
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, June 19, 1996, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP (President)
Senator the Honourable G. S. H. MURRAY
(Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE (Parliamentary
Secretary, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and
Culture)

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

Senator Miss O. P. SYMMONDS, G.C.M.

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 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 Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr.
President, I beg to lay the following documents:

1. The Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 1996.
2. The Annual Report of the Public Utilities Board for the year 1995.
3. The Barbados Highway Code, First Edition, 1996.
4. The Medium-Term Macro-Economic Strategy.

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

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr.
President, in the absence of the Honourable Deputy
President, I beg to move that Senator Pat Symmonds be
elected to fill that post for the day's sitting.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: I beg to second
that, Sir.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr.
President, seeing it is our intention to deal with two matters
in all their stages, namely, the Bill to amend the
Immigration Act and the Bill to amend the Supreme Court
of Judicature Act, I beg to move that Standing Order 45(2)
be suspended to allow for such matters to be proceeded
with.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I beg to move the passing of a Resolution to acquire a number of parcels of land to facilitate the Bridgetown By-Pass Road Development Project. This project really exemplifies what the role of continuity of Government means. It had its genesis way back in May 1983.

Mr. President, I am sorry for that *faux pas* which stems out of inexperience in this role.

I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the acquisition of land for the Bridgetown By-Pass Road; also, notice of a Bill to amend the Immigration Act and a Bill to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Act.

I ask that the Bills be read a first time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR THE BRIDGETOWN BY-PASS ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to deal with this measure because it exemplifies what are some of the good features of Government in Barbados, namely, the continuity where projects, particularly those that ensure to the good and the well-being of the whole society, are concerned.

This project, which is known as the Bridgetown Road Safety Improvement Project and essentially involves the construction of inner and outer by-pass roads, really had its origins way back in May 1983 and over the years, between then and now, it has gone through its various phases under successive Governments to bring it to the point where we are today, where we can actually move a Resolution to acquire parcels of land to bring it into reality.

This project is funded by the IADB and the Government of Barbados, with a total construction cost of some \$41 411 035. When one adds that to the professional and engineering services fee of \$1 430 560, it brings the grand overall cost of \$42 841 595.

The project is going to involve a massive acquisition of land. I think there are some 428 parcels of land which are going to be involved in the acquisition in order to bring this project to full realisation. But I think it might be useful

if I were to bring Honourable Senators up-to-date with the framework within which this project is cast. The project has a number of components and it will seek to include highway improvement and supplementary work for traffic control in two highway corridors in Greater Bridgetown. It will involve technical assistance to improve the traffic control and management in Bridgetown and for increasing highway safety. It will also involve the development of a national programme for traffic education and the procurement of equipment to support the whole concept of modern traffic management.

It has a number of objectives which are specifically to –

1. Increase the road capacity and improve the general condition of traffic in the inner and outer corridors of Greater Bridgetown and in the intersections with the related main roads.
2. Reduce accident risks and generally increase the safety levels for all urban road users through the improvement of highway infrastructure and the implementation of more effective traffic control measures.
3. Optimise the use of resources for traffic planning, management and control and support of the effective application of laws and regulations related to these topics.

All in all, the project will include some 7.4 kilometers of urban roads, all of which currently have only two lanes through much of their extension and the project will be divided into four sections as follows:

Section A will be the outer corridor by-pass, stretching from the Spring Garden Roundabout to Eagle Hall Junction.

Section B entails the outer corridor by-pass from the intersection with Government Hill continuing through Pine Road to the intersection of the Collymore Rock Roundabout. It easily involves some of the busiest roads in urban Barbados today.

Section C will involve the outer corridor by-pass, namely from Collymore Rock roundabout to the intersection continuing on Culloden Road, Dalkeith Road and Garrison Road to the intersection with Highway 7. Those who have to fight the traffic on mornings in order to get to work and get their kids to school and go about their social activities and what not, will understand how some people have to endure today in order to make that course of travel.

Section D will be the inner corridor by-pass from the intersection with President Kennedy Drive continuing on Westbury Road, Passage Road and Country Road to the intersection at Roebuck Street and along Roebuck Street to the Globe Cinema.

When one hears the areas outlined by this project and which will be touched by this project one can only wish that it were to emerge in reality and function tomorrow in order to ease the stress and ease strained nerves and the amount of anxiety with which thousands of people are afflicted daily as they seek to travel in and out and around Bridgetown, more so at the peak periods.
11.25 a.m.

Other aspects of the project which are noteworthy involve the technical assistance programme which has 2 components, namely, the management and traffic control which includes the examination of speed limits and parking regulations, the use of vertical overhead signs and determining the type and proper location of traffic signs and markings. In addition, there is also a technical and economic study to determine the convenience of installing a centralised automatic system for the phasing, monitoring and synchronising of traffic lights.

Phase 2 involves a national programme of traffic education which I am sure most people will readily welcome, given the exceedingly high number of traffic accidents, particularly those that involve fatalities which we continue to experience as a society that battles with a high ratio of vehicles on our roads. This educational programme will function through the provision of funds for a road safety education project and resources involved will include production of video tapes manuals, publications, school campaigns, advertising on radio and television and newspapers. They will be using all the modern means of communication in order to carry out the very essential task of advising and educating the public on better road and traffic habits.

The Division of Public Works has already implemented some of the consultants' recommendations using local resources and a number of areas have already seen road improvements that have enhanced not only the aesthetics but also the logistical functioning of traffic along these highways and byways. These areas that have already been touched by road improvement would include Eagle Hall and Bridge Road, Collymore Rock and the Pine Road Junction, Collymore Rock and the Jemmotts Lane Junction and the Halls Road and Passage Road to Country Road Junction. Also, the area between the junction of Collymore Rock, Pