will standardise nursery and primary education and teach foreign languages at an early age. We aim to make every Barbadian conversant in at least one language other than English to take advantage of the opportunities offered by a service economy."

Already this Manifesto is a document of the House. Mr. President, we aim to make every Barbadian conversant in at least one language. We recognise that there has been a decline in the statistics from the CXC that indicate that fewer children are taking foreign languages. We are of the views that the appetites of our young children should be whetted, that they should get experiences to know about other people and their culture, they should get an opportunity to become bilingual. We know that the tourism market is going to be needing them in large numbers as time goes on and as long as we in the Barbados Labour Party continue to look after the needs of Barbadians, generate employment, make people comfortable and make this country one that tourists will want to come to, because we will hope that over the years there will be a tremendous decrease in crime.

There have been meetings with the Governments of Costa Rica and Mexico. They have been approached to give us technical assistance where there can be an exchange programme, that teachers from Barbados can

go to Costa Rica and teach English to their children, so they too will be developing a second language, they will be learning about our culture, they will learn what calypso is, what steel pan is, what a monkey is, and whatever. We will expect our teachers to carry the culture with them and share it with the Costa Ricans and the Mexicans, and the Costa Ricans and the Mexicans in turn will come to Barbados in an exchange programme and share their cultures with us. We expect that the conversational lessons will not be rigid ones, but that the teachers will be able to talk to the children for 15 or 20 minutes perhaps twice a week. We know that we see our little children watching the TV and when it comes to Sesame Street they pick up the Spanish words, and our children are counting as a result of that small amount of exposure on the TV. I am sure that with this opportunity it will go further and at least by the time they reach secondary stage that interest will start to be developed so that they too will want to continue to pursue the language.

Mr. President, I want to touch teacher empowerment. Teachers and educators are significant to any notion of educational reform, since they are the key facilitators in the delivery of education. In the past teachers were perceived as the stalwarts in the field of education, they were seen as the nation builders, they were the role models. As a result of numerous changes in our society the breakdown in communication between the home, the community, the church and the school, it is sad, Sir, a lot of our teachers have undergone serious criticism. Often on the call-in programmes we hear the serious comments that are made by callers about teachers, most of them at times untrue, and like any other profession you are going to find a 2% or 3% that will not be coping or doing the acceptable thing to the standard it should be done at.

You find it in any profession in Barbados or anywhere in the world and therefore we, as teachers – I say "we" because I still teach Sunday School and that is where a great influence is – need to be conscious that the eyes are on us in everything that we do. We will make our little jokes and pull our little pranks but, at the same time, when the day is finished, they must see us as doing things in love or we were socialising or whatever and we must not in anyway convey any negative messages to the children.
1.15 p.m.

Therefore, teachers have now got to do the various things that will help to revalue them and the status that they had before. There must be some kind of upgrading. I am not sure how to express it, but something should be done that people in Barbados and students in particular continue to show that love and respect for our teachers like we did for our teachers of the past who molded and shaped us and our characters and our lives.

Mr. President, we, in the Ministry, must do everything in our power to ensure that the role played by the teachers in our society is restored. There is a comment on page 34, paragraph 4, in the White Paper, that Honourable Members can get an opportunity and read.

Mr. President, I want to turn my attention to Erdiston College and teacher training and re-training. Over the last 4 decades or so, Erdiston College has made a very significant role in the training of Barbadians and of hundreds of Caribbean persons too, I must confess. While on my stint there, I met many Caribbean people who are still lauding the praises of the quality of education that was delivered to them at that noble institution. As a result of the draconian measures that were introduced by the last Administration, it is hurtful that Erdiston College appeared to have a very dim future. I am pleased, Sir, and I thank God that the noble institution is today very actively involved in workshops, seminars and re-training programmes for teachers in this Barbados.

Erdiston will undertake the responsibility of restarting the full 2-year programme in September of 1997. We have many teachers out there who are starving for that training and we have decided with the principal of Erdiston College to let the credits that would come from the various workshops and seminars that those teachers are involved in go forward to that 2-year programme because there is no need if they have done specific areas to be repeating it. Once they have done it and they deserve the credits of those modular programmes they are involved in then that goes towards their 2-year programme final grade.

Mr. President, the College has undertaken the responsibility in this last year to oversee the tutoring of the Certificate of Educational Management and Administration as well as the Diploma in Education which was formerly run by the University of the West Indies. I was privileged to attend the graduation a few Saturdays ago and was extremely pleased with the high quality of the standards that were expressed that those teachers had developed. I was even more impressed when I heard a student of the year deliver her valedictory speech. I was extremely pleased to be identified with the teacher, with that kind of ability, that Miss Magnel Mason possessed when she expressed herself about the quality education she received and the input that she can now further make into the system and our schools in Barbados.

Mr. President, it is also the plan of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture to introduce a Bachelor in Education programme at Erdiston in September 1996. Sir, there is a growing demand for attendance at university and we all know of the rising costs of tertiary education and the concomitant dwindling of the public funds that has posed problems for our people. We are

aware that Government, both in developed and developing countries, experience similar problems to ours. These concerns have caused them to examine alternate sources and methods for financing education.

The immediate past administration has set systems in place during 1993 with the IBRD Human Resources Development Loan and committed itself to the charging of fees of at least 10 per cent of economic costs at the tertiary institutions, namely the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Barbados Community College, Erdiston College and the University of the West Indies. To this end, Sir, an *Aide Memoire* was signed on May 14, 1993 by the Honourable Senator L. V. H. Lewis in Washington D.C. committing the Government of Barbados to the introduction of a cost recovery programme at the post-secondary level, meaning the same institutions, the University of the West Indies, the Community College, SJPP and Erdiston.

This present Administration set up a committee to investigate the peoples' feelings towards the tuition fees because this Administration had agreed that no fees would be charged since early last year at Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic or the Erdiston College; but we felt that we needed to pull a committee in to get the public's feelings as we always consult with them on the matter of payment at university level. I am happy to be associated with this Government and I have absolutely no reason to grumble because Barbadians are having a better life as a result of the performance of this Government in these few months.

Therefore, the Committee, in its recommendations, stated that Barbadian students should pay at least 50 per cent of the fees and that 50 per cent would total about \$3 million. This Government is committed to all Barbadians and we feel that everybody matters, not only the children in the schools but the students at tertiary level and the teachers and all the other educators and stakeholders in the system. Therefore it has been agreed that tuition fees will not be a burden to Barbadians, the poor, that has been often mentioned by the other Administration, and the outcasts, and the marginalised. As long as they enter the University, they can study for free and the Barbados Government will continue to pay those fees.

Teacher appraisal. Teacher evaluation has to be regarded as an integral part of the school curriculum. It is considered important in promoting the professional development of the teacher and, most important of all, an undertaking in a professional and systematic manner can have great impact on the students' performance and behaviour. A teacher appraisal committee was formed in 1989 and it was reconstituted in 1994 to review and advance the findings and recommendations of the former. A draft form on teacher appraisal was delivered and is

being reviewed with the hope that the committee will agree upon aspects of the proposal so as to report to the Government and to the Ministry of Education for implementation in 1996-97 school year.

Mr. President, we will not proceed on this matter – the whole issue of teacher appraisal is a very sensitive one – without the response from the committee in the same way that we had the patience to wait on the outcome of the committee set up to examine whether they should pay the university fees. We will communicate with the committee that is set up on teacher appraisal to solicit their findings. Then we can come in agreement when we meet with the unions and the various stakeholders in education to find out how we can meet some mid-way if those recommendations are not as satisfying as we would want.

We need to communicate. We need to have dialogue on the whole process before we go forward. We do not believe that we should go and put any heavy hand in it and stop the participatory flow from functioning.
1.25 p.m.

Sir, when this is approved, the new teacher appraisal system will replace the annual report forms that were, to me, extremely subjective, if you could call it that. I have worked with them for 25 years so I know. Someone had to report on me. Thank God, I tried to perform to the best of my ability. But there are areas there that teachers always question. When adverse comments were written on you, you got an opportunity to read them, but then unless you tried to pursue them there was this long trail you had to take before you could even get a hearing. Therefore, those reports are really outmoded and we need to get some proper system we can use to evaluate our teachers and make them happy in this respect.

I will just close for a moment, Mr. President, because I recognise the time. I just want to say that the benefits of this appraisal would be to increase its scope for personal achievement of the teacher, for better job satisfaction and lead to further career development.

Another area, Sir, is to improve working relationships with their colleagues. A third area is for the provision of balanced objective feedback on previous performance and guidance, support, reassurance and motivation for the future.

The fourth area would be provision of opportunities to express views about the school and how it is managed, so we want teachers to be a little bit open in their comments in an effort to be able to function even better in the environment they are in. We want them to get a bit more latitude to be able to function better in the environment.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, given the hour of the day, I propose that this sitting be suspended until 2.30 p.m. this afternoon. I note that the Honourable Member has not yet finished her presentation.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2.30 p.m. was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Senate accordingly.
1.30 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed.

MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have received the following communication from the Other Place. It reads as follows:-

"MESSAGE TO THE HONOURABLE THE SENATE FROM THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

The Honourable the House of Assembly invites the Honourable the Senate to nominate three Senators to serve on a Joint Select Committee on the Insurance Bill, 1996.

The Honourable the House of Assembly on the 20th day of February 1996 appointed the following to serve on the Joint Select Committee:-

Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, Q.C., Mr. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, His Honour R. D. Marshall, Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, Q.C., Hon. Sir Harold St. John, Q.C., Mr. D. J. H. Thompson."

It is dated February 21, 1996 and it is signed by the Speaker.

RESOLUTION WELCOMING THE WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION REFORM IN BARBADOS AND ENDORSING THE REFORMS AND PROPOSALS SET OUT IN THE PAPER (RESUMED)

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I should like to continue on teacher appraisal and to add that provision of a balanced feedback on previous performance, guidance and support, reassurance and motivation of the teachers are extremely important to the proposal we are trying to implement in the teacher appraisal system.

Of course we know that appraisal comprises two areas, summative and formative evaluation. The summative is concerned with more management and legal requirements and the final aspect of this would come at the year-end by a grade or whatever, while the formative seems to be more objective. Teachers tend to like that aspect of it from the point of view that it is continuous. It helps to develop a mutual relationship between the teacher and the evaluator. It focusses on the positive attributes of the teacher and it is aimed at improving the performance of the teacher.

A number of concerns too have been raised in that particular respect where some teachers see it as important for them to know who will do the evaluation. They have reservations about the appraisal. They are concerned about confidentiality, disharmony and frustration sweeps in. The list of those negative things goes on. In the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, we will continue to consult with the stakeholders and rely on their recommendations to assist us at arriving at a document that will be considered appropriate by all involved.

Mr. President, the senior and composite schools in this country were created in 1977 to absorb those children in the secondary system who would not have acquired as many marks to be able to be accommodated in the public secondary schools. Some of those children at that time were superannuated as a result of the 14-year olds that had to leave school at that time but because of the amendment to the Education Act many of them were given that opportunity, and I thought it was a noble action, to allow our children to continue their education way past 14. Many of those who came out of school at 14 were, for the most part, the under achievers in the system. The composite and senior schools were developed to accommodate that particular group of children.

In July 1995, there were five composite schools and one senior school, namely, the St. Giles Senior School. These schools provided an alternative education to accommodate the needs of those slow learners, or late developers, or whatever term we would want to use because we appreciate that no two individuals are alike and, therefore, no two sets of individuals will be able to develop the skills and abilities in any particular area at the same time. They would not be able to assimilate the information at the same time. Those five composite schools and that one senior school accommodated approximately 500 students at that time.

There were a number of problems, however that arose. First, people in the society called them clown colleges. The children were marginalised. They did not get the opportunity even though they were of secondary age to even participate in the end of school sports at the

Stadium with the secondary schools and at the primary level some of them like the St. Lawrence Composite School, the Holy Innocent's Composite, Good Shepherd Composite, and there was one other.
2.40 p.m.

Those children never got an opportunity to participate in the primary end of school sports even though they were attached to the same compound. They had great difficulty in finding a niche into which they could fit and they felt marginalized. They felt ostracized, as a result of the particular system.

Parents specially requested those schools, Sir, because they did not have to pay school fees because some of them could not afford the school fees of the secondary schools. Others preferred their children to go there because it would have been a good neighbourhood school or community school in which no bus fare had to be paid and no lunch money because those schools were catered to in the school feeding programme, let me call it that.

Mr. President, there were a number of other problems that plagued those children. The facilities were unsuitable. There were inadequate playing facilities. There was little or no space for even a garden bed so that they could get involved in agricultural science. The entire curriculum of the school did not fully cater to their needs. There is no single identifiable uniform. The children in the rural districts wore one colour at their composite school. The children in another school wore a different uniform and it was difficult for them to find their own in the school system.

Given these circumstances, Sir, we have given deep thought to what we should do with those children to pull them in and bring them on stream because we cater to the needs of all. Every one of them matters whether they are learning well or whether they are slow learners, or whether they are special children in our system.

Therefore, we came up with the idea of alternate secondary schools. In September, 1995, we saw the opening of the Alma Parris Memorial Secondary School which catered to the needs of those students who were presently in attendance at St. Andrew, Holy Innocents, and Good Shepherd Composite School. We have closed off the composite section of those schools and they are now at the Alma Parris Memorial School. That school has been named after a former educator, the late Alma Parris, who not only gave of her skills and talents in the area of education, generally, but she was an ardent cub scout leader.

Those students are very happily settled in St. Peter. All reports from the Principal indicate that it is a very good move, that the children have settled in well because now,

they have their own uniform, they can wear their ties and they are easily identifiable. The Principal and her staff are making contact with the St. Lucy Secondary and other schools in the north and giving the children that opportunity to be able to fit in so that they too can be recognized and feel like secondary school children. They are going to have their own sports.

In the special curriculum that has been designed for them, they will be doing the basics because a lot of them are lacking in reading skills. One of the members of the Remedial Education Unit, Mr. Koeiman is specially assigned to the school to test those children in reading to ensure that the correct kinds of programmes are put in place to look after their needs. They are going to have their own Textbook Loan Scheme. But, of course, their books will not be at the same level as those in the regular secondary schools because there is no point in children having particular needs and we are trying to give them other accommodation when they cannot cope at the level which they are actually at.

In the curriculum, as well, they have been exposed to fishing and boat building. Some of them are assigned to the various agricultural stations in the north. Some are at Bullens. Some are at the Soil Conservation. Some of them are involved in small engine repair. The principal has put in place a system where they can learn to operate the tractor and do a little driving on the compound. They are being given a hard court so that they can get involved in athletic activities. There is an agricultural plot in the area. They have been given a special block where they can get involved in the industrial arts. Those children have settled in and all reports are that even their behaviour on the streets has improved, tremendously, this term compared to last term when they were still in the adjusting stages.

Mr. President, it is our plan to develop one of each kinds of those schools in each of the zones. We should end up with 3 of that kind where those students living in the central part of the island would also be catered to. We have asked for the Education Project Unit to assist us with the technocrats in the Ministry to find another location, somewhere in the south, so that we can start acting on it now so that by September 1996 the needs of the students at the St. Lawrence Composite School and the St. Giles Senior School would also be accommodated.

We are happy to be involved in looking after not only the academics like the ones in the Community College, Erdiston and the other tertiary institutions, as well as the other secondary schools, we are also looking after those who are perceived to be the slow learners.

But I am confident that, as long as those children get the opportunity to develop the skills and talents that

they possess and to be able to function at their maximum potential. They too would see themselves as citizens in this country and they too will want to make a contribution towards the development of Barbados.

The Government is committed to the continuation of sixth form education in the 4 schools and at the Barbados Community College. There is a concern, particularly among schools without sixth forms that the number of places available to students to pursue the 'A' Level studies is inadequate. It must be noted, however, Sir, that schools with Lower Sixth Form comprise about 250 students. In addition, at the Barbados Community College, it has a capacity to accommodate about 700 full-time students spanning both 'A' Levels and the Associate Degree programmes. That is the total intake for sixth forms. If you are looking at the secondary schools, as well as, the Community College, they can accommodate an average of roughly 950 students. That says that the students in that capacity can be accommodated at our institutions.

The Barbados Community College, as well, is involved in the Associate Degree Programme. This programme is growing in popularity. Its value will be further enhanced when that Committee comprising the technocrats in the university and the Barbados Community College come up with their final agreement on the articulation agreement to be finalized. We are looking at this so that the courses that when the students at the Community College level in the Associate Degree Programme cover those programmes that the credits can go towards their university education.

Mr. President, I want to turn our attention to the Barbados Hospitality Institute which is now located at Marine Gardens next to the old Marine House. Later this year, we expect that our students will be accommodated on the site. Areas such as housekeeping, plant and equipment maintenance, training in areas such as bell boys, front desk operators, porters and so on will be accommodated.

As you are aware, Sir, in the past, students entering that kind of programme were expected to enter the Community College with at least 2 CXC or 'O' Level certificates. In agreement with the Principal and staff of the college, we see the need for individuals working in the hospitality sector who may not have certificates to get training. Therefore, students can enter the Community College later this year at its opening in the Hospitality Institute. Those who do not have the certificates are eligible to attend. They are going to be working in modular programmes and getting the training over a 9-month period to make them better able to fit into the tourism sector, the hospitality sector so that they too can pay their contribution

to the development of the industry. There are also discussions on the way between the University of the West Indies and the Community College for a joint tourism degree.

National certification. We are aware that 6 out of 10 of our students leave our secondary schools without proper certification. We know that the CXCs capture roughly 25% of those students who obtain 3 general proficiency subjects or so while the Barbados Secondary School Certificate or what we call the School Leaving is written by those who are incapable of coping with even the basic CXC.

We are aware that the BSSC which is the Barbados Secondary School Certificate and the CXC Basic have lost their currency. In the past we used to hear that in a Government department individuals would have been accommodated for employment if they had passed the basic examination. I recognize that, nowadays, most institutions both private and public are asking for CXC General. I know in the past, as well, that a number of institutions recognize students who had acquired the Barbados Secondary School Certificate or the School Leaving Certificate. Nowadays, students have it but it really has no recognition in the work place. Therefore we have set up a Committee to submit recommendations for a proper form of certification at least by 1998. Again we will do the consultation. We will go through that process to ensure that, at the end of the day, everyone comes out feeling satisfied that we have done our best and that what we are doing is in the interest of every Barbadian.

This outcome should reflect on certification that will give an independent measure of the scholastic achievements of all school leavers. It will provide a more accurate measure of competencies obtained from pursuing the secondary school curriculum.

The Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic has started to attract some of our best brains. I remember visiting the institution some time last year at an official display of the various skills that the students have been working in, especially in the area of electronics, and when I questioned the students around that area, because I had a keen interest in their little project that they had set up, and I said to them, "I remember you leaving the school when I was at the Alleyne School. And where did you go?" I heard Combermere, Harrison College and I heard St. Michael and I heard St. Leonards. Then I thought here is it that these young people are becoming very wise. They know that the marketplace is catering to the needs of the skilled individual and if you look at it in the areas of computer science the knowledgeable ones again are pushing forward as well.

2.50 p.m.

Now, we in the Ministry felt, yes, if you need competent people to be able to develop the skills and continue to teach and share their knowledge well then we would need people with an educational ability background if you want to call it that. We also felt that those students coming from the composite and senior schools, we also felt that those students who dropped out of school for one reason or another need to get an opportunity too to go to the Polytechnic and get involved.

We met in consultation with the Principal and the Chairman of the Board and his other officers agreed yes those individuals out there who are on the block need to get into the Community College because that is where the hospitality aspect is being looked after, as well as at the Polytechnic and to use whatever skills God has blessed them with to be able to do something useful.

The programmes at the Polytechnic have been expanded to accommodate Tourism, Craft, Fishing and other areas that individuals out there who may not have the necessary academic ability, but have the talent, can fit into that niche and therefore we have asked for the Polytechnic to expand from approximately 1 400 students in the year 1994 to 1995 to accommodate at least 2 000 students this time. I must say how pleased I am that that programme has gotten off the ground quite smoothly and the students that are there who could not enter the Polytechnic because they did not have that academic ability to write that entrance examination have been exempted but have been given programmes to prepare them in modular form so that they can take off small bites of the particular subject area and whatever credits they accrue can go towards their final examination so that at the end of the day they are going to end up having the same qualification but doing it in small steps. That would help them to progress in a successful manner.

Mr. President, we contend that everyone in our educational system matters. It is also in our plan that the instructors at our various institutions, not only at the secondary level because our teachers are taking great advantages for study, opportunities for training and re-training, and as a result we have teachers, even in our Primary Schools; I think it is important that we put our best resources at our primary level as well. Some teachers have Masters in reading, assessment, administration....

Sir, there are so many areas that I am lost now to tell you exactly all of them but I know in particular in remedial education and, some of our teachers at primary level do have.

We are cognizant of the fact that our instructors at the Polytechnic need to upgrade their skills as well to look after the needs of those students. They need to become

involved in the informatics, they need to be given new equipment that they can meet the needs of the marketplace. A plan is afoot for our tutors at Community College, at the Polytechnic to be given an opportunity that they can upgrade their skills and come back in and put all they can into the particular institution.

Mr. President, I cannot close without making mention of our primary schools and the state of disrepair in which we found them in September 1994. It leaves a lot to be desired if we are going to be hypocrites in this Barbados. Every minute we are complaining but nobody wants to bell the cat. We were faced with a situation where more than 3/4 of our primary schools were in such a poor condition that it is sad to say the kinds of costs that it has involved so far in trying to do minor repairs that it is important for me to make mention of it.

Two weeks ago, Sir, Thursday and Friday, I spent more than half of a day each because teachers are upset, parents are upset, the students in that environment are upset. If the environment is not conducive to learning and people are not feeling relaxed and things that are happening there do not enhance them and their interest then we cannot expect learning to be fulfilled at its maximum. We saw doors that are falling off. I will not call the names of the schools, Sir, because we are currently looking at it and the project unit is aware of the problems and certain remedial steps are being taken, but we have taken a conscious decision to repair at least 8 of those primary schools that are in the worst condition.

During the summer holiday again we undertook a lot of repairs at the Grazettes Primary School that had structural problems, large cracks in the walls, toilet facilities were deplorable. If you see the Grazettes Primary School today, Sir, it would bless your heart. It now looks like somewhere where children would want to go and learn and use up all the innate abilities they have because of the tremendous work that has been done by the Ministry of Education.

Mr. President, we also looked at the St. Elizabeth Primary School that has structural problems. The foundation needed underpinning and the roof was leaking because it is a concrete roof. That also caused us great concern when we had to send the children out from school one week earlier before the school closed in December and they entered school two weeks later at the beginning of this school year, January.

Sir, the list goes on. I visited the Christ Church Girls' School last week and when I saw the condition of that school I was wondering how are these children able but I have to thank God for parents and teachers who are

committed to the whole process and are trying in their small ways through the PTAs and so on to put remedial measures in place at least for the children to be able to use two or three good washrooms. There is no way that any school that has an average of 600-odd children should be functioning in schools where the washrooms, which are the basic things, are not in adequate supply or are not in good condition for human beings to even ease their system.

I think it is deplorable that the last administration bypassed all of those necessary things to help our youth to get the proper education but as you look around Barbados, Sir, you can see structures that pain the heart.

Only last week I went to St. John to a particular function and I saw a massive structure. There is no way it could be finished this century. When I speak at St. Thomas I see it every day. It is an eyesore. Thank God this Government is working on the St. Thomas Secondary School, a World Bank project, in an effort that the children at St. Leonard's Girls' School can be accommodated in that school and the boys at St. Leonard's Boys' can use the facility at St. Leonard's Girls' so that they can get more space because boys cannot walk around with a shirt tail pushed in. They have to have space that they can move around and perspire and act like boys. We are crying out that the educational system is not catering to the needs of the boys and the boys are ostracised. We are giving those boys at St. Leonard's an opportunity to keep it as a boys' school and the Springer Memorial Girls' as a girls' school so that those two schools can function and anyone who chooses to do any research to see if the co-educational system is posing a problem, they can work the experiments with Springer Memorial and the St. Leonard's Boys' Schools. We have done something about the monstrosity, the white elephant in St. Thomas, the St. Thomas Secondary School, and we are happy to know that the children at St. Leonard's are already getting motivated because they want to get into spanking facilities, they have been in a rut for so long.

Mr. President, I can mention the structures all over Barbados. It is unfortunate that there was no vision at the end of the tunnel in the last administration. We in this Barbados Labour Party have the vision and we will put the vision to the action as we have in this White Paper to ensure that from the cradle to the grave our Barbadians are a happy people.

Mr. President, this White Paper is a basic national document. It has generated much discussion, much praise, and I trust that the Opposition will tell us in here today the reason why

Aside.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: I will deal with that. Mr. President it is a basic national document. The parents out there whose children have been tested for hearing problems, the parents whose children have been accommodated in the schools such as the Alma Parris, the parents out there who have children going to school where the toilet facilities and the chalk boards are falling down every day and breaking children's legs are happy about the stages so far that we have started in this White Paper. I am sure that the public of Barbados will support us in this document because it has brought about a change. The Government, of which I am a part and I am extremely proud to be, has heard all the grumbings over the years and all the recommendations on the call-in programmes, newspapers and wherever, and the last administration did not have the courage to bell the cat. We have belled the cat in this Barbados Government and we intend to put our money where our mouth is to the benefit of Barbadians and not some white elephant like we saw in the last five or six years.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. President, this is the time for action. This Government is a government of action. I said earlier that we make promises and we perform. We have no reason why we should hide from this document, because this is a true reflection, and if one follows this manifesto one can see the various things that we pledged and that we have started to implement. The public of Barbados today is happy because some of them are getting jobs. All cannot get at one time because Rome was not built in a day.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: A lot of people under the other administration lost their jobs. This Government is helping some of them to feel like Barbadians again to hold their head up and to cut back on crime that has escalated between 1991 and early 1994.

Mr. President, I want to say that nothing in this White Paper is cast in concrete. We will put some of the things into practice. We have implemented some because we made manifesto pledges. If for one reason or another that particular aspect of the implementation is not favourable, because the children matter, then we have to cut our nose to spoil our features and we have to make changes. We are willing to come back and say to the public of Barbados that we have tried so and so. From the comments that have come to us in the recommendations, we would want to make a change because at the end of the day the children and the people of Barbados matter.

Mr. President, it is not cast in concrete and I challenge the Opposition to identify the areas that

they would want to question today. As many as I can respond to, I will respond to because all of us should be conscious that for many years there has been talk, talk, talk but nobody putting any action. We have taken that task.

Mr. President, I wish on behalf of the Honourable Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture and, as a matter of fact, on behalf of this Government, because it is collective responsibility that we are responsible for, to extend sincere thanks to all Barbadians – the educators, the technocrats in the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, people in the business sector, the Employers Confederation, BIMAP, the various unions in Barbados, the principals, teachers and guardians, and even members from the Labour College who have given of their expertise in helping to shape and mould this document – to the principals of BAPPS, to the principals from the Conference of Primary Schools, to the National Council of PTAs, with whom we are working in close association at nursery education level to see if we can get parent aides to go into the schools and assist in furthering the cause of our young children to set the foundation, to other members of the public and private sector, to other private citizens who gave of their time and expertise in helping us on the various committees and to all other stake-holders in the public and private sector, to the media personnel without whom we would have been unable to reach all Barbadians to give them the necessary education, to funding agencies without whose commitment, hard work and dedication we would have been unable to meet the demand that this White Paper sets.

Mr. President, we have started on the trail in this successful milestone. We will keep the communication lines open. We will continue to consult. We will continue to practice participatory democracy. This Government and this Barbados Labour Party have as its motto "A Better Life For Our People". We recognize that each one matters. We want all Barbadians to be able from all walks of life to get a better life so that they can all work together in the schools, communities and in the society as a whole to make outstanding contributions not only to their development but to the development of those who are less fortunate.

Mr. President, I wish to thank all Honourable Senators for their support and the guidance which they have also given to us in preparing this document and I thank you for your listening ear. I trust that all Members will be able to give us the necessary support, because without this document I am sure we will be set back for another 15 years. We need to keep going forward to the year 2000 in helping to make our people literate and more self-reliant and all the other things that are necessary for good citizenship. I thank you.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, I rise to make a contribution in this very important debate. But I

wish to start at the very beginning of the document since I am of the view, and I will argue quite effectively, that the premise of the vision is flawed and, as a consequence, I am not so satisfied that the document is going to result in any dramatic change in the educational system of Barbados. At the very start of the document under the philosophical vision, I am of the view that politics entered this document too early. This document starts with the quotation and I quote: "A revolutionary concept cannot work in a non-revolutionary framework." That is indeed a very flawed quotation.

I wish to suggest, Sir, that in an environment of war we would have to put forward or we would have to be in a state of readiness and, as a consequence, a revolutionary framework is perhaps necessary for a revolutionary concept to fully accrue and to work. But within the context of education, this quotation is indeed inappropriate. It is inappropriate because if a revolutionary concept is introduced in a backward environment in the society then it will have a greater impact than in a society which is in a state of readiness for that revolutionary idea. I am suggesting that when you introduce education ideas which are in fact rooted in principles to bring about a change in any society that those concepts would be better served if they are introduced in a backward environment. Let me explain. If you are to introduce technological change within an agricultural system where you use a hoe, certainly the impact that revolutionary idea will have will be far more significant than an environment where the agricultural environment is up to a fairly advanced stage. Therefore, to say that a revolutionary concept cannot work in a non-revolutionary framework within the context of education is a completely inappropriate quotation, and on that basis I am suggesting the rest of the document is certainly not going to be commended by me and certainly to my mind is pretty flawed.

3.10 p.m.

When once we speak of revolution within the context of education, we have to address the earlier days of Barbados, the 1960s. In the 1960-65 Development Plan there was a fully stated set of principles which were outlined for the educational programme of the then Government, and these principles were –

- (1) there will be general education for all children between ages 5 and 14;
- (2) the reorganisation of education for children between 11 and 14 years of age with a focus on the provision of an increased number of places in secondary modern schools;
- (3) the provision of free grammar or secondary school education for all those who qualified;

- (4) the development of technical education with a view of contributing to the industrial needs of the country; and
- (5) the improvement in the quality and expansion in the quantity of the teaching stock.

Those where the principles outlined in the 1960-65 Development Plan.

What I wish to suggest in fact is that those revolutionary ideas took root to the extent that we saw significant change in the Barbadian society in the post 1960 period. That is what you call revolution, but to suggest that a document which only introduced partial zoning and flexible transfer is indeed revolutionary in its thinking is to be flawed, is to be lacking in understanding of what revolution means. It is supposed to be constituting radical change. There is no way in this document that there is going to be any radical change to the educational system and therefore I am suggesting that the very premise upon which the philosophical vision is based is not a premise that we can have great expectation of. There is no substantial expectation on my part as far as reforming the educational system and the impact it can have in transforming the Barbadian society.

Let me show that the principles outlined in the 1960-65 Development Plan were in fact buttressed by a whole set of initiatives in the period following 1960. In 1962 we had fees for Government secondary schools being abolished. That indeed was revolutionary. We had technical training being consolidated in the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the introduction of a polytechnic of that magnitude to assist in technical training. We had tertiary education being expanded in the Community College and at the University of the West Indies, and in order to facilitate those objectives we had changes within the social system of Barbados. We had the School Meals Service being introduced in 1963, we had a Textbook Loan Scheme in 1975 and in all what I am suggesting is that an environment which one can describe as revolutionary was indeed formulated within that post 1960 period. I am further suggesting that there is going to be no significant or radical change in the Barbadian sociological or even economic landscape as a consequence of this document which I have before me. So to suggest that it is revolutionary in idea and that it is going to bring about substantial change is, to my mind, to misunderstand the whole concept of what revolutionary means.

The important thing to note is that those initiatives under the Democratic Labour Party in fact gave rise to very substantial expectations on the part of Barbadians and that the expectations were realised. There is no way in which anyone in this Honourable Chamber can dismiss that the

educational reform, a revolution which we had in the 1960s, did in fact bring with it a whole economic transformation in the Barbadian society. Just let me quote from a document which I have before me, a Paper written by Dr. Andrew Downes, "Education and Sustainable Development – Historical Perspectives and Projections for Barbados", and it is a revised version of a Paper presented at a symposium sponsored by the Barbados National Forum on Education held at Erdiston College, Barbados, May 11, 1994. I can make it a document of the Senate. I am quoting at page 14:

"In 1962 fees for Government secondary schools were abolished. This policy measure opened up secondary education to a large number of individuals and has had a significant impact on human resource development and social mobility in Barbados. This single policy measure is widely regarded as creating a watershed in the Barbadian educational system and held in the future development of the middle income professional and technical class."

That is what one can describe as revolutionary, a system that transformed the economic landscape and allowed many of us who, without access to secondary education and further tertiary, would not have been able to move up through the social rankings in this society. Therefore, when one is speaking of revolution, one has not only to look at conceptual matters but to look at the reality, to look at the output, to look at the whole issue of what has been produced as the result of a system. So I am suggesting that you can look around Barbados now and see, get representative individuals who one can describe as products of that revolution in the 1960s, and indeed if I am permitted I can do it, not just by way of concepts but by way of information, by way of examples, by way of even identifying individuals in this Chamber who otherwise would have been deprived of an education, who otherwise would have been deprived of reaching the stage of tertiary level education, and therefore I am suggesting that is revolution.

Just let me describe, for the purposes of this debate, what in fact is now regarded as a product of that educational system. The information is there, it abounds. I can tell you for instance that an average individual in Barbados would be of age 32. I can tell you that an average female in Barbados would be age 34 and that an average male in Barbados would be age 31. I can further tell you that as a consequence of the measures of the Democratic Labour Party during that period the average earnings across the society – they vary according to Government, the private sector and the self-employed – would have been of the magnitude of almost \$300 per week, according to the 1990 census. That varies across the male and female and, unfortunately, females have a lower earning capacity. It is an average of \$242, whereas

males earn an average \$317 per week. I am also suggesting that an average representative individual in Barbados, who is a product of that educational revolution, would have been entitled to free secondary education and would have been from age 5 up to age 15 or 16.

3.20 p.m.

I am also suggesting to you that that representative individual would now have for the most part access to proper shelter, proper clothing, house ownership, ownership of motor cars and the like. I am setting the environment to show that that revolution did in fact create an individual whom we can all be proud of and for whom we recognise that there would have been a substantial transformation as a result.

Let me go on to say that within that sample as well, individuals, the number of slow learners in Barbados, in 1990 were surveyed to be about 462 people. That is the number of slow learners surveyed in the 1990 census data. Of that magnitude, 295 of those would have been slow learners. This information is in fact available within the population census of Barbados. It did not take any recent survey to discover this. Every 10 years, a population census is conducted in Barbados and throughout the world. What we also have in fact is that in the age 12 and under category there are 295 such slow learners and that represents less than 0.5 per cent of the total population in the under 12 category.

I am putting in perspective what I regard as important information upon which we need to build in order to establish or justify why indeed we need reform if we do within the educational system. I also know from the information provided within the population census, especially among the disabled that there are severe problems as regard sight, hearing and other disabilities and that we have not yet provided for. In fact, those who do not hear well within the population of Barbados represent just over 1 000, of which 633 are females and 431 are males. I am suggesting therefore that the basis for educational reform will have to take into consideration what we have now versus what we intend to get as a consequence of this reform which we propose to put in place to improve the opportunities for Barbadians across the system.

Whereas there will be no revolution as a result of this White Paper there was indeed a revolution in the educational system in the 1960 period and that revolution has in fact produced an individual of the kind whom I have just described. Therefore, it is critical for me to understand that product of the educational system. Now having said that, it is clear to see that the system has not been perfect even though many of us have benefited as a result of the system. The process of evaluation was necessary.

I am suggesting that that evaluation should have taken 3 forms, based on quality, and for this framework I refer to the work of the late Sir Arthur Lewis who in fact did quite a lot of work in the area of economic aspects of quality education not only within the Caribbean but across the African continent. Indeed, in a very informative paper presented by him, he outlined 3 determinants of quality education, the breadth of the education; the pyramid and the whole question of success.

Just let me for the purpose of this debate introduce a definition of these 3 concepts. According to Sir Arthur Lewis, breadth refers to the choice between the vocation and the general in a school curriculum. This choice exists at all levels from primary to professional. So you are talking about having vocational and general concepts within the school curriculum. His concept of pyramid is that pyramid is concerned with the proportions in schools of different ages and with a different combination of general and vocational at each age group.

He talks about the whole concept of success which refers to the extent at which the school actually achieves with the child what it sets out to do. That is important because that introduces the whole notion of evaluation to which I will refer later.

In short, Sir, having suggested that we did have an educational system that has indeed produced the kinds of products which we have in today's Barbados, I think we all recognise that in a dynamic world there is going to be need for constant change and constant evaluation. Let me just say even though I will not deal with it thoroughly, that the contents of the White Paper do in fact mirror the contents of the Development Plan for 1993 to the year 2000, at pages 54-91. There is no problem at all with that, because the vision that is shared for Barbados as it relates to education is really a vision of the technocrats of Barbados. Let us not be fooled that this vision is one that emanates from the politicians. This basically is a vision of the technocrats who are in trained in the area, who understand the principles underlying the whole educational system, who can give the kind of expression that is needed to the educational system up ahead. So don't be confused when you see these documents being presented in Government or by Government, development plans, economic reviews, economic reports. These for the most part are the result of hard-working technocrats across the civil service. Don't be fooled, the system as it works is that a Minister changes according to the wishes of the people and they are not permanent. They are temporary beings within the system and therefore the kind of permanency which we have within the civil service is important for the continuation of policies that will ensure the sustained development of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am having a little difficulty in hearing. Every Member of the Senate will have an opportunity to speak. May I therefore urge Honourable Senators to hold their fire? There is plenty of time.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: The issue, then, Sir, even though I will not elaborate on it – this is for the specialists in the area – is to look critically at the 3 components of quality in education to determine where we are at and where we intend to go.

We first need to know where we are in order to know where we ought to go. What I want to come to know is the whole question of development and how the educational reform which we are seeking to address can play a role in sustainable development within the Barbadian society. I am not so convinced that it will because I am not convinced, as I stated earlier, that it is revolutionary. Therefore, I don't anticipate any substantial or radical changes as a consequence of the White Paper.

For the purposes of this debate, it can be described as a vector of desirable social objectives. These objectives include an increase in real per capita income; improvements in health and nutritional status; relevant and desirable educational achievement and access to resources, land, capital and the like; and a more equitable distribution of income, wealth and eradication of poverty and the greater participation in the socio-economic decision making process.

I have outlined, Sir, what I regard as the vectors of the objectives of development and I wish to suggest that having consulted the individual whom I have constructed before, having suggested the age grouping, having suggested that on an average the typical worker in Barbados would be in a clerical position, having suggested the age profile and the sex profile of those individuals, I wish now to look forward and see to what extent would this education reform paper contribute to developing that individual such that we can see the kind of representative individual who we would like to see up ahead in the year 2015 or in the year 2020.

3.30 p.m.

I am saying that flexible transfer and partial zoning are indeed not going to be critical in determining what that individual would look like in the future. Therefore, in that regard, I wish to suggest that there is not going to be any revolution or any radical change in our economic landscape or social landscape as a consequence of the White Paper.

Now, let me go on to put the emphasis where I should put it. According to this Government, they intend to create 30 000 jobs across the plain. That has, in fact, been designed in a way as to suggest that the informatics

industry of Barbados will, over the next five years, be responsible for creating 10 000 jobs. Now, there is need for some correlation between the educational system which we develop and the kind of resource needs which we need in a society. I am saying that if indeed we are putting our emphasis on the offshore sector, there is nothing within the White Paper to suggest that there is going to be an educational system designed to encourage the development of individuals to look at the issue of the offshore sector. This is because the Government is not convinced that it is, in fact, capable of creating 10 000 jobs within the offshore sector and this is because, I am suggesting, and I reiterate, that if indeed the offshore sector is supposed to be a target sector for developing the Barbados economy, why then did we have the kind of action we had at the Barbados External Telecommunications? Why then did we see the kind of downsizing we saw at the BET? Why did we not see an attempt to expand the BET in such a way in concert with the so-called projected job creation within the offshore sector?

I am saying, Sir, that there seems to have been no planning as it relates to the manpower needs for Barbados into the 21st Century and that there is no example within the White Paper that there has, in fact, been such a manpower study to determine exactly where our educational system should go, so to my mind there is no symmetry between the role to be played by education and the kind of goal that has been established for economic development within the Barbados landscape.

Let me suggest, Sir, that there are, in fact, areas which have to be emphasized in the coming years. Environmental education is an absolute requirement. We have seen the increasing emphasis on the environment. We have seen a highly successful conference being held in Barbados on the environment a couple of years ago. There has been an increase in focus and those on that side who care to deny it would also be denying that this Government has now put in place an environmental tax, so-called, to assist in the management of the environment and therefore one is having difficulty understanding why there is not a clear understanding that the environment has a role to play. Environmental education, geography, social studies, integrated science, agricultural science are all going to be very critical in a future Barbados because we have an increased emphasis in the area of the environment. That is a must.

We must also, if we have a vision of Barbados into the 21st Century, be looking at service oriented development. Therefore, we can anticipate increasing emphasis on management. We can anticipate increasing emphasis on accounting and computing. Indeed, if one were to look at the kind of enrolment that has taken place within the social sciences at the University of the West Indies, one would see that there has been an increasing

demand for the Management Degree Programme and that says a lot, because there is an increasing focus on service and human skills as opposed to the kind of physical skills which were required in previous years.

There is also increasing demand in the area of accounting which provides a service for the overall business community and therefore there is that emphasis also in terms of the enrolment at the University of the West Indies in the area of accounting. Computing has certainly taken on a serious shape in the last 10 years, not only in Barbados but worldwide. We are saying that if, indeed, there is going to be an education reform that is going to transform the economic landscape of Barbados, then the contents of the White Paper have to marry, to a large extent, the manpower needs we anticipate up ahead and I am not so sure that has been done within the White Paper. There is no explicit plan of action to determine what the manpower needs are. There is a conceptualization of things, but concept is easy. A philosophical vision is quite easy to put together. It only requires a skilful writer. It requires someone to sit down and have a vision of where they want to go but it does not state explicitly in this White Paper what is the plan of action.

The costings done within the White Paper are also flawed. They do not reflect what we can anticipate up ahead. What we are saying is that it is easy to predict that there is going to be greater emphasis on human resource development within the Barbadian society. It therefore means that if we are going to be developing the human resource, both institutional and non-institutional, then there would have to be increasing emphasis placed on the education budget in Government, so rather than there being a contraction in the budget for education, there is every reason to believe that the amount spent on education should be increasing over time, so when you hear concerns about reducing the budget in education you have to wonder whether or not that is consistent with the kind of vision that is being outlined within the White Paper. I get no impression that there is that kind of nexus between what is being projected in the budget within the White Paper and what is actually the vision for Barbados. You cannot speak to developing the human resource base of Barbados and at the same time speak to reducing the amount of spending on education. The two things are very highly inconsistent.

There is another area, the offshore sector, which I alluded to earlier which is supposed to be an area of opportunity for Barbadians. Now, this is an area where we have to be very hesitant because the skills required in this sector are particularly limited and there is evidence to show that. There is evidence to show that there is increasing reliance on the lawyer, accountant, the hiring of a maid and secretary and I am wondering to what extent, therefore, our educational system can, in fact, reflect the kind of

manpower needs within this sector. If indeed we are saying that we are going to create 10 000 jobs, it was the only area that was explicitly stated that there would be 10 000 jobs created within a 5-year period within the offshore sector, then there is no evidence to reflect that within the White Paper Reform.

We need not only a vision, we need a plan of action. We need to know where we are. We need to know where we are going. We need to know how long it is going to take. We need to know who is going to be responsible. The truth is Senator Forde rambled consistently throughout her presentation and I was unable to follow clearly what she was saying. There was no clear vision for the role education will have to play in a future Barbados.

Now, let me get to some more critical or specific issues that have to be addressed in this White Paper. The evaluation of a teacher is critical. As far as I gather, the way to really evaluate the performance of the teacher has to do with the inputs into the process based on the length of time spent teaching and the outputs based on the performance of the students at the end of the year or whatever.
3.40 p.m.

At the end of the day, the assessment can be pretty subjective but one would need to have some quantifiable things that you can tie your remuneration to after you have done a revaluation exercise. This is highly critical and is especially critical within the context of the new emphasis being placed on productivity.

I can see all kinds of difficulties that will arise as a result. How do we establish evaluation systems at the primary level to make them comparable with those within the secondary and even at the tertiary level? How can we establish evaluation exercises across primary schools? How can we access evaluation exercises in secondary schools? The thing is that at the end of the day no one wants to be evaluated without there being some form of remuneration.

I am asking Government the question. How will Government determine how to pay or compensate teachers who have been highly productive? How would Government determine whether or not a teacher in a particular school is more deserving of an increase as a result of increased productivity? At the end of the day, it has to do with whether or not Government can afford, whether or not Government has the revenue to be able to make the payments required.

The question of evaluation is going to be a very sensitive question within the teaching service, as it would be within the nursing service, as it would be right

across the 56 departments of Government. It is going to be extremely difficult because, unlike a private entity, the Government is not in the business of producing anything to get revenue. Government derives its revenue from taxation. Therefore there is no connection between what a teacher does and how Government's revenue is going to perform. As a consequence, it is going to be extremely difficult, as I said before, to understand how Government is going to evaluate and then remunerate those individuals on the basis of their performance. It does not make sense to me to have an evaluation programme which, at the end of the day, does not translate into any significant benefit or benefit at all for whom you reevaluate it. It would have been a useless exercise.

On the basis of evaluation, there is no question at all that since the 1940s in Barbados, we have seen 100% opportunity at both the primary and secondary levels. We have seen increasing levels in the teacher:pupil ratio. When there is an increase in the size of a class, is that an indicator that the productivity of the teacher has increased? Is it an indicator that the teacher has been far more efficient in conducting her duties? How do we evaluate? Do we evaluate on the basis of performance, on the basis of certification? How do we evaluate across different schools, a school like Harrison College as opposed to St. Joseph? How do we make sure that a system is derived that can ensure that there is equitable treatment across the system? I have great difficulty understanding the process that would be implemented in order to determine how the evaluation will go.

Productivity, by definition, is supposed to be a relationship between inputs and output. The output of the students is supposed to be in the form of certification. But how do you evaluate a sports teacher who has made a contribution to the development of the school but that cannot be recognized by way of the participation with the form? How do you evaluate a teacher who has contributed to an orchestra at a school who spends invaluable time ensuring that there is efficiency among the musicians, ensuring that the standard of musicianship within the orchestra is high? How do you evaluate these kinds of contributions that teachers will make outside and beyond the call of duty?

I am suggesting, Sir, that no matter what you do, at the end of the day, this is going to be a very ticklish issue which has to be attended to. I have reason to believe that the Barbados Union of Teachers is not for the evaluation procedures that have been outlined within the White Paper, because they have been misled into believing that productivity has nothing to do with efficiency or evaluation. They have been misled by a consultant...

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: . . . who is suggesting that evaluation is a useless exercise because it has nothing to do with efficiency. I have been told that was stated in a recent presentation made to the Barbados Union of Teachers. I recently made a presentation to them on the question of productivity, evaluation and efficiency and they have indicated that they are not one to one on the process which is outlined within the White Paper on evaluation. This is going to be a bone of contention.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It is not easy to construct evaluation or efficiency measures within the public service as a whole, far less within the services oriented public servants.

The question of evaluation is certainly one that will have to be a bone of contention in the future. The other things that we need to look at therefore in this evaluation process is, do we need to have less specialized curriculum or would it be more appropriate? Do we need to specialize earlier within the school system or do we need to extend the general training which we give to students?

The curriculum becomes critical to the overall objectives of the economic system.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Should one restrict higher education in order to spend more on the primary schools? If indeed we are saying that there is a limited budget within the area of education and that certification within the secondary level is not at the kind of level which we would like to see, one is asking, where do we have to make the changes? Do we make the changes at the tertiary level? Do we reallocate resources from the tertiary to the secondary and primary levels? These are very critical issues that have to be addressed. Therefore, I am asking these questions.

When we hear about the World Bank and its proposal to increase the student:teacher ratio, do we succumb to that? Let me make a statement on that.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It was . . .

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It would certainly be ludicrous of any Administration which has invested so much in developing the human resource base of Barbados, which has had such vision, which has, as a result of that been able to transform the economic and sociological

landscape of Barbados, to have succumbed to any international organization, to be unwilling to forego a mere \$3 million at the university to pay for students and undermine all that it would have done over the course of the last thirty something years.

How could you, having moved the educational budget of Barbados from the levels and the depths which we had in the earlier days, where we spent in 1946, \$1 million in total budget, in 1961 \$4.2 million in education, in 1975 \$50.2 million...

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please. I am hearing Senators other than the Senator on the Floor. I have been very patient.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: In 1990 we spent \$285 million in the area of education. Would any sensible or reasonable Government be willing to undermine something which has become a legacy of the Democratic Labour Party, to forego all that it has created – it is known to be associated with the free educational reform in Barbados, it is known to be associated with anything positive within the educational system – can give up an entire following, an entire constituency for a mere \$3 million? I have difficulty even from a common sense level in understanding why this can be bandied about as an issue. It does not make sense. It is similar to succumbing to pressures to increase the cost of transport or increasing the National Housing Corporation's rents. It is foolishness.

Any Government which has come through the kind of reforms that the Democratic Labour Party's Government came through in the post-1991 period with the kind of success rate it achieved can feel proud, and justly proud, of its achievements and therefore should not be derailed or sidetracked into believing that this new Administration has any new vision. That is something which we all, as Barbadians, would hold dearly to. This is why the vision between us in the area of education is not so wide. Basically as parties we understand the importance of education within a system that deprived many in the pre-1960 period. So therefore it is just a question of how do we go from a conceptualisation of a vision towards a plan of action and there is no evidence in this White Paper that there is any plan of action. There is a vision that in today's world there is need for greater emphasis to be placed on the question of a plan of action. Where is the plan of action? Where is the development plan within the Ministry of Education? There was one. Where can you show me the measures that would be implemented? Where can you show me the progress report on these measures? Where can you show me who is responsible for what? Where can you show me the budget that has been put in order to achieve

some of the issues that we have seen in this exercise? It is not there. It is skimpy.
3.50 p.m.

On the issue of flexible transfer, it has been rightly admitted that only about 2 to 3 eight-year olds would in any one year sit the exam. Now there is no reason why you should stall an individual. There is no reason why but I wish to suggest that I would hate for the day to come when a child who has sat an exam at 8+ and who has not in fact done well because he was perceived to be a high flyer and who did not get to the school that they expected him to get, that there should be recourse. I am saying to you that in Barbados where there is so much emphasis placed on where you go in terms of education that any high flyer of Barbados, in the primary school system who sits at age 8 and + would in fact be targeting the highest schools, would in fact, in the system which we have, be targeting the Harrison College, would be targeting the Queens College, would be targeting the Combermere and St. Michael. What in fact happens to that individual who in the first sitting does not get into that school? That individual you may think, as I know it in Barbados, be condemned for not having reached the highest level at age 8 and what is unfortunate about it, is that individual would not have a second opportunity to redeem himself or herself. That is a basic weakness of the flexible transfer system that I see. Why, if you are giving the opportunity to an 8-year old why should we deprive that 8-year old from having a second chance at going to the school that he or she would have been desirous of going to. That does not gel well with the kind of Barbadian society we have, because unless you go to a particular school you are deemed to have failed in our system.

The whole question of partial zoning does have some relationship to the whole question of land use policy. There is no doubt at all about that. The whole question of the education reform relates to land use policy. If you are going to be transforming the economic land scheme, if you are going to be getting out of agriculture into other forms of economic activity, if you are going to be establishing a rural development programme you are saying in fact that you are expecting that there will be some de-urbanisation, there would be some movement away from the city area towards the more rural areas because you are trying to equate the urban with the suburban areas. If indeed the rural development plan works, then the opportunities within the rural sector of Barbados should be upgraded and as a consequence one can expect that individuals would be encouraged to move from out of the more crowded city areas into the rural areas. As a consequence of the population movement there would be additional services and these services will have to include services relating to schools. These services will have to include other social services so it does not make sense to me to make laughter or to suggest that there is anything wrong with linking education reform and land use policy. It will also impact

on the transportation network. It will impact on a whole range of other things within the economic system so there must be some correlation. There will be need for school grounds. That must impact on the land available for agriculture. There will be need to resite people to be closer to the centre of activity within the rural districts. It must impact on the agricultural sector. Therefore there will be a need to understand that the cost of land within the rural areas would now take no lesser share than within the more urban and update areas along the West and South Coasts.

I am saying therefore that as you develop the whole question of land costs will increase. It will become more expensive to resite in the rural areas. It would therefore have implications for the economic environment. It would have implications for what kind of activities you pursue within the rural districts and therefore the education reform if it is desirable and consistent with the rural development reform would in fact have implications for resource allocation.

When you hear certain comments made and the Government is pretending to have a vision which it does not understand and then you make a comment about land use policy on the educational system it does not make sense not to understand that there is a link between your land use policy, your educational reform, your rural development and your overall economic development of Barbados. You intend to build hotels in the remote areas. If you develop a hotel within St. Joseph, should you not anticipate the development of restaurants and ancillary services? Should you not anticipate a movement towards that area in terms of population? Should you not anticipate a need for other services, better roads, better lighting, better recreational facilities? Should you not anticipate the establishment of housing estates? Should you not anticipate all of these other means within the rural districts of Barbados? Does it not make sense to have a holistic view of the educational system and the kind of role that it can play in the economic transformation of Barbados? It is absolutely imperative to look at the entire picture, but to come and present a partial analysis of the educational system devoid of any understanding of where you are going as a Government, devoid of an appreciation as to the kind of transformation which you want to see within the society, within the economy, it just does not make sense. Partial zoning, as I see it, therefore could be flawed. It could be flawed to the extent that it does not fully understand the demographics. It does not understand the age profile. It does not understand a number of things. On that score, Sir, I wish to look at the survey that was conducted. Again this is supposed to be a reform survey. We went across secondary schools, we went across primary schools and would you believe it that there is no question at all in this survey which seeks to capture the opinion of the children at the primary level as it relates to flexible

transfer. There is no question within the survey which seeks to capture the opinion of the children as it relates to the whole question of partial zoning. The major initiatives coming out of this White Paper are initiatives which relate to partial zoning and flexible transfer.

4.00 p.m

So I am at a loss to understand. Where is the vision? Why it is such critical issues were not addressed within the questionnaire? It does not make sense. The Government should have targetted the children in fact to get their opinion, to solicit their support. It does not make sense to me. There are other areas of evaluation. There are some inconsistencies within the system. We are hearing how very good the teaching system is by some individuals within the system. Yet, when we ask the children about what kind of expectation they have in terms of their success, that is pretty low. So there is inconsistency there. If you are saying that the opportunity for you to achieve is not substantial, why are you not saying that the teaching service is so good? There is an inconsistency in fact in that area. I am saying that there must be some correlation between the expectation of the student to perform well and that student's opinion of the teaching standards of the particular institution unless something is happening. These issues are epiphenomenal and that does not make sense.

I am saying that I am not convinced at all that the survey form seeks to capture the real issues within the White Paper and I get the impression from all who are in the area of research that this survey might have been conducted as a means of saying yes, we did something to evaluate the existing system but the evaluation has not led to the outcome. We have not seen in here in fact any evidence of a clear set of questions which were designed to inform the vision and the principles upon which the White Paper was designed. So I am little fuzzy as to the importance of this survey. Where in fact did this survey inform the White Paper? If indeed a lot of thought had been put into this White Paper, then the population census data which captures disability, slow learning, hearing, sight problems and a whole range of other things relating to the demography in terms of age structure, male or female, the level of education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, that kind of information ought to have been in this White Paper, because that is supposed to be the starting point. You need to understand where you are in order to understand where you are going, and there is no evidence that there has been proper evaluation of where we are.

We have used one single indicator as a means of justifying this White Paper. We have said that at the secondary level the level of certification is quite low and as a consequence we have sought to develop a White Paper which seeks to address that need. If I understand the vision as it should be, certification is not the overriding factor

in our educational system in Barbados. I thought that the emphasis would have been elsewhere and therefore it strikes me that was the single most important reason for having the White Paper reform, because there is no other overriding evidence within this document to give reason for this document. This document has been put together on the basis of a vision, which I said from the outset is flawed, about revolutionary concepts not being able to work in a non-revolutionary framework. That is a flawed vision. It is a false premise. It cannot be the basis upon which a philosophical vision for education can be constructed. It is inappropriate. It does not make sense. I reiterate that a revolutionary idea is even more potent in terms of its impact in a backward society than it would be in an advanced society. So to suggest that a revolutionary idea has to operate within a non-revolutionary framework is nonsense. It does not make sense. The more backward the society the greater is the impact on the revolutionary idea. That happens to be the case in war and I have no doubt that the Prime Minister of the day, 1991, might have been referring to an environment of war. But the mind does not work like war. The mind does not develop on the basis of conflict. The mind develops on the basis of cooperation or being in an environment where we get the best out of the people we have. You do not have to create an environment of conflict or war. You do not have to create conflict within a school system to get the greatest benefit for each person within the system. That is a flawed basis and it therefore leads me to believe that the outcome of this White Paper will be marginal. It will not be radical.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, will you wind up your speech?

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: So just let me reiterate that when we talk about revolution in education we have to revisit the post-1960 period in Barbados. We have to understand and appreciate what free secondary education did. We have to understand what is important in terms of the character of the individual, the resource of that individual, but that this White Paper does not give me any reason to believe that there will be any radical change in the economic or social landscape of Barbados as a consequence of its contents. I am also suggesting that we have to understand where we are at in appreciating the characteristics of that representative individual in today's Barbados versus what impact this White Paper would have in reshaping and redefining that individual into the 21st century. There is no evidence within the White Paper that the objectives are consistent with the overall objective pinned with its economic development strategy. There is no evidence in the system that there has been radical change to meet the needs in the environment and the services areas. There is no evidence within the offshore sector as proposed by the Government to raise 10 000 jobs. I am saying that on the basis of the vision that we have for

Barbados this White Paper will not serve to transform the sociological and economical landscape as we had in the 1960's. I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Davis.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, before I speak on this White Paper on educational reform, I must remark that I thought the nexus of topics on the Order Paper today is very interesting. The Prison Act and the White Paper on Education Reform. I thought that this is ironic, deliberate or pathetic, because I think that a lot of what I consider to be the vision for this country would really have to deal with a certain kind of philosophy which tends to diminish the nexus between the education system and the prison.

4.10 p.m.

First of all, let me say that I must start with commendations. I am prepared to commend the Minister of Education and the process of consultation which produced this White Paper. I am prepared to say, and I look forward to seeing it implemented, that the words will become deeds. I really like the philosophy: Each One Matters and quality education for all. Time is going to tell how well this philosophy is going to work.

I am also happy to see it. The quality of opportunity and access to education are always wonderful objectives and as I look I can say there is a list of them that I can say, fine. It is great that we are going to be looking more seriously at early childhood education, flexible transfer for the Barbados secondary school entrance exam, partial zoning. I don't agree with the fact that we are going to just talk about partial zoning. I am just saying some of the things that I find. Yes, national certification. We all talked about this tragedy of the number of students who have passed through our system without any certification.

We also of course see curriculum development. There is a constant set of special year provisions, very dear to my heart, the fact that we are now beginning to take seriously the fact that every child whether it is challenged or not is entitled to an education and, of course, teacher incentive. I was a little amused, I must say, about teaching centres and teacher of the year awards and that sort of thing because, as far as I am concerned, the only genuine incentive for the majority of teachers who work very hard and are well qualified is better salaries. The same way we can think about paying specialist people good salaries we must think about the majority of our teachers, 99 per cent of us. There are very few teachers in the system who are not pulling their weight. They are working beyond the call of duty in horrible situations out there and they deserve more than they get as nation builders.

Having said this about my commendations, I must say that when I looked at the notion of White Paper on education and reform, my emphasis would have been on reform, because we are now facing the 21st century and I was thinking that as wonderful as these things are they should have been done 20 years ago. God knows why they weren't, but I am not going to go into that. But these things are real and in any enlightened situation – Barbados interestingly enough has had a long history of education – the question remains, what do we mean by education.

I want to give you this very incisive remark of Paulo Friere who was a Brazilian educator and he wrote the book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed." I find that for Barbados now the aims of education as Paulo explained them should be not only the transformative aspect of education. This means that we have to educate people for the practice of freedom. We have to educate people, and the transformational process will only come when we educate them so that they can deal creatively and critically with the reality of their world. Now this is where I begin to part company with the notion that this White Paper has anything revolutionary or reforming about it.

The thing about education is that the goal post keeps moving. At post-emancipation we were talking about education for people to read the Bible and then we went on to colonial days when we were educating clerks. One of the things that I can't help think is that we really have not revolutionised education in post-colonial Caribbean society. I am not simply talking about Barbados. I am looking at it from the Caribbean point of view, because when you think about how our educational process came about we will see that we have always privileged what is essentially a European class-biased, educational system. We have accepted the hegemony of European education for a middle class. Imagine imposing that ever since we have been a colony, a patriarchal European class-biased educational system on a society that was mainly matriarchal, post-emancipation, working class, anything. You can call it imperialistic.

From the time we started off in our education system we have imposed on it something that brings you right back to what Paulo Friere is saying. Are we dealing creatively and critically with our reality? Mr. President, what I am saying here today is up to today now that we are facing the 21st century when you talk about this European model that I am always amazed when one says to people why not try another model, as soon as you say why not try bringing in African history, why not try bringing in ethnic education, people look at you as though you are a bit of a nut and yet they have privileged for all these years a European model which does not fit into our society.

It is Derek Walcott, our Caribbean Poet-Laureate, who said it beautifully when he talked about this

schizophrenia. It is a schizophrenia in our education system that sees another world imposed on this world and we are living this split as he talks about it, the inner world of poetry and the outer world of action and dialect. We are living this split out. Fortunately, for a man like Derek Walcott, he made creative use of it and of course, I am not denying that about 20 per cent of our societies are probably equipped to make creative use of that schizophrenia. If you think about it, can you imagine a system that looks for a nuclear family, a strong father figure, a dominant figure in the home which values learning and all that, that whole middle class thing, can you imagine imposing that on people, this 60 per cent, which we keep coming back to, about non-certified people. Sixty per cent is a euphemistic figure because I think it is more like 70 or 75 per cent and this has always been the case.

If over 300 years we are saying we have always skewed our system so that 60 to 70 per cent of our people are failing, it is because of this schizophrenia. We have to recognise it. We mustn't pretend that it doesn't exist.

Paulo Friere did not stop at saying education for the practice of freedom or the transformative power. He did not stop there, and to me it is so relevant to the Barbadian society today. He also said that education should create a world in which it made it easier to love, a world in which it made it easier for people to love. You know when I think about the society in which we live today in Barbados I feel this is so relevant.

I really am going to move on to what is my pet concern. If we are not dealing creatively with the reality that we have, young boys and young men who are absolutely failing the system... By the time they reach to university or so, 2 out of every 3 is a woman. If we are really dealing creatively and critically with our reality we have to begin to think that the most revolutionary thing that we can begin to do is to begin to deal with some measure of integrity with that situation of our young males and begin to put into place, not just talk about it anymore, very serious plans to halt this failure.

I started off by saying that I thought there was this interesting nexus between the White Paper on Educational Reform and the Prisons Act. I tell you I think about it. If we don't do something now, 21 years from now I am afraid the blood will be on our hands. If I have to believe that the majority of our people in Barbados do believe that we must start hanging all these 18 and 25-year olds who are loitering around the place, if we are to believe that, we had better start from now to do something about this. That is the only way we are going to be genuinely revolutionary in terms of our reform system. If we are going to be able to teach people to practise freedom, if we are going to teach people so they can transform their lives creatively

and critically, we have to create the environment where they can love. We will have to begin to see what we are doing in a genuinely and more revolutionary way.
4.20 p.m.

I am going to again reiterate, because it is something I have to say. I am beginning to be concerned, and I saw a Harvard professor propounding this theory that he notices now this concept of the winner take all. I am beginning to think that we are perpetuating a system. If we look at how we are talking about education, how education money is spent, we are intent to say that those people who can edge it out to the top are the winners. They can play a role and for the rest the Devil takes the hindmost. This is the same situation that makes us begin to wonder how we can continue to live in a society and talk about educational reform when we are not dealing with the most important reality of our lives right now.

I make no apology to anyone to say that whenever I see a society that begins to say hang them, and a society that begins to talk about the majority of its people, I begin to think that we are really perpetuating a society which is more concerned with violence than love. If even it is the verbal violence in saying these things, there is by far too much of it so that instead of the winner taking all, the sense in which we say we spend the money on those people who are making it in the system and not on the others, why do we not begin to think in terms of the meeting turn sort of philosophy? We all put in something we all take out.

Talking about that, I am always a little annoyed to think that headlines in newspapers about free education could fool anyone. Whose Government subsidizes education? And that money, as I said, is a meeting turn. If all of us are paying in our taxes at least see that we have something for everyone. This is why I am waiting to see how this works, quality education for all.

Now, educators know full well what the problems are and I think the Ministry of Education has access to all that information. What are the problems in the sexes? Why are they not performing as they should in secondary schools? We all know that boys have greater cognitive skills. We know after they live a certain age they can lift heavier objects. We know they are more interested in mechanical things. We all know these things. Educators know that. They know girls have greater verbal skills. They are docile. They know boys tend to be aggressive as they reach puberty. What is the value of all this information? We go on and on because the girls have better verbal skills. They do English Language, Literature and Geography. These are things that utilise verbal skills. Why are we not, with all this information, changing our curriculum? This is what I would like to see in curriculum development so that what

boys can profit by or can gain from more of this would be put into our schools. Yet, we sit back as though this is not a problem, as though this does not matter at all where it does matter. Once we get desperate enough to talk about hanging children it does matter. This is something we have to do before the 21st Century. It is already too late for some of the things we have had in this reform. It is already too late.

Our problem right now is looking at equity in terms of what is happening to our young boys and our young men in the society and why is it we are not putting things in place so that they can benefit sufficiently well from this. I am saying that I would like to see a genuine effort to deal creatively with our reality and our reality is not just the 5 per cent, 10 per cent or 20 per cent.

I have also said in this Honourable Chamber that if we are talking about the way education money has to be spent, we have to think in terms of continuing education. We must be prepared to educate and re-educate people so that we have to spend more money in that kind of community-based education to all those people who are out there who would be quite willing to benefit from it.

I have talked about this. We have said yes, we have schools out there. Yes, they could be opened but nobody is getting desperate enough to say let us implement something. Let us implement continuing education, because while you are talking about downsizing and all that, we know full well that lots of people who are in the work force are going to have to be retrained. We cannot sit down if we say we have leadership qualities and have a vision to say that the interest is not there. We have to implement these things. If schools are opened and there are opportunities for young people, young men, young women, whoever they are to go back to get training, if even it is done I would prefer to see, as a matter of fact, that we insist that our people who are unemployed spend five or ten hours a week at some sort of community base continuing education, than to pack them in the prisons or to say that we cannot deal with them anymore.

A truly revolutionary position would have to say what are we really educating people for. They have to transform this society. What happened in the past? What we are doing now in this reform is not a reform. It is tinkering. It is playing around with something that we have inherited, so it is not anything particularly creative. As I said, the goal post moves all the time. What was good, what was important and what was radical – 20 years ago this would have been radical. Now, it is just something that we have done to fix some of the problems so that we have to start off with what is our philosophy. Where did we come from? How did we get here? What are we going to do about it in a very serious way?

I also found it interesting by the way that when students at secondary school level were asked what sort of input they wanted in the curriculum over 50 per cent – you can refer to page 19 in the Appendix – said they wanted technical studies, information technology, industrial arts and market business studies. This is the first time they have even thought about asking students what they want.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Okay. I am not really concerned about that little political game. I am saying this is the first that it is here, over 50 per cent said this was what they wanted. What I am saying is that once we really genuinely involve people in their own creativity we are honestly transforming our society, and we have to begin to do it. I am saying that before the 21st Century this is already obsolete. What we have to do, if we are really going to be people of vision, is to deal seriously, ground ourselves in our own reality and begin to put in place the things we need to do to stop what I see. It was interesting to hear the Minister of Education say that education is now seen as an economic resource. I thought, oh my God, how have we failed? How bankrupt have we become? Are we not going to consider all that wastage out there around the corners with those young men?

4.30 p.m.

I have said time and again and I will continue saying in this Chamber that I am going to be talking for those young men out there and saying, please, please do something about it. Let us really think in terms of creating an atmosphere where people can really be more loving, that we can train people for the practice of freedom and that they can really genuinely transform their lives in a creative and critical way.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Symmonds.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Thank you, Mr. President. I was young when free education began in Barbados with the building of the newer secondary schools like St. Leonard's. I thought what an important step this is in education. I was a little older when, in 1976, I became Principal of The St. Michael School and I was given the opportunity to admit 14 year-olds who had been put out of school. This was another important change initiated by a Barbados Labour Party Government.

I am still young now in outlook and thank God with a fertile brain, and can appreciate all the reform that is to be carried out in the White Paper.

The Minister of Education, the Parliamentary Secretary and the officials at the Ministry deserve to be panegyricized for the excellence of this White Paper and for the unparalleled dialogue which has taken place.

Mr. President, I have said before in speech and writing, and I am never tired of saying, that Barbados has one of the best educational systems in the Caribbean and, perhaps, the world. We have achieved wonders with our educational services and because we have had them for so long sometimes we take it for granted. But as Franklin Delano Roosevelt has said, "We must reform if we would conserve." This White Paper does seek to reform and prepare students for the Twenty-first Century through quality education for all.

I saw the goodly Senators opposite looking, feverishly, in a dictionary and I have wondered since Senator Mascoll's speech if he were looking at the definition of 'reform'. I could not help thinking that in Language Arts our children will have to be taught how to use the dictionary. Because, from what I have seen, the definition of change or reform does not necessarily mean revolutionary, it just means alteration, change, mutation, a period or instance of significant change. Reform, to be effective, does not necessarily have to be radical.

Mr. President, I have noted, with a good deal of pleasure and approval, certain areas. One is the concept of flexible transfer which will allow bright students to enter secondary schools earlier and give slow learners more time to acquire complete knowledge of the curriculum.

I have said before in this Honourable Chamber that I hope that care will be taken to see that the gifted children are ready, emotionally as well as intellectually. However, one has to bear in mind and there are evidences of it that if the gifted child is neglected or kept back, that child can become as frustrated and as much of a problem as the handicapped child or the slow learner. One has to consider both if we are looking at education for all. The wide age range in first forms will require monitoring but there are solutions. I am sure that will be monitored. I am also glad to see that citizenry is going to be taught in the second and third forms of secondary schools. I trust that these two years will suffice and that, by the time students reach fifth and sixth forms, they will have been stimulated enough to continue to take an interest in public affairs, even when they leave the influence of the school.

I have encountered very gifted senior students who did not know the name of any Caribbean person who had won a Nobel Prize. My good friend Senator Davis talked about Derek Walcott. They could not name 3 Barbadian poets. They did not know who Dr. Hugh Gordon Cummins was. Therefore, this is another change which is

important if we are looking at education in its broadest and best sense.

The increase in the number of English periods to between 8 and 10 for slow learners is very significant, particularly since the standard of English overall has deteriorated alarmingly. I hope that a reasonable number of these periods will also be devoted to Literature and spoken English. We need to go back to English across the curriculum. Each question must have a language or question component and students must be penalized for...

Aside.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Look at me and see that I am speaking straight and looking at you ... for faulty English.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I hope you are addressing...

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: I beg your pardon, Sir. Whilst on pages 45 and 46 there is no reference to Physical Education, it has been mentioned elsewhere and I am sure that the National Curriculum Development Council which had not functioned for about at least 8 years will include it among the curriculum core subjects.

As an educator has pointed out, the body and mind are interrelated. In educating one, you are educating the other. Moreover, sport is a great character builder. It is very much a part of Physical Education. It teaches one how to lose with cheerfulness and how to win with graciousness and humility.

I also want to come to another very important point which Senator Davis spoke about, which is, superficial changes, cosmetics. This is far from superficial. This is going to be very real, very important, important for the development of the child and the development of the country.

I wholeheartedly support the acquisition of a foreign language, in spite of the fact that English is the *lingua franca* for international communications and of the media and, although it is true that one billion people speak English and have a good grasp of English and another 100 million can understand it reasonably, yet it is the common language. But we live in a multilingual region and since we are focussing on tourism it is vital that we develop this base of foreign languages in competition in this period of global competition. Therefore, I applaud the idea of second language learning at the primary level, although naturally it is desirable that children at this level develop a mastery of the English language. If the correct methods are used,

for instance, such as music, children can be introduced successfully to a second language. In fact, a researcher at the University of Washington has pointed out that it is unlikely that a child will be able to speak fluently like a native if he is not taught a second language before he is ten years of age.

4.40 p.m.

In Europe you will see jobs being advertised for people who are competent in 5 languages. In Singapore the schools are learning several languages and recently a vote of the United Nations General Assembly of 100 to 35 approved a Resolution stating that recruits for United Nations jobs must speak at least one of 3 working languages. These include English, French and Spanish.

Much has been said about national certification and 60% leaving school without. I myself have spoken out about that and this again is a very important change, reform, call it what you will. Senator Davis is worried about co-education but I think if she looked at page 91 of the document she and any others who are worried would see that there is a comparative study on co-education being conducted in Barbados and in Trinidad and Tobago and of course these findings will be revealed and will be important to us.

There is an aspect of our children's development about which I have always felt passionately and which I think needs to be emphasised, and this is no criticism of the White Paper, this is something really that I am speaking to colleagues. I have been, still am and will always be a teacher and it is social development, developing in students what I prefer to call a sense of what is fitting. Encouraging this sense of good deportment in a child is just as important as achieving academic and athletic success.

Just as the selection of a Principal is very important because Principals are responsible for the total educational influence in a school. It is they who explain the ethos of a school when new teachers are recruited and assembly is one of the places where spiritual and social development can be stressed and in which values can be inculcated. Every member of staff needs to be a role model and this includes the ancillary staff. Such things as standing when an adult comes into a room, looking someone straight in the eye, standing straight and tall, saying "Yes, Sir or Ma'am", how to acknowledge introductions, these are all part of the niceties which are important for development. Unnecessarily loud talking and laughter, completely unlimited expressions of aggression or enthusiasm, these are things which should not be encouraged, things which we are losing sight of and I do not by this mean that we are to suppress the individuality in students or stifle creativity or curtail enjoyment. But these things are not to be imposed but absorbed through example, through

constant talking so that children's lives would be much better.

A debating society, I think, should be set up in every school. It is another kind of formality which children learn easily. I am very pleased to see the emphasis too on library resources and in that regard I should like to see every school with a form library in addition to the central school library. It is extremely important in these days when children are not reading as they were before.

So, Mr. President, this White Paper is of such magnitude, it is of such enormity, that everything cannot be spelt out. But the emphasis is on the basics, a good foundation, reading, writing, listening and numeracy, without which students cannot go on to grasp any other thing, Mathematics, Home Economics, Science, whatever and it is the start of something exciting, thoughtful, caring. Changes in education which will stand all students in good stead in the 21st Century. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I must confess that from time to time there are certain occurrences that take place in this Chamber that to me are very salutary and re-affirm my faith in this Chamber. It seems that whenever a debate of this nature and magnitude seems destined to be railroaded and side tracked and catapulted into irrelevancies, invariably we have people like Senator Symmonds and Senator Rickinson and Senator Workman who from time to time come and do a magnificent job in reinjecting sanity into it and bringing it back on target and back on track. Once again the same applied to today's debate, because at one time I was beginning to despair that we were going for the most part to be hearing a lot of hot air and rhetoric totally devoid of substance and any connection or as they say, any nexus, with the document and therefore we would just be indulging in waffling. But, Sir, I had hoped that, particularly from Senator Mascoll – and I doubt there will be any difference in hearing his colleague – that we would have had some real nuts and bolts discussion, most of all offering alternatives to the White Paper. But as fate would have it, I am further convinced, having had an earlier experience this morning with the Prisons Act, when his colleague waxed warm and hot but not necessarily significant on the subject that clearly indicated she had not read the Bill. Senator Mascoll spent a great deal of time berating the Government and by extension the White Paper for not being revolutionary when in truth and in fact the White Paper does not say anything about revolutionary. It shows that he has not even read the cover. The cover says, "White Paper on Education Reform" not "White Paper on Education Revolution". That is basic, so therefore one has to judge the content. If you start out with a premise, one has to judge what follows on the basis of your premise and not indulge in any pseudo-logic and philosophy.

4.50 p.m

If you turn to page IV of the "Choice For Change", you would have seen that the White Paper comes out of what we stated very earlier in our "Choice For Change". It says:

"The Barbados Labour Party resolutely avoids any excess in the perspectives, policies and programmes which we present to you."

We are not interested in indulging in excesses to satisfy some pseudo-rhetoric or something that you learn at the university in politics 101 of the Marxist, Leninist line and that kind of thing, just to destroy our country. Senator Symmonds, Sir, helped to put revolution and reform back into perspective. But reform implies gradualism and ease in connection with something but not a whole scale dispensing of the baby in the bath water. In other words, we do not believe in the philosophy that informs the policies of the last Government as immortalized in that infamous "Ode to the Environment" which states, Sir, "to build you must first destroy". We do not therefore believe that we have to destroy the educational system of Barbados in order to build it. We prefer not to indulge in excesses but to reform.

Sir, when you turn to page 19 of the Manifesto dealing specifically with education, it sets out a whole gamut of activities involved in education. It starts off by declaring right up front under Education and I quote:

"The thrust of our educational policy will be towards making the Barbadian competitive in all areas of human endeavour."

Therefore, this White Paper cannot be seen in isolation because it would have stemmed out of this very same principle. There is reform taking place in the economy. There is reform taking place in the public sector, well thought out and well reasoned and constructed reform as captured in the draft White Paper on Public Sector Reform which is available to the public. Again, this is a draft and like Senator Forde said it is not meant to be a document cast in stone or cast in steel even, but it is meant to stimulate public discussion that will be of high calibre as was some of what we have heard today, Sir.

Sir, the role of education therefore cannot be separate from the other institutions because it is out of the educational system that will provide the material or the inputs, as they say these days, for the other sectors of the economy. Because we know that education is not merely about accumulating information and regurgitating it in an exam of one kind or another. But it is also about thinking creatively and also about the imparting of social values. As a matter of fact, we noted quite clearly again in our Manifesto, to show that this was not some kind of hodge-podge thing that was dreamed up overnight, we say again on page 4 of our Manifesto, and I quote:

"Our key strategy is to unleash your creativity and energy and your enterprise, particularly the enterprise of our young people, by providing all of you with the means and the abilities to enable you to realize your immense potential, and to ensure that every one of you is afforded the opportunity to be everything you aspire to be, and to ensure that no social circumstance should be permitted to limit the extent of your aspirations."

These are quite laudable and quite attainable social objectives and it is upon that basis, Sir, that this whole White Paper is based.

Sir, as has been alluded to by several Honourable Senators, Barbados quite rightly can be proud of its past education history. The society has benefited, as indeed the wider Caribbean, from the rich resources that we have been able to expend in our educational system. It has benefited from the hard work of teachers and headmasters of great renown. There was an early reference made to Buxton School. I am also a proud product of Buxton School, I would like to think, under the distinguished headmastership of Mr. William Arthur who, I am not proud to say, has been somewhat forgotten as a poet in Barbados. But there is a movement afoot which will very shortly honour both Mr. William Arthur along with some of his other colleagues such as Mrs. Cumberbatch, Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Downes for the tremendous work which they had done at Buxton School which unfortunately is no longer in existence.

We can be proud of what our education has allowed us to achieve in the past, but from time to time it needs revisiting. I think the time has come when we need new approaches and new perspectives to be given to education and this is what this White Paper is all about. It is revolutionary in its effect because it is going to provide the basis for all that Barbados hopes to achieve in the immediate foreseeable future as we enter the 21st century.

Sir, there was some attempt made to pooh-pooh the idea of conducting appraisals on teachers who are an integral part of the education system and the education system is being dealt with in this White Paper. Sir, it was mentioned that it was virtually impossible to have these appraisals done not only with the teachers but where the public sector was also concerned. There was some alluding to the fact that it is impossible to measure productivity in the Public Service. Now if Senator Mascoll had been as good a follower of Dr. Andrew Downes as he claims to be, and having quoted extensively from one of his publications, he would have known that even as recently as 3 weeks ago on *Voice of Barbados* it was established that it is possible to measure productivity in the Public Service using means which are being developed by the National Productivity Board.

But Senator Mascoll keeps trying to insist that it is impossible. If he cannot understand, it does not mean that nobody else can understand how to do it or that it cannot be done. I can speak particularly of the public sector and its reform where a great deal of stress is being put on performance appraisal in the public sector. Again, we are not happy with the fact that you get a yearly revision of your so called performance by someone who may have had very little connection with you over the year and as a matter of fact cannot remember some of the good things or the bad things you might have done months ago, but might only judge you on the most immediacy of the situation. There are going to be performance appraisals which will be conducted and designed for each particular job and not a standard form that is irrelevant to some other situations. 5.00 p.m.

Therefore, Sir, we are very happy with this White Paper because it seeks to chart a new path for Barbados. It seeks to give a new view of ourselves, a new world view, a new view of how we see the world and how we deal with the world. I am not surprised – and again I must indulge in a little political history here for the younger members of the Senate who are not as old as I am – at the Democratic Labour Party's attempt to belittle this White Paper.

Every time that the Barbados Labour Party has sought over the years to do something significant like that, that is their approach. Would you believe, Sir, that they pooh-poohed the idea of Government Headquarters in 1956, said it was extravagant, a waste of time, and called it Adam's Castle? That noble building will be 40 years old next month and has withstood the test of time. They pooh-poohed the Deep Water Harbour. They pooh-poohed the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The Tom Adams Highway. Senator Mascoll is always exercising rhetoric about the offshore sector. They are the ones who when Tom Adams tried to introduce the offshore sector said that it would bring in Mafia money, gamblers and drug dealers.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: You stand condemned for that forever as you did with the Insurance Corporation of Barbados. Not you, Mr. President. When the Insurance Corporation was suggested they told people don't put their money in it as it would be a waste of time, and now it has turned out to be one of the most successful statutory corporations in Barbados. So there you are.

They think, Sir, that by revolution we must re-invent the wheel. They think that because free secondary education was revolutionary, and it did have a revolutionary effect on Barbados' social and economic

situation, that we must go back to that now to prove that we too are revolutionary. These are different times. When the Barbados Labour Party introduced milk and biscuits, it was revolutionary in Barbados. When school meals came in, it was a continuum and we do not have to go and re-invent free school meals or re-invent free secondary education to prove that we are revolutionary. The point is that we are living in a different social climate now and the country's needs are different. The methodologies and the approach to these problems therefore have to be different.

So if you are stuck in 1961, I am sorry for you. Because if you don't quite realise it as yet, in the same way that more than a generation and a half of Barbadians have grown up to take the right to vote as an everyday fact of life, since 1961, 30 years, which in the world of sociology constitutes a generation, has grown up to accept free secondary education as a way of life. If you are going to be stuck in that mode forever, no wonder! I can then appreciate the time warp you are in, therefore justifying Senator Lynch's declaration that by 2050 you will still be in Opposition. When that time comes, you will still be talking about free secondary education. Mr. President you are far too wise a man for that.

Sir, now for some more political history. The Barbados Labour Party also introduced the Evening Institute and the Technical Institute at Richmond that also provided the base for a lot of people who went on abroad and did well. I remember when Combermere, the 300-year old institution that Senator Mascoll and I happen to share, the one thing that we have in common that we are proud of, that was the first school that went after a technical stream and it was also laughed at with scorn and derision by some aspects of Barbadian society. It has produced people of the likes of Tyrone Mapp, Erskine Rose. They are the product of that same technical stream that was envisioned and put in place by the Barbados Labour Party.

Therefore, Sir, we do not have to apologise for this Paper as though we are Johnny-come-latelies in the area of contribution to Barbados' development. We have a long and proud history of it and we will continue to contribute to it in every possible way.

Senator Davis made quite a heady and emotive reference to the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, seeking to make some kind of extrapolation between that and Barbados and now. I would like to know whether that is any way reflective of the needs of Barbadian society, whether the Brazilian society or other societies are on all fours with what Barbados needs today, what Barbados needs to tackle in an educational programme to be able to make such a reference relevant. I do not think so, Sir. I believe it is of a different age and a different social climate

and therefore it is just some useful literature that reflects a period of time with which we are not dealing today, but which is good for review and good for theses and research and what not.

Therefore, Sir, I have all pride in supporting this White Paper and I am sure that when all is said and done the Opposition will be left for what it really is, empty, beating at the windows of change like some queer Don Quixote and left on the sidelines of history. Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to commend this White Paper to this Honourable Senate and to address a couple of issues which arise out of the White Paper and to state that I do believe that there are some revolutionary aspects about this White Paper because we live in revolutionary times. We are not talking about revolution in the sense of conflict; but we are talking about revolution in the sense of technology and the impact that it is having on our society and our business community. We are also talking about the fact that this is a paper which leads us to address the issues of the future.

This White Paper, to my knowledge, is the first document of this sort about education that has been written in Barbados for many a year. It addresses the fact that we have stepped back and taken a strategic view and we are taking a considered action in the area of education and addressing the issues that have arisen by a series of *ad hoc* developments, *ad hoc* situations and a response of a Government under siege which has seriously damaged the primary school education in recent years.

This Government has stated that it is reassessing the importance of primary education, the fundamental part of our education with which no student can continue to learn beyond the primary school area. The problem is that for too many years we have been pushing students through schools like sausages. It is not just Barbados that has done this. There are countries around the world that have done it. We have recognised that this is a problem, and we are going to do something about it.

In the White Paper there is specific reference to the training of teachers in new technology but also in the area of remedial education, values education and conflict resolution and special education needs. This is exceptionally important in the primary school area where we can catch those people who are falling through the net and who become the disasters in the society. This is exceptionally important and an area that this White Paper addresses specifically.

Mr. President, we are talking about one of the Ministry's goals, which is the computerisation of primary and secondary schools by the year 2 000. As I travel

around the world, Mr. President, people from developed and developing countries alike are amazed at our commitment to achieving this in such a short period of time. They recognise the value of it and it has changed the image of Barbados as a place in which to invest. It has extreme relevance to the economy. It is also revolutionary in concept. Mr. President, I think we must really understand what this White Paper is doing to the development of Barbados, the development of our people and the development of our economy. Importantly, the White Paper raises issues which have created action. 5.10 p.m.

Senator Mascoll has asked for blueprints and has asked for specific plans about how certain things are going to be implemented. The Ministry has introduced a pilot diagnostic and remedial education programme in over 40 primary schools. That has been done. This will lead to the improvement in the quality of primary education.

In respect of school books, the Government accepts the responsibility of reducing the cost of books to parents of primary school children. The cost reduction will be done through a standardization of primary school textbooks and the supply to the schools for the majority of basic textbooks required by the children. This has been done and this is going to reduce the cost to the parents of primary school children by \$2.7 million. That is something that has happened.

So, Mr. President, as this White Paper is here for discussion and we see the direction in which education will be changed in the years to come, it does not mean that this Government is static, has stopped and waits for the discussion to continue. It is taking concrete action to improve the educational product, to improve the efficiency and reduce the economic cost to the community as a whole.

Mr. President, the offshore sector was described as an area where a few jobs were being created for some secretaries, a few accountants and lawyers. Well, that is not true. The vast majority of the jobs being created in that area are much wider than in those few disciplines. In the Community College there is a plan to widen the stream of information technology inputs and also to widen the area of the arts, to strengthen the area of the use of English, and those areas which are directly supportive of the offshore industry.

Mr. President, in writing software programmes, you use many different disciplines. You just do not use mathematicians and physicists. You use people who have a wide cross section of disciplines, be it accounting, banking, artists, linguists, whatever have you. It is in this area that the greatest number of job creation activities will take place.

Mr. President, we go now to the Polytechnic where it is stated that the objectives are to stay technologically current and also to increase the skills of the masons, steel benders, welders and carpenters who are currently constructing over six major buildings in this country for supplying space for the offshore sector to operate. Some of those people work in the private sector and some of them were working under contract for the Ministry of Industry which is providing some of the most advanced spaces for advanced software development programmes in this country, where many hundreds of jobs will be created over the next few years.

Mr. President, I think we must approach this White Paper in the context of today and the context of the revolution that is sweeping the world. This Government is not waiting for it to happen to us by default. We are taking a proactive approach. We are developing a strategy for action. We are doing it in a considered and methodical manner. We are involving the total community in the development of this strategy. This document has had very wide distribution throughout this country, through the teachers, parents, the business community and the professionals within this community. It will be a living document, something that will continue to develop and change, because change is upon us.

One of the critical aspects of this document, Mr. President, is the focus on continual learning. This is a radical change from the past where people went to school, came out, were qualified and worked for the rest of their lives without further education and training. The objective here is to create a culture within the educational community that will instill love of learning and realization that continual learning in our community is essential to economic development, economic progress and the strengthening of our society. Mr. President, I truly believe that this White Paper on education reform is a radical departure from the past. I think it addresses something that is highly needed. I finally come to the concept of teaching people to think, to be creative and breaking from the past of learning by rote. This complaint has been made within the community for the past couple of decades but it needed articulation and it finds articulation and definition in this document. This White Paper on Education Reform will lead to fundamental change in the way we teach in our schools and the way our children will learn. It focusses on the period of time when people are more readily able to learn specific subjects.

I will never forget my experience with my own children where between the ages of 4 and 7 they were fluent in about four to five different languages. They were fluent with the vocabulary of their age but they had the ability to speak continuously switching from one language to the other without conscious thought. They spoke the languages in the native tongue. They were some of the

most difficult languages in the world but they were living in the environment and were in contact with people who were speaking the language. We have to address the area of conversational language at the primary school level. I have no doubt that this White Paper will lead to a revolutionary change in the method of delivering information to our children and a greater understanding of how they learn.

I commend this White Paper to the Senate.
5.20 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to support this White Paper on Education. But I have a few contributions to make towards improving this White Paper or making it even better.

Asides.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, on page 86 there is an area where it says that suspended students will be monitored by youth commissioners. I have no quarrel with that. However, I think the nurses will be able to assist in monitoring these students, because if students are suspended they are usually suspended for behavioural problems. In particular, those nurses with a psychiatric nurse background who are trained in the area of counselling I think will be able to give some input and assist the youth commissioners in their task. I do not know how it is going to be, but I think this all needs to be linked up with the system of polyclinics throughout the country and with the youth commissioners working in conjunction with the polyclinics and the polyclinics working in conjunction with the schools.

I note that, in the White Paper, assessment for hearing, seeing, speech, *et cetera*, is being attempted. This is excellent. But I should also like to add a bit of improvement on that. I feel that the child, upon entering the school should be fully assessed both physically and mentally. The best person to do this, at the cheapest cost to the Government, is a nurse. With that in mind I am therefore making a plea for the attachment of nurses to schools. I know that at this present time the nurses in the polyclinics are assigned to many schools. But that does not work, Mr. President, because what happens is that if we get dengue fever or anything else, and there are a lot of patients in the polyclinics, that takes precedence over the nurse going into the schools. Therefore the schools take a back seat. It would be better if a nurse is included in the team that is being set up with the psychologist. Even if you start with one or 2 nurses, Mr. President. You have a psychologist in the Ministry of Education and you have made provisions for a second one.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Two more? Why not make provisions for a couple of nurses to work alongside the psychologist and assist her in her task and also assist with the assessment of the school children so that they can pick up different types of deviant behaviour and different disabilities?

Mr. President, another suggestion is that you must make the White Paper walk. You have started to make some areas walk. It would be more difficult to make some areas walk than others. I know that the teachers are very well trained and very well qualified, Mr. President, but it would not hurt to have continuing education for all teachers in the area of problem solving, critical thinking, conflict resolution and the building of self-esteem. They would be able to learn about the new developments in these areas because these areas are the areas upon which the revolutionary or whatever changes you care to call it must come. The changes so that people will think twice before being led. This will come in very useful in the area of substance abuse when there is a lot of peer pressure. When the young ones are able to think critically, their peer group and people want them to do something that is unprofessional, they can say, "No, I do not think this is right." Because that is the main problem in our society, not only in nursing but throughout the society. We are having a problem of people not seeming to make what we would call simple decisions but important decisions needed for the fundamental growth and development of our nation.

Anything seems to go. There does not seem to be any right or wrong anymore. It really does not matter what happens. Problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, conflict resolution and self-esteem are the areas in which one could grow citizens who could stand up to anybody and say, "this is my advice to you, Mr. Minister or Madam Minister... If you do A that would happen and if you do B that would happen."

Mr. President, another area that I should like - I am sorry, I have gone back into the Ministry of Health.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You are in the Ministry of Education today.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, another area in which I support and I think there could be quite a bit of improvement on page 16 is the area of teacher aids. I see these very relevant in the area of the Government institutions, in particular the pre-school areas where they have the pre-school children who, if one could invite the parents to come in and assist and teach them certain skills in parenting and the upbringing of the children, I think this will assist us quite a bit. Because, in the area of education, I think what we need to do in addition to teaching the children is to get to the parents.

I am not so sure how this will be done but I think that every opportunity should be taken to involve the parents in the area of problem solving, critical thinking, *et cetera*, so that they will understand how their children are thinking.

Another area in which I should like to see this White Paper on Education improve is that, as part of the curriculum, to teach the children cardio pulmonary resuscitation, that is CPR. That is a life saving measure. Because we seem to be hearing every day 'A' is collapsing, 'B' is collapsing, 'C' is collapsing and I think we need to teach our children what to do. Just simple first aid and CPR which will assist them in improving the health of our people.
5.30 p.m.

In conclusion, I would like to say that education is forever changing and one will have to change the goals, objectives etc. I would like to make a plea that whatever is being implemented or changed, full consultation should be had with the teachers, the parents and the teachers union concerned, and I wish you luck.

There is one more thing I want to talk about, mother craft. Mr. President, when I was at Alexandra School in Fifth form we were taught mother craft and one of the things they taught us is that children are not toys to be played with. They are not here today and gone tomorrow. When they start crying they do not stop crying. I think we need to expose some of our children to the idea that having a baby is not a toy. It is not a play thing that you will have for a few hours of the day and then you can get rid of it. Once you make a decision to have a baby it is there all the time day and night. I think that, I do not know how it is going to be squeezed in, but I think it is a topic that is very important in order to try to assist with the prevention of teenage pregnancies in school.

Mr. President, I do know that things have changed. People used to leave school in their teens and start having children but it is time that they stay in school and start to learn a bit more. We do recognise that teenage pregnancy is nothing new. We used to start having children at 14, 15, 16 but with developments in education we need to have our children staying in school and therefore we need to teach them about the values of being a virgin until they get married or until they are ready to have a baby. There is nothing wrong with that. In some areas it is being introduced and it is working very well indeed because with certain conditions like the AIDS virus which is very rampant there is no turning back once one gets it. I do not want to go into the area of health because this is the education document but I feel that we should make room for some health education even if it is included in mathematics or English or Spanish or whatever.

With this I support this White Paper and I sincerely hope that we do not have too many problems with its implementation.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I too rise to give my fullest support to this White Paper on education reform and I would also want to take this opportunity to compliment the Minister of Education for having the foresight to begin the workings on such a document as this and to also compliment all the various bodies who had an input into the document, the PTA, the Ministry of Education in particular and all teachers and educators generally.

Mr. President, I want to say and I believe it is a known fact already that in 1952 there were revolutionary changes beginning in education. Free secondary education started under a Barbados Labour Party administration with the construction and opening of the Princess Margaret School, St. Leonards, West St. Joseph, now renamed Sir Grantley Adams Memorial. Erdiston was expanded and a teacher training institute was formed there for the purpose of training teachers. The philosophy was to provide free secondary education to the masses to enable them to take advantage of developments in agricultural and non-agricultural areas and to look at alternate ways of revenue.

The 1962 proposals by the then Democratic Labour Party administration was a restatement of the policies that went before in 1946 to the 1966 development plans of the Barbados Labour Party. They did not depart in any way from those proposals. What the Democratic Labour Party did was to advance the already beginnings and nurturings of the existing proposals.

Senator Mascoll's statements about the 1962 plans being revolutionary could not be true since these were already being implemented since 1946. The former DLP Government in its attempt to institute payment at tertiary institutions was like a turning back and therefore would have had the effect of dashing the hopes and aspirations of poor working class people in this country if it had come to pass. Fortunately it did not because of a change in Government in 1994 and now with the introduction of this White Paper and the policies of this administration that has been washed away and so that will not now happen.

This Education White Paper now creates a new sense of policy guidelines under new management in a revolutionary framework. The style and management in education will allow all of the revolutionary changes to follow and to take place. Since the theme of the Education White Paper, "Each one matters" is paramount I am particularly happy, Mr. President, to look at two areas specifically, the first being special education and I would want to look at pages 7 and 8 of the White Paper which

tells us that the process of integrating the mentally and physically handicapped persons in the society would be accomplished through better identification of children in the need of special education services, upgraded curriculum, additional teacher training and expansion of public awareness programmes in order to better sensitise the community to the importance of special education.

Mr. President, I really have to pause on the aspect of sensitising the public at large to the need for special education. Just this morning on a visit to the Challenor School I was appalled to learn that there was one young man there whom I had the opportunity to speak with who had never done a simple thing such as going to Bathsheba until he was age 25 years old. His family had hidden him away all those years until he moved to the Challenor School and the person in charge there took the opportunity. She too was appalled at his not having done a simple thing like going to Bathsheba, which all of us at some time or other would have done, a simple thing like this. These exercises lead to expanding our knowledge and our integration into a society, the simple things of life often times is all that is needed to give us that one step further on. It is not all housed in the academia but the simple day to day practice of life, street learning, street wise. Sir, it really hurt my heart this morning to think that we still have people in this society who would hide away any child or relative of theirs because they have a disability. That needs to be banished forever and those individuals who do that I would have to say, perhaps they do it out of ignorance or embarrassment. Persons with disabilities should have the opportunity to become involved in our society and to this extent the Challenor School is doing a particularly good job. The whole question of special education ultimately will ensure that persons with disabilities can become part of the day to day framework and management of this country. Often persons with a physical disability have an excellent mind but because they are in a wheel-chair or have to walk on crutches they are shoved away and put aside. That has to stop.

5.40 p.m.

Mr. President, I would also like to look at the area of special education as it relates to slow learners, as I call it, because I am a simple person who likes simple language. As already outlined by Senator Forde in her presentation this morning, there are many students who get below 30 per cent in the Entrance Exam and they formerly would have gone on to fall by the wayside or gone to composite schools or to senior schools such as St. Giles' Senior School. A lot of them along the way lose complete self-esteem in the struggle to keep up with a lot of their peers who are excelling in the academic areas and they feel that because they are not able to keep up with the academic students they are not worth anything.

Mr. President, I always like to share from my own personal experience. I was a student at Foundation Girls' School and I remember that I went in at lower First Form. Then I went into the Second Form and then in the Second Form in 2IA, as it was in those days, which was the highest of the three levels of the Second Form, when we were doing 3 languages consisting of English, French and Spanish also History, Scripture and so on where a lot of reading material had to be done and retained and then to be spit out, I had great difficulty in keeping up and I had a particular friend who excelled and she was at the top of the form. I spent so much time trying to keep up with her but, of course, I did not do well in the exam. Then in the third year I went into the 3A2 stream. I was distressed because at that age as a child you feel if you are not keeping up with your friends that you are not as good as they are. Fortunately, I had an excellent headmistress, the former Senator Enid Lynch, who in those days took the time, and I am sure principals of the day do the same today, to nurture young persons. While I thought it was a travesty that I had to go into 3A2 and my friends went into 3A1, I realized soon after the beginning of the next school year that I was coping very much better. Somebody had taken the time to not just push me through the system but to put me in a level where I could cope.

Mr. President, I would want to say that it gave me the opportunity to blossom because I no longer felt worthless and I have no problem admitting that. I think that most of us at some time or another had these feelings of low esteem and not of being of any worth. We have demonstrated in this White Paper that students who are unable to be on top of the class, and each one does indeed matter, will have an opportunity through remedial education.

I want to look at page 76 of the White Paper where the suggestion and the plan would be to have more schools such as the Alma Parris Memorial School, which opened last year, that caters to students such as these and the curriculum I am very happy about will comprise subjects such as basic English and mathematics, of course, which are essential. Because even though you may not be strongly academic you still need to understand the basic arithmetic, mathematics and English so that you can too when you become an entrepreneur or self-employed craft person or vendor or a person working with your hands that you are able to add 2 and 2 to make 4. Therefore, you can add up your profits at the end of the year so you can see where you have gone. The enrichment subjects consist of music, social studies, home and family health and physical education, career and vocational guidance. Vocational subjects consist of agricultural science and fisheries, art and craft, industrial arts, home economics and needlecraft, basic information technology, tourism – how vital to our Barbados tourism product – and driver's education.

Mr. President, it really gladdens my heart when I read this because I really realized that this Government, of which I am very proud to be a part, is really on an upward mobile trend and taking each and every Barbadian into consideration. I want to touch once again now that I am in this area about the need for educating of the older persons out there, because I remember almost being assaulted in the road during an election campaign when I sought to put this message across that you too matter, even if you are not academic you can use whatever skills that you have. I remember almost being verbally abused most certainly by an older woman of the community who tore up the document that I had as part of my introductory material and she said all this art and craft, how dare you suggest that my girl child would ever want to do something like this. My girl child is going to the University of the West Indies and she is going to be a lawyer. I said to myself that I sincerely hope that girl child had an interest in law because, if not, she too will fall by the wayside. However, this administration is here to place that particular young person, if she should happen to fall by the wayside, because we will have alternates in place for her.

Mr. President, these policies instituted by this administration and contained here in this document on the White Paper will go a long way towards building the self-esteem of our young persons at primary and secondary levels and as they go on to the tertiary level, and will make them forces to be reckoned with regardless of their area of expertise. Mr. President, I would want to urge the Barbadian public as a whole to endorse this White Paper and take the opportunity to put their hands on one and have a read. Do not just blindly say that it is non-revolutionary and it has nothing in there for me. This document has something for everybody and so I would want to commend this White Paper on Education Reform, where each one matters, to each and every Senator in this Honourable Chamber and with that, Mr. President, I commend and offer my fullest support to this document. Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, let me say in a very non-partisan way as it relates to this White Paper on Education that I do not think there is anyone in this Chamber that can deny that this White Paper in itself is an outstanding piece of work. Whether or not we agree with every single aspect of the White Paper, we still should generally agree in a very non-partisan way that this is an outstanding piece of work.

I want to begin my own contribution on this White Paper by quoting from the Prime Minister's first Budgetary Speech Proposals that he delivered last year in the House of Assembly in the Other Place. He said, Sir:

"Mr. Speaker, it is my administration's intention to work assiduously towards building a strong, modern and competitive economy in Barbados, an economy in which the principal thrust in the generation of incomes and jobs comes from the expansion of activities in those sectors which compete in the international business arena, an economy so structured and so managed as to enable Barbados with its wonderful endowment of human resources to grasp the opportunities daily being created in a world of skilled intensive, knowledge based industries, an economy in which there is a broad range of thriving, prosperous and well managed small businesses."

Sir, in that aspect, I believe that what the White Paper seeks to do is to create the kind of Barbadian that the Prime Minister has spoken about that will take his place on the world stage and be able to be the kind of Barbadian of which all of us can duly be proud. I think that globalization is surely one of the most powerful and pervasive influences that is taking place today. Information technology, communication and travel are in themselves revolutionary ideas and revolutionary in their impact upon the world and I think that the whole philosophical underpinnings in which this White Paper is placed takes that into account and the theme that the Minister has clearly laid out is that one is no longer going to be treated in terms of mass but as an individual, everyone is going to be studied and offered the opportunity to be the best that he can be, in what he wants to do, not that he will fall in and fit into a situation that was created for him but, that in his own way, he can hold his own direction with regards to where he wants to go. I think that lays the entire theme on which this White Paper has been founded.

In itself, that is a revolutionary concept. The Minister has clearly laid out and the White Paper has clearly taken account of the fact that we understand that education is available to all people in Barbados. We don't knock that concept. What we are saying is that education must now be quality driven, that every individual must have a right to be able to hold out his or her own path in terms of taking his or her place on that world stage. It is clear in everyone's mind that there is a whole emerging, post-industrial, knowledge-based economy that is emerging and what Barbados as a nation has to do, like any other nation, is to look outwardly and see what that global economy is telling us and how we can take best advantage of what that global economy throws up.

I think, Sir, that this White Paper has already started where Government has started to respond to those global challenges which are being thrown out. To prosper in this new global economy, it is clear that Barbadians will have to rethink the way in which they do things. We must not just prepare ourselves for a place in a national

economy because this concept of national economy has become inadequate and incomplete. What Barbados needs to do, Sir, is to develop a Barbadian who can compete at the highest level, anywhere in the world, irrespective of place of origin or boundaries. These boundaries have failed to exist. We believe that only the highest quality matters, no matter where you are born or where you come from. In that context, Sir, this White Paper on Education Reform is structured.

We believe that education is a dynamic process and is constantly changing and the goalpost continuously shifts and therefore, Barbados has to respond not believing in partisan politics that only if we have free education we must continue in that mode, but Barbados must respond to all of the changing global factors that this world throws up and therefore in that context this White Paper is structured to be able to deal with each and every Barbadian as an individual.

Sir, I want to say that there must be, and legislators need to understand the role, I am not here to create curricula on the Floor of this Honourable Chamber. What I am here to do and this White Paper seeks to do is to create the wide macro view of where educational development in Barbados must go and how that picture fits into the global picture. I am not interested in whether or not there is a White Paper or a blue paper. I am not going to be caught up in form. I am dealing with the substance of the Paper and I am saying that the development process maybe the single most important aspect that we have to deal with if we are truly to move from being a developing country and to display those indicators that prove that we have become a developed or more developed country.

The Prime Minister has clearly stated that one of those indicators is that unemployment in this country can be restructured and brought down to negligible proportions. I believe that the White Paper from the outset sets out clearly the general philosophy of how education will be used in this process. I think that there are concepts in it that make a difference. The fact that it was informed by all of the stakeholders in the educational process in itself is important. For once, we allowed everyone that gained from education or had education or will get some education in the future to have an opportunity to give his or her words on how this process should be structured.

Sir, I want to say that the White Paper on Education is not a bible. It has its flaws like any other document and I propose to deal in my own way with the analysis of the Paper. I will laud the outstanding areas, the areas that I find to be outstanding. There are areas which I consider to be grey areas which I intend to deal with. There are also areas which I consider to be either non-existent or deficient and those areas I also intend to deal with.

I first want to look at the reason for the reform and the Minister clearly set out on page 2 the reason for that reform. It says:

"Barbados has traditionally had a sound educational system facilitating social mobility for our population. There have, however, been some disturbing features occurring in the system over the past decade or so, such as negative attitudes (to self, family, the environment, law and the society in general), persistently poor academic performance and absence of mechanisms to adequately reflect the attainment of students or the success or failure of the methods used in the delivery of education."

Sir, it is clear the educational system must continually be reformed. This is not the last time. This is a process that is ongoing and all of the people on the other side who had the opportunity to reform it in the past, all they did was to spit into the air, because it was a lot of rhetoric. It is all as they say outlined in their own reform document. The problem is that it was never put into practice. We don't claim that the Democratic Labour Party doesn't have ideas about how to reform the educational system. We are saying that this is a process now of action.

Sir, I want to deal with some of the important and outstanding areas as I said before. The next one is the area of teacher empowerment. I had the privilege of teaching for a little while, three years or so of my life, and I am also the holder of a Diploma in Education, believe it or not, and over time I believe that teacher empowerment also becomes one of the fundamental planks of this, because what we do now and as is clearly set out on page 37:

"No educational reform can be successful without the recognition that the teachers are an integral part of the process. As a consequence, it is vitally necessary to empower the teachers and to regulate the teaching/learning environment so as to allow teachers reasonable scope in performing their legitimate functions."

Sir, that in itself is revolutionary, the fact that we not only look now to our students but we also look to empower the teacher and give him or her his rightful place so that they can take their place in helping to reform the system.

Sir, there is the area of curriculum development. The Curriculum Development Council as set up even has Dems on it. Known Dems are on that Curriculum Development Council because we have not allowed anyone to be left out in terms of informing us. Past Ministers of Education we

put on it because we believe again that it must be the Curriculum Development Council must inform in a way that makes a difference that each one matters.

Sir, there is another area. That of diagnostic testing. I believe that if there is an important area the diagnostic testing area sets out on page 65 the area of testing for physical impairment which must be a fundamental plank of this. The Minister has stated that there are people who go into school who have learning disabilities, who have sight and emotional disabilities. For the first time we are taking each child and analyzing that child to see where that child fits into the system, whether that child can see properly, whether that child brings along the tools for him or her to be the best that he or she can be.
6.00 p.m.

Sir, there is the area of flexible transfer, another outstanding area. For the first time we are not keeping children back. We are allowing children to develop at their own speed. These ideas do not necessarily have to be revolutionary. These ideas are ideas that give every one of those children the opportunity to be the best they can be.

There is another area, Sir, that of National Certification. We have said already that there are 60 per cent of them that leave school without any form of certification. How can anyone not see that we need to be able to have Barbadians at least certifiable in terms of what he or she has gained throughout this educational system?

This takes me to the part of children at risk. I thought when I was reading the White Paper that the section on children at risk on page 85 was indeed an outstanding area. Sir, it is important that we talk about children at risk because what has happened is that we came here today to clearly deal with the Prison Bill and reports have indicated, we are still at page 84, that at each secondary school there are approximately 10 students who are at risk for deviant behaviour. When multiplied by 22, the number of public secondary schools, the number becomes 220, a figure equivalent to an entire age group in a large secondary school. Sir, this is first-class. We are looking at each and every opportunity to deal with things that have escaped the process in the past. This is what this Government, this is what this Minister, this is what this Ministry seeks to do. Who can knock that?

There is another outstanding area, Sir, that of Sixth Form Schools and Equitable Access. I think we are all agreed that this is the role and the channel into tertiary education, most of the time, from formal tertiary education as we know it. We are seeing people deprived of the

opportunity to go into Sixth Form in areas which they are competent in. The White Paper sets it out giving clearly on page 95:

"In an effort to improve the access to sixth form places and to ensure that the principles of transparency and equity are honoured, it is proposed to re-establish a Committee for Admission of Students to Sixth Form Schools and the Barbados Community College. It is expected that this proposal will become effective for entry in the academic year 1996-97. At that point, there will no longer be an automatic right to a sixth form place on the basis of one's enrolment in the Sixth Form School. All applications for such places will be reviewed and processed by the Committee for Admission to Sixth Form Schools and the Barbados Community College."

Again, Sir, it continues: "It is envisaged that the membership of the Committee will be as follows:" and then you see a lot of broad-based people, a representative of Non-Sixth Form schools and a representative of the Principals of Assisted Private Secondary Schools. Sir, how can you knock a process like this? This is participatory democracy at work at its highest level and the Barbados Labour Party has never shied away from it.

Sir, there is another area, Adult and Continuing Education on page 112. I read the whole thing from cover to cover. It says:-

"Government remains committed to the provision of a comprehensive Adult and Continuing Education programme for those persons who were unable to benefit fully from formal education. Rather than the continuation of the traditional formal education curriculum, this programme will focus on an informal curriculum which will emphasize learning rather than teaching. As a result, persons working in these programmes will be seen as 'facilitators' who will assist the students to learn."

Sir, how could anyone in their right minds, although there are not many on that side with right minds, knock the concept of adult and continuing education?

Finally, on the area I consider to be outstanding, the use of the Audio Visual Aids Department at page 116 where it sets out aims for this department and how we can better use the Audio Visual Aids Department to help in the process of education in Barbados, an area that has been solely neglected as an important part of education forever and ever in this country, no matter how many free secondary places you have. Therefore, those 10 areas are areas that are clear.

I still have a problem with some areas which I consider to be grey areas and which the Ministry of Education needs to continue to work at to see how we can change these areas. I have always wondered, Sir, about the concept of the Common Entrance Examination as it presently exists. I believe this area needs to be studied, to be consistently studied and reformed.

I believe if there is a system of continuous assessment throughout the primary schools which can tell me that a child is able to go into secondary school at age 9, I see no reason why we have to formalize an examination at one particular age to be able to move a child from primary to secondary. I say this, it is an examination that traumatizes both the students and the parents alike every year in this country. I believe, Sir, that if there is a system of constant assessment, that we may have the mechanism right there for moving them. How do you identify that the child is 9 and must be moved onto secondary school unless this child obviously has been constantly assessed and tested? I believe, Sir, that the area of partial zoning, that is another grey area for me because I have always believed that there is only one way to zone and that is geographically. I believe that if you are going to partially zone, I would say take the schools with the areas of excellence, four or five schools out of the mix. Take them out completely and make the child maybe take an examination if he or she wants to enter that school.

If I make Harrison College the school for Mathematics and Science, and I say that my child is gifted in those areas, and he or she wants to go, let them take an examination to see if they get in. If they do not get into that school, we go to the school that is closest to us, or most accessible to us. But this is what we do. We put a boy from St. Lucy in a canister and hurl him down to Bridgetown every day at 9:00 o'clock in the morning. He comes down to Bridgetown and whenever he comes down here he is like the Duke of York. When you are up you are up and when you are down you are down, but when you are halfway up you are neither up nor down. You move him down here to the school. He goes to school at Harrison College for the whole day. You know what happens to him, Sir? He gets back home too late. First of all he cannot participate in any extra curricular activity at school, because it is already too late. Then you hustle him back up to St. Lucy. He gets up there too late to take part in the community development that happens in that particular place. He finds some girlfriend in town. He gets a job in town. He gets married in town and then the one person that can contribute to helping the community move forward in St. Lucy ends up in St. Michael.

I am saying that the child's own assessment needs to be studied, and unless it is in an area where he is unusually gifted, I see no point in taking him out of his environment to bring him somewhere else. In every study I have ever

seen, and I said I have a Dip. Ed. so I would have taken courses in education, in every educational assessment that I have ever heard about, children who are bright help children who are dull to move up to aspire to them. Children who are bright have never yet been mixed and come down but children who are dull will come up. If you cream off the top every year and send them to one school I believe you are perpetuating an elitism which does not fit into this environment.

Sir, I have a little problem with the grey area of co-education. When I taught, co-education was introduced at the school I taught at for the first year. I saw things I had never seen in my entire life. No Barbadian cannot even claim a legitimate place on the West Indies' Cricket team. Campbell has been in and out. Brown is barely holding on. Holder made nought this morning very early. One of the reasons is that our sporting base is in crisis. You know why, Sir? If a boy does not bat in the nets in the evening he cannot bat long on a Saturday, and if he does not bat long on a Saturday he cannot make the Barbados team to bat long in the Red Stripe.

Aside.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: You do not know much about education so listen to me. Listen to what I am saying.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please address your remarks to the Chair.
6.10 p.m.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Sir, the point is this that in co-education in Barbados I coached an athlete at that school at the time. He was a very good athlete in third form. The next year, in fourth form, he returned to tell me, "Mr. Lynch, I cannot stay at school to practise because I have a girlfriend now and she is going down in the bus stand with the boys. If I do not go down in the bus stand with her, I am liable to lose her." Therefore he never stayed at school to help develop that particular side of his character which is so important. Because sports and the other areas teach discipline. You cannot have education unless you have discipline. That is why it is important.

I want to say that I believe excellence in public secondary schools is an area that is deficient. We even have here those areas of excellence. I have them covered here. They are on page 89. We have laid out areas of excellence in this document. We have got Industrial Arts and Home Economics. Would you believe that there is not an area of Physical Education or Sports within those areas of excellence? Do you want to tell me that, in a day and age where professional sports ...

Aside.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: We have a professional footballer who just scored a goal in England on Saturday, Lalu Goodridge. How could you have areas of excellence that include things like Vocational Education, Horticulture and Music but you have not got sports? Sports has got to be an area. I am telling the Government and the Ministry that they need to restudy and rethink the area of excellence, in terms of sports, because I believe it is an area as well that can save us and help us economically. We are not looking at that as an aspect of our own development. I believe this needs to be added because I believe that Barbados desperately needs a sports school, not a cricket school where people who are gifted in that particular area can be given the opportunity to develop.

I am making this call right here and now too that the Barbados Scholarship be extended to include people in the area of sports and arts. We have the world junior record holder in track and field in the 100 metres. He has gone on to a school in the United States on an athletic scholarship. When you go to a university in the United States on an athletic scholarship they make you run your heart out. I know because I went on one. Any time that you are about to be trained or you want to concentrate on your country, he can no longer do this because he has got to run for the school which pays for his education.

I am saying that a boy who is academically gifted as well and who is the fastest junior athlete in the world could have been the recipient of a Barbados Scholarship. Therefore, if he did not choose to run for the school in 1996 to get ready for the Olympics to prepare for Barbados he could have done that. But he cannot do that now because he is caught up in a programme that makes him run for that school.

I want to say as well that in the area of tertiary education the Minister has clearly outlined that not enough persons go on from secondary to tertiary. That is, principally, because of a lack of resources. Many of them are able to go on. There are many times when these people have got ability but they cannot pay. I commend the Minister 100 times over for letting people understand in Barbados that we need to pay for tertiary education in Barbados.

We need to correct the imbalances that exist on the social scene. One of the ways in which we are going to correct that imbalance is through paying for people at the tertiary level. The United States, for example, Sir, is one that is so complete that in a leading magazine in the United States it says, "One of the reasons why the United States continues to lead the way, even though all Europeans think that Americans are dumb, is because the United States spends more, per capita, on education than does Japan, Germany or anybody else." I believe that that is significant

for Barbados because what it sets out is this. There are some who might drop through the cracks.

But I am saying that when you take a man like Bill Gates, who dropped out of Harvard – and some people not only believe that he is the brightest man but also the richest man in the world – it tells you something about what we need to do in terms of our own tertiary education and how much money we spend. I think that has been the hallmark of what we have done in this country over the years, but we have continued to make free tertiary education accessible to all.

I believe also that discipline is an area that is important. I visited a school that is called a newer secondary school on a sports day recently and I saw equipment and conditions that were better than some of the older secondary schools that I have seen. One of the things that appalled me was that there was a lack of discipline. I believe that the fundamental problem was that there was a lack of discipline.

I keep on saying that this thing about people can only be rewarded, and self-esteem fortification, I say that we have to bring back some old-fashioned values to this country... I believe that the White Paper is deficient in the spiritual side of the educational aspect. I believe that everything that you need to learn, you learn in Sunday School from the beginning and it sets the stage for everything else that you do. I believe that if we do not bring back some old-fashioned family values to this educational system, I do not care how much academics we preach, we will still be in trouble.

People walk around and tell you that we can aspire to the concept of a one-parent family. There is no such thing as a one-parent family. I do not believe that. I believe that a family consists of a mother, father and child or children. I do not believe that we should aspire to have one-parent families. I believe that parenting, as a subject, needs to get into that continuing education area as well and that we need to look at a broad base of that. I believe it is deficient in some ways, maybe the informal education side. We do not look at *CBC* television. We do not look at those video shots and control the things that come off of them because that, in a way, is one of the greatest influences. I believe that the White Paper is deficient in that area because that is an area that must be studied and must be looked at and examined.

In conclusion, I would say this. I do not believe that this education paper is an A+ paper. I give the Minister an A, not an A+, because it has some deficiencies in it. I am grading this one. I would say this. I laud these areas. The broad-based consultative process that informed this particular paper. I laud the fact that there is research in this paper and it is going to be ongoing. I laud the fact that

she talked about public relations and letting Barbadians know about each and every one of these schools.

I want to say that whether you want to call this paper revolutionary or not, it is a fantastic document. I want the Opposition of Barbados to join with me in a non-partisan way, to support the reforms that have been laid out here. As they say in Latin, *carpe diem*, seize the day. Let us move forward in Barbados and stop being very partisan in our issues. This, Sir, is a document. I laud the Minister.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. It is a bit late but I do not believe I should allow this opportunity to pass and not make my contribution on education in Barbados, not necessarily the White Paper on Education.

I should like to start by complimenting the staff in the Ministry of Education, the teachers and all those individuals who joined to help to produce the document. I have read most of it, I must admit, not all of it. It is extensive. It has gone into a number of areas in the educational system.

I was so familiar that I had to look to see where I had seen most of those things before. Hence, I turned to the National Development Plan, 1993 to 2000 and lo and behold, pages 54-91 embodied every area, and in some instances word for word, covered in the White Paper on reform. That is not to say, Sir, that I am saying there is something wrong about it. The point I want to make is that education is an area that once you have looked at it carefully, and we are really looking at it, Sir, we should arrive at similar or the same conclusions. Therefore there is no need for this type of divisive debate which has taken place this evening.
6.20 p.m.

I was hoping that I would not have to refer to my Manifesto but since Honourable Members of the Barbados Labour Party set out to prove to Barbadians that education came about on September 6, 1994 and that all of these revolutionary and forward looking reforms started with the Barbados Labour Party. I have no choice, Sir, but to refer to the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party. On page 32 of that Manifesto it clearly states, the Democratic Labour Party maintains that the educational system must respond creatively if we are to face the challenges which confront us as we approach the year 2000. It proposes to pursue the following programme of action. It starts with early childhood education, improving diagnostic services, providing appropriate training for teachers and instructional material. It proposes to maintain and consolidate present

programme development in primary level education, to consolidate, and I hear murmurs on the other side, at least one who stated that he was a little perturbed that did not address this area of the White Paper. At the same time we proposed to consolidate the moral and religious education component of the curriculum and pay special attention to instruction and teacher training.

It goes on in the areas of technical and vocational education to be more responsive to the needs of the National economy, to implement a national certification system. We recognised that was necessary for today. To introduce a new system of transfer from primary to secondary school. We also explored that area. In adult education, we propose to rationalise the delivery of these programmes with a specific focus on their quality, efficiency and cost effectiveness, the ultimate objective being institutionalisation of life long education and provision of post-school training and employment opportunities and it goes on.

I will hold to this Manifesto, Sir, because I think it is necessary that when we seek to debate issues of a national nature that we have to be careful. No one can deny that there are serious problems in our system of education but I believe the challenge for Barbados today is the challenge that calls for a very strong sense of commitment because the challenge is dismantling the status quo in the education system of Barbados.

All of these proposals in the Manifestoes of the 2 political parties and in the White Paper seek to correct. When you have a house and there are cracks you seek to chip and plaster. I believe that in order to reform education in Barbados we have to go a bit deeper.

There are many of us who do not want to debate the real problem facing us in education today. I have no difficulty debating it because I am fairly anchored. I know where I stand. I know where I come from. I know where I belong. I know where I am going. Those are the components which give you clarity and which help you to face challenges which could cause you to be unpopular at times when you have to make decisions in the interest of the masses of Barbados.

No one can deny that in our primary school system our children are placed under significant pressure and stress as they compete to enter the secondary school system. No one can deny that their parents experience sleepless nights to the point of ulceration of their stomachs as they agonise about the outcome of the results of these examinations after their children have sat these examinations. No one can deny that when these children have sat the examination and the results are back and they have not gained entry into the school which their parents thought they should have

entered that these children believe that is the end of the their lives. No one can deny that a significant percentage of these children believe they are worth nothing, it makes no sense continuing. No one can deny that many of them who go on to the secondary schools go there because they are not yet in full control of themselves. The system says they must go to school. Their parents say they must go to school so they go. The evidence is in the schools, in the classrooms, that a significant number of these children are in the classrooms physically but spiritually and otherwise they are elsewhere.

Mr. President, any system of education which subjects such young people to such pressures must be investigated thoroughly. It is all well and good to put all the things in place for other periods but for me many of our problems in society today started at that point. Many of those children on the streets some of whom are referred to as vagrants, many of those children got 20% and 30% in the 11+ examination. Many of those children in Glendairy who have committed all kinds of heinous crimes, Mr. President, many of those children are the ones who got between 20% and 30% in the 11+ examination. I am therefore saying that we need to take this system and fully explore what is it that we have to do to stop the system from destroying our citizens. We have to remove the myth that some schools in this country are better than others. We have to take it out of the heads of the teachers. We have to take it out of the heads of the parents and the poor children themselves. Our biggest problem is tackling our problems in education. The other problem I should say rests in attitudes. We need to embark on a whole new programme of socialisation which says to Barbadians, look there was a time when we had few schools and when one or 2 turned out to be better than the others but there has come a time that we have enough schools and we have teachers who are all trained and qualified and equipped to deliver education at the same level therefore let us move away from this school better than the other. But it cannot happen if the system of marking remains the same. How are you going to say to a child with a 50 per cent pass mark, who is going into a school which is catering to children with a 90 per cent pass mark, "never you mind," and expect the child to accept that? That is why I support a system which allows children to mix. I support that system. If partial zoning or total zoning will assist in that regard, I support that 100 per cent. I have seen children in the classroom who from the outset appeared to have no ability at all until they started interacting with the children who were a bit sharper, because children are not as unkind as adults, and I am going to relate some of my experiences in the classrooms.

6.30 p.m

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: As a matter of fact, they do not distinguish between themselves until

adults whisper into their ears that you are black and she is white and all of that. Do not let us fool ourselves about this.

Mr. President, I am saying that we have to deal with that problem. Let us get the system in place which allows these children to mix. Let each one help the other. I would like to see a mentor programme in our schools, like in the American school system. I can speak now of it with some authority. I was brought up in Barbados to believe that the system of education in the United States was the worst. Unless you had been educated in Barbados or England, you did not go to school. Well, thank God I removed the veil from my eyes. I have now been exposed to the system of education in the United States and let me say this, that I have two daughters at school and in the areas in which they are sharp they have been allowed within the system to be tutors for their peers. I have a daughter who went to school at Ellerslie Secondary School, and I want to make that clear, because I want to show that I do not believe that any schools in Barbados are better than others. I have another daughter who attended St. Michael. The one who attended Ellerslie got back the same subjects as the one who attended St. Michael, with the exception of one, because they had a parent behind them who reinforced strong values.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: But I will deal with that, Mr. President, and I will continue to make my point. My daughter who left Ellerslie School and who is attending school in the United States has shown that she has sharp abilities in calculus and physics and she tutors three students privately at her school in calculus and physics. I would like to see us have that kind of system in our secondary schools where our children can help each other.

Another thing that happens in our secondary school system, Mr. President, is that our teachers must learn to control the level of favoritism in the classroom. That creates serious problems in our school system. A number of our teachers in the classroom make it obvious that they prefer a particular type of child and some of them go further. This is one of the reasons why I support Parent Teachers Associations but I think high profile parents should sometimes not become so much a part of that kind of situation in the schools, because the teachers pick out their children. They do not realize how they make the other children in the classrooms feel when they do it and I will use myself as an example. I was in a form at my secondary school in which there were other students whose parents were teachers and one of the things some of those teachers would do was to come to the classroom and say: "Oh, how is daddy? I have not seen him for a long time." or "I

saw mommy last night at a particular function." Sensitivity, Mr. President, is important and that is why I believe that we need to expose our teachers to inter-personal relationships that they would understand that whether they socialize with these children or not, when they get to the classroom they must not paint these children with different brushes.

These are some of the problems we have in our school system. I do not know why they want to run away. They are real. So that when we have our children on the streets there are a number of contributing factors and some of the teachers contribute to that.

I believe, Sir, as I said in the Estimates Debate last year, that education takes the major part of our national budget and I believe that education is about shaping and culturing of people. It therefore hinges on a national philosophy if you want to call it that. What I find lacking in this White Paper is a core of beliefs which challenge all people within the education system in Barbados. Performance is always related to goals. You do not get anything out of people unless they are aiming for something. I believe that the White Paper on Education has not stated clearly that it can be understood by everybody in Barbados. I do not like the term stake-holders in education. The stake-holders in education is the population of 260 000 Barbadians if that is the size of the population of Barbados. I do not like that term. When I take up this White Paper or when an American takes up the White Paper or when an Englishman takes this document up, he or she without having to go through this voluminous document should be able to see from the first page of this Paper where Barbados is going into the 21st century and beyond. As a matter of fact, Sir, the first paragraph of this document should clearly state the national objective.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I do not mind what my colleagues on the other side say to me. An objective is something that is put in brief and simple terms because it is something that you have to be able to retain. As I have stated before...

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: The Russians succeeded. Fidel Castro succeeded. All Governments – I am not dealing with whether you support it or not. I am dealing with the fact that, whenever you want to mobilize and motivate your people to achieve a national goal, your objective must be clearly stated that it remains with them.

I challenge all members of this Senate to visit any primary school in Barbados tomorrow, ask for permission to speak to the students of that school and ask what is the document on education aiming to achieve. Ask them to say the National Pledge. They can say it. The point I want to make is that the national objective must be defined in that type of way that it can remain with people. It has to be etched in their memories. We are missing the point.
6.40 p.m.

A national objective caters to people at all levels of society. The smallest child in Japan, 5, 6, 7 knows what is expected of him. Let us not fool ourselves. They assemble transistors from the age of 4 and 5 and 6 in Japan. What are we saying? That is a national objective. You cannot have a White Paper on Reform that you read all kinds of things and then at the end of the day you cannot summarise it and say this is what is expected.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am having difficulty in hearing the Senator.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, Sir, I am not going to allow my colleagues to force me to deal with this page by page. I am going to deal with the issues in Barbados as I see them. The Government of Barbados has stated that it will embark on a programme of economic enfranchisement. A White Paper on Education Reform should seek to assure Barbadians that they would be equipped for us to realise this goal of economic empowerment. Where in this document must I go and find some clearly stated points which will help me to say that we are really on the course to economic enfranchisement.

There is mention of business education. There is mention of technical and vocational training. Mr. President, that, too, has to be firmly stamped in the minds of Barbadians, and I believe you will have to start with the school system. Our children must know when they are going to school their purpose in going to school is not to pass exams only, not to go to university only, their purpose for going to school is to realise their potential to the point of self-actualisation and at the end of the day to assist their nation in its development.

If economic enfranchisement which is about empowering the masses which in itself implies that significant percentages of our population take training in the share of economic power. If that is to be a reality the educational system must address that. I agree with Senator Davis that it is about love. Economic enfranchisement is about creating love. It is not about creating it

selfishly, about getting it and seeing how much you can have and spending it all and then moving on. It is about sharing, about pulling along your brothers and sisters, and it is about making sure that your offspring have something to inherit and carry on. That is an act of love. Today in Barbados as I seek to encourage many Barbadians to plan their financial future, a number of them say to me that they didn't inherit anything so their children can start from scratch like them. That is what a lot of Barbadians say. Sir, we have to work in that area too. We have to get into the classrooms and get our children to understand that they come to school because they are embarking on improving their lot, the lot of the others around them and making Barbados a better place. These are very serious issues.

If education is about making people realise their potential it has to address many other areas. The classroom is one part of the education of a people. The challenges facing the educational system in Barbados, Mr. President, resides in our homes, within our families, in our churches, in our social and political groups out there in the wider community. I would like to see greater interlocking of these agencies in Government with the educational system. I would like to think that in the same way in the past we had extra-curricular activities – guiding, Brownies and those things, which are present today, that we would seek to go beyond that. We need to link the school more with the wider society. Let me explain, Sir. I don't just make hollow statements. As a citizen, I attempt to play my part.

For the past 5 years I have been a visiting tutor to a number of secondary schools – the principles of business class.

I am not paid a penny and even if I were paid I would turn it over to the school. I have been going to a number of schools in their career guidance programme and I try as much as possible to encourage young people to look into some non-traditional areas of work, that when they are thinking about careers that they try to see themselves doing other things than what they would like to believe are the only careers. That is another problem that we have in Barbados. In those schools when you ask children what it is that they want to do, what they want to become, they would not choose areas other than the traditional. They don't because they do not believe again that they would be living up to the expectations of their parents if they chose areas outside of the traditional.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, you have 2 minutes to wind up.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I wish I had a bit more time. Let me say that I have no contentious comments to make about the White Paper on Education Reform. What I want to say, Sir, is that the

document identifies a number of concerns in our system, areas which have been clearly articulated in the past. So we are at one in this area. What I want to see is a real search into our educational system. I want us to be able to resist the pressures of those people who would want us to keep a system which perpetuates a certain class in this society. I want to see, Sir, when we come up with answers that we have the courage to implement the programmes in our education system in Barbados which would redound to the benefit of all.

6.50 p.m.

I thank you very much, Sir, for allowing me the opportunity.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Mr. President, I rise to make my contribution to the White Paper. Before I get into the meat of my discourse, Sir, I would first of all like to answer some of the statements made by the Opposition Senators and Senator Davis. Senator Thompson was contradictory. She built her argument up and then she knocked it down when she referred to her two children and the reason why one did not really outdo the other one.

Sir, both Senators Thompson and Mascoll failed to draw the distinct line between learning, teaching and education. They mixed everything up. Unlike Senator Davis, she was fairly clear. Sir, I make no apologies that us old people in here are trying to live the lives of the children. We do not know if the children are at ease, are at home or are relaxed in their schools. I observe children coming from all the newer secondary schools assimilating quite nicely with those from the older secondary schools. In another few weeks, Sir, you only have to go up to the National Stadium and see. A few weeks ago they completed a volleyball competition. A few days ago they completed a Basketball Competition. They also did swimming, and no difference.

I have the privilege, Sir, to teach about some six or seven children weekly, not all at one time, some in Physics and Chemistry and they all come from different schools. They came from the older secondary with and without sixth forms, the new ones, and these children the least they think about is which school they are at. Each one seems to know the other one and the children are quite relaxed. This is why I say that us old people seem to be more concerned and seem to be all caught up with the so-called prejudice that lies in between the schools.

Sir, at some point in time you have to face the music. We wish that life was utopia but it is not. Children at the tender age of seven and eight have to do Grade I, Grade II, Grade III Piano. They pass or fail. Life is a challenge. The parents are the ones suffering from the stress because they want to live their lives again through the children and it is unfortunate that this should happen.

Only a few weeks ago, Sir, I had to visit my old school. When I got there, I saw equipment that I went and found and the children are still using it to the best of their ability, old beaker stands, old galvanometers are there and benches 45 years old. About a year ago I happened to have gone to a dinner at Springer Memorial School and those facilities, spanking facilities, were well covered. The outdoor facility which they call their gym is covered. They can play volleyball and netball. Those facilities do not exist at schools like Harrison College and St. Michael. They just do not have them.

Sir, there seems to be an invisible hand which governs the success of these older schools. I think it has something to do with those teachers who go back. It was commonplace at Combermere where old boys left and went back and taught. It happened at Harrison College and, Sir, it happened at your old school. They went back because it was like part of a commitment that before you go overseas you put in your stint for two or three years at the old school and then you go on. Some of those returning go back to the old school. I would like, Sir, to implore upon some of those past students from some of the newer schools to go back to their old schools and give part of their time in teaching. When that happens, you have a great respect, a feeling and a commitment for your old school.

We talk, Sir, about the United States of America, the Soviet Union, Canada and England. The type of education upon which we were weaned was one which was subject centred. America and England have tried the more progressive style where the child now becomes more the central focus than the subject itself, and letting them, as they say, run the show. This created serious problems in England in the 1960s. Sir, the literature is there to show that sociologists had a field day during the 1960s and 1970s in education. So lots of what we would like now to explore with and probably look at and try, have been tried and thrown through the window elsewhere.

Sir, if the Minister, along with her technical staff, were bold enough to bring together all the facets in one document, it is akin to having your talents and using them but just do not say that she pulled from here and she pulled from there. It represents a document which was previously not brought together in one solid publication. Each and every one of us in this Chamber would have been a recipient of what we call the good old education and it is nothing to be ashamed of. As a matter of fact, it is that education that allows us to come here and sit today and be able to see the cracks and flaws and be able to take us forward into another time period. I do not like so much to talk about the 21st Century, it is just a few years from here.

Sir, such an education is the only thing that most of our parents were able to bequeath to us. Although most of

us sitting at this table span a period of the 1930s to the 1970s in secondary education, whether it was a classical education, scientific, or one with the humanities, we are the better off today, and we have been the envy of many a country in the world. Yes, Sir, it has its problems. Who would be so naive as to say that it does not have its problems? The literature will show you that this type of education helped to the developing of children into efficient members of society. It equips them with the basic skills to get them ready for earning a living. We were able to pass onto children through teaching the cultural heritage and future aspirations of the nation. It helped to nourish spiritual values. It helped to create disciplined minds. It helped to train our potential leaders. It helped to inculcate qualities of character, for instance, industry, patience, perseverance, sound judgment and mental effort. But, as Senator Rickinson said, it had its flaws.

Sir, the theme which rings through this Paper that each one matters is, indeed, a theme which shows that at least we are trying to involve each and every child and each and every adult who wants thereafter to participate in the system, an opportunity. The Minister and her staff throughout this Paper have shown philosophical soundness. They have been judgemental and they have sought, Sir, to bring together some of the old and hybridize it with some of the new showing some degree of progressive education. 7.00 p.m.

Just let us look, for instance, and in another few weeks, when we look at the Income Tax Act we are going to show you what a progressive approach is towards reform.

At page 21 it shows social commitment:

"In respect of books, Government accepts the responsibility of reducing the cost of books to parents of primary school children. This cost reduction will be done through the standardization of primary school textbooks and the supply to the schools of the majority of basic textbooks required by the children. Accordingly, through an IDB Loan, some 114 000 textbooks in English, Mathematics, Social Studies and General Science".

Is this not progressive? Sir, as a matter of fact, this is bringing into play 3 different areas. The first is that you have brought it down to the primary school. There was a time when you would get school children at that age going out with the Hayden Richards, Walter Phillips, Nerine Singh and Mary Signacks, a set of books for over \$200. That is in class 2. Then you have those who are actually writing the exam another \$200. Then you have those in third form at secondary school, another \$200 or \$300. It shows a commitment not only to those at the secondary

school. It shows a commitment not only to Maths and English, it goes beyond that and it shows a commitment to Social Studies and General Science. This is real reform, just as how this Administration, some time ago, had embarked on income tax reform.

If you go to page 67, if you are talking about reform, if you are talking about commitment, the Common Entrance Exam. The previous Administration, and there are some individuals who keep hedging this system of the Common Entrance Exam. We are either going for it or we are going to leave it out. It is not going to suit you today when you are at the wheels of power and tomorrow suit you when you are in Opposition. You have to be firm and honest. I laud the section which says:

"The Ministry proposes that the 'Common Entrance' Examination should remain as a measure of what children have attained at the end of primary schooling since it is perceived as the 'fairest' way by which children's attainment levels can be assessed."

You are being rational.

If you come with another system as fair as this is, no problem. But again, we seek to talk in terms of what happens in America and what happens in England, not knowing that that system is built around, to some extent, religion whether you are Catholic, Protestant. Every child in America is not in the system where it will get in as easily as the other one to the University of Massachusetts. All the systems have their problems. Parents sometimes send their children up state, down state to be able to get them close to a university which they think their child, at some point in time, would be desirous of attending according to the career which he is hoping to plan. If one thinks that because it is America and each and everyone has the same equal opportunity and USSR, that is false. Every system has its Max Plank Institute, it has its Einstein Institute, it has its University of Massachusetts, the MITs, all systems have them, Sir. Therefore, I would not join in simply saying abolish the Common Entrance for the sake of abolition.

Page 80. We are at the secondary level. This shows the bifocal or I could even say the trifocal route along which our secondary school system will continue or will take its path over the next few years. This is what it has to say:

"It is concerned not only with providing an agreed core education for all as a basis for living but also with ensuring a sound foundation for entry into the marketplace as well as for continuing education."

Sir, if any Senator got up and said that the vision was not clear, there was not an opportunity of a rewarding career after leaving school, nothing is further from the truth.

"Its significance in providing the tools for adult living is therefore without question."

Here is where there is the fusion of the old and the new.

"The present systems of certification (CXC and BSSC) leave a substantial number of persons without independent indicators of their achievement. CXC captures fairly well the upper 25 percent, that is, those students who obtained 3 or more General Proficiency subjects."

It then goes on to say:

"School leavers and as such a national secondary school certificate must be established to correct this short-coming. Further, it is generally accepted that both BSSC and CXC Basic have fallen into difficulties regarding their acceptability for further training or for entry into the job market. This Certification must also be available to adults participating in any Adult and Continuing Education programme."

I do not know how some of these Senators read this document. I am convinced that they read the Introduction and nothing more.

Aside.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: I am speaking about the Other Side, Senator Odle.

On page 94 again you are grading the new with the old:

"Government is therefore committed to a continuation of sixth Form Education in the four Sixth Form Schools and the BCC,"

Sir, there are some out there who are silently trying to knock the system for one reason or another. But the sixth form system has served us well and it will continue to serve us as we expand and we take more into the system and as we off-load to the Community College those students from other secondary schools without a sixth form.

This is how it continues, Sir:

"And the BCC, as well as the relatively new Associate Degree Programme at BCC."

Again, offering you an opportunity, at the Community College level to get the Associate Degree in the field, once it is given there, that you desire.

"However, there is need to rationalize course offerings to ensure that equity prevails in accessing sixth form places and to provide subject areas which have the greatest potential for supporting the Government's overall economic policy of job creation and a vibrant export-led economy."

Here again, Sir, you cannot say that the system is failing or that the system is not working in the direction of setting out opportunities for students leaving secondary school.

The importance of libraries on page 116:

"Encouraging the establishment of Library Resource Centres in the nation's schools and supporting them by all possible means, including networking."

What I should like to add here, Sir, is that these facilities be made available to the students on Saturdays and you just do not close the schools down on Friday and re-open on Monday.
7.10 p.m.

Sir, before I wind up, we have been hearing a lot about the information technology and I have seen some figures and some statistics in Appendix 3. There are 55 students going forward one with Grade 1, one with Grade 2, 11 with Grade 3, 26 with Grade 4, 16 with Grade 5. Sir, over 60% have fallen by the wayside in terms of achieving Grade 1 and Grade 2. Sir, look at a subject like Physics which lots of people may consider as being difficult and this is why I say, Sir, we do not know what is going on. We try to live the lives of our children. Four hundred and fifty six entered and about one third of those children achieved Grade 1. That, Sir, is worthy of praise. That was in 1993 and a similar picture reveals itself in 1994. Information technology, 77 students going forward. Two achieving Grade 1, 15 achieving Grade 2 and then between Grade 3 and Grade 5 you have 54. Maybe we should pause, because this is need for analysis. Maybe we should ask ourselves, has the syllabus been well understood? Has it been well interpreted? Is it a matter of equipment? Is it a matter of those who think that they are really sharp in the area, but are not as sharp as they think they are? Sir, it leaves me a bit concerned.

Another area where I find children tend to opt, thinking that they will get away from the more rigorous curriculum, is the Principles of Business. The results, Sir, are not as encouraging as one may tend to believe in terms of the children opting to go for an apparent easier course or courses.

Sir, I would like to see instituted, but I am not going to be caught up in the methodologies, but I would like to see a greater emphasis being placed in the teaching of science throughout the schools. At primary level, Sir, I do

not think that a child should wait until it reaches secondary level and at, in some instances, 13/14 to be exposed to basic concepts. Sir, I think this is where the panic button is pressed and they are introducing 2 or 3 huge books trying to cover the course load in 2 years. I think, Sir, this is where the problem arises. How can you get a child to think about the environment at age 14 when in truth and in fact that should have been introduced as early as age 5, as early as age 7, to conserve water, to conserve energy? Expose them, Sir, to small magnets, expose them to microscopes, not expensive microscopes, Sir, the small plastic ones that cost next kin to nothing. Expose them, Sir, to the concepts of speed and light. We do not have to wait until they reach 14 where they have already been influenced and already have a bias then to instil certain principles into the brains of these children.

Sir, I think some of our older, or some of our retired science teachers could find a very excellent niche in preparing workbooks for students at primary schools because remember they, the retirees, would have run the full distance and the children could be introduced to practical courses. No books with theory. Do not model them. Let them explore the topics, let them experiment and they will come up with their own conclusions and when they get to the secondary level, so long as they have their workbooks with them, they would see how the whole thing ties in and it is not magic. Sir, technology is not magic, it is science being put into action. Technology, as omnipotent as it is, is the slave to science so that when you go into a lab and you see various blood samples being analysed, Sir, when you go into food processing or let us say manufacturing, and you see various switches going on and coming off they are basically harnessing the tenets of the natural sciences.

I know that we have children throughout the length and breadth of this country who, because a topic has been introduced late, has been introduced badly, go on not to like the specific area and shy away from it and go to another area which they think is apparently easier. This is where a great deal of the problem lies.

Sir, now I am speaking on books, I think and I know for sure there are some children who have a bad record in caring their text books and I make no apologies. If a child has gone on record as damaging its books, Sir, some of those books, the ones with glossy covers, they cost in excess of \$100 and if you have a record for not caring your books, I feel you should be made to pay up front before you actually receive the books. In other words you should have to carry that little penalty before, not after when the books are damaged, since sometimes students do not come back into school at the end of that term.

Sir, I see the White Paper as a good running track. It has resilience, it has distance and it has elbow room. Sir, there are various schools of thought about education,

what it should do and what it should not do. Some see it as being a social stabiliser. Some see it as bringing together national unity. Some see it as a form for wealth creation and some see it as personal fulfilment. But, Sir, the best definition I have seen in recent times appeared a few years ago in the RSA Journal No. 5411 page 743. This was in an article in a publication by a Sir Christopher Ball, a Fellow in Continuing Education. I think he was called to chair a committee looking into university education. It is the same thing that we are looking at here now – payment or non-payment. It was entitled "Our Widening Access To Higher Education" and this is what he had to say:

"In developed nations and re-developing countries like U.K..."

7.20 p.m.

He referred to his country as a re-developing country as recent as 2 or 3 years ago.

I go on:

"In developed nations and re-developing countries like U.K., it is becoming clear that the quality of the education and training of the work-force is the single most important factor in delivering economic competitiveness."

Sir, he did not stop there. He went on to say:

"Of course, education is the hand maiden of more than just the economy."

Mr. President, Sir, with those few words, I would like to make it abundantly clear that I endorse and support this document on education reform which will go a long way in the development of our students. I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR J. A. WORKMAN: Mr. President, much has been said by many and with great conviction on this White Paper during the day and we are now in the 49th over of this limited overs contest. So I really do not have to score too many runs. I will give support to the White Paper because I believe it is a genuine attempt by the Government and by all those who have joined forces with the Government in preparing a focus for education in Barbados. I support it, Sir, because I believe that the document quite rightly addresses the vision we should have for education where we see education as fashioning people to fashion our nation. I believe that the White Paper addresses the opportunity to develop a whole person whether the individual is a child, youth or an adult who has the opportunity to develop his and her personality and potential and to put it at the disposal of our nation for strong nation building. I believe, Sir, that is the focus education must take. We have been so concerned in our educational thrust at developing ourselves in getting a degree, which is nothing more than certification of

proficiency at a particular level, and then we believe that we have arrived. But it is when we can transform this personal academic knowledge into public productivity that the entire nation benefits. I believe that the White Paper addresses this and gives room and scope for development of our people and our resources.

We are living in an environment where the world order has changed, is changing and will continue to change very rapidly and it is this flexible approach and this wide approach to education which will stand us in good stead and equip us to meet the rapid changes of our society. Therefore, our educational system must no longer be static and stereotype but it must be dynamic and variable to suit the challenges of every coming age.

Mr. President, I would say that the White Paper is indeed a revolutionary tool, not revolutionary in conflict but rather revolutionary in conquest as it seeks to address the conflicts, fears and fightings within and without which challenge our society from time to time. I was therefore happy to see that the White Paper has moved away from the traditional three R's which we have expanded at different levels of our understanding of reading, writing and arithmetic and it has gone to a fourth 'R' of reasoning where by critical analysis an individual is able to understand his or her environment, the challenges that are there and to use that academic knowledge to surmount the difficulties and indeed ultimately turn those challenges into productivity.

But there is another 'R', Mr. President, religion, which seems to be unaddressed. We need to get back to moral values. I think that when we begin to speak about religion people limit religion to the relationship between an individual and his or her God. But we need to see religion in its wide sense for indeed religion teaches us brotherly love and I know that Senator Farley in another little place would say brotherly love, relief and truth. But it teaches us how to live with each other, that we are our brother's keeper and that whatever we have by way of wealth whether it be financial, academic or any other kind of wealth is given to us as stewards. We need to use this for the betterment of our fellowmen and women and the betterment of society in general.

Sir, religion also teaches us how to apply our talents, gifts and graces for the benefit of humanity. It teaches us morality and integrity in all its branches. Religion teaches us not only morality and integrity but it teaches us great discipline. It teaches us the ability to be able to submit to others. It teaches us the ability to recognize that there are times when our personal agenda must go on the back burner and where we must put self in the background for the benefit of society and the community in general. Religion also, Mr. President, teaches us the fundamentals of strong home and family life, and many of the causes of the over-crowding at the prisons which we

dealt with earlier today stem from the lack of this religious education. Mr. President, I stand here and no one can challenge me on this, that there is a breakdown of home and family life in our community and we need to have this as one of the vital parts of the curriculum in our educational programmes not just for children but indeed more so I believe at this time for adults, because we do not have as many delinquent children as we have delinquent adults. I would like to see religious education being brought to the forefront again in our society.

I believe, Sir, the White Paper was a bit silent also on another 'R' and that is remand for those who are remanded to Her Majesty's pleasure at Glendairy. I think that we need to look at education for inmates of that institution. I am very happy to see in the amendment to the Prison Act today the appointment of a Board. One of its functions is education for those at that institution and I wish that the Ministry of Education will address this aspect of education more forcefully.

Before I sit, Sir, I would just like to say that I believe that education is like oil. Oil gives us great opportunities. It is a gateway to the world and education does give us opportunity to the world market, especially in this age of technology where we are able to sit in our studies at home or even our bedrooms and by way of a computer we can work in another part of the world. So we need to see our education as that tool which opens up opportunities for worldwide endeavour. That is what the oil is about. Education also is an investment. I believe education is our greatest investment, a greater investment than money and material possession. We can lose our money and our material possessions but no one can take away the knowledge implanted within us.
7.30 p.m.

I remember a dear friend of mine, now gone to the Great Beyond in his early 40s. I remember he was a millionaire when he was 26-27 years of age and by the time he was in his mid 30s he had lost everything; but because he had the knowledge and the education in his particular field he was able to become a millionaire again before he died at 45. So we see it as an investment first and foremost for our nation. We must see education, not as an investment for ourselves, it is when we put that investment of the education we have derived from the educational system, provided by our Government, at the disposal of our nation by service and in business, it is there in serving that we see the true benefits of our education and it is there then that the investment comes to the nation, to ourselves, to our siblings and ultimately to our successors.

So I hope, Mr. President, that all of us in this nation of ours will see education as the greatest investment which an individual can have. Then, the 'I' in 'oil' is that education is limitless. The sky is the limit. We need to

keep that vision before us, that through what we learn in school, through what we learn after school can carry us to limitless heights. In this sense, Mr. President, I believe we need to redefine tertiary education. We understand tertiary education as going to Cave Hill, Manchester in England or the University of Toronto or McGill University in Canada or Howard University in the United States of America, but I believe that we need to see tertiary education in the sense that it is education which is available to us over and above whatever we have obtained at the secondary level.

For the individual who may be a good mechanic he may never have the opportunity to go to that type of university, but there are other universities which are available to him which he can avail himself of and which can make him a real mechanic in our community. So I think that we need to have that redefining understanding of tertiary education.

So, Mr. President, with those few remarks I would encourage all of us on all sides, those with and those without political persuasion, to join forces for the good of our nation. Now is the time for us to join hands together as loyal sons and daughters of this nation to redress the existing educational imbalances and to develop to the fullest the people who are the potential of an independent Barbados.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE INSURANCE BILL, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, with respect to the Message from the Other Place concerning the Joint Select Committee, I propose that Members of the Senate to sit on that Joint Select Committee be Senator Barker, Senator Thompson and Senator Workman.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Is there a consensus on the proposal before this Senate? I therefore declare the 3 Senators, Senator Barker, Senator Thompson and Senator Workman, be duly nominated to serve on the Joint Select Committee on the Insurance Bill, 1996.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate be adjourned until February 28, 1996 at 11 a.m.

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

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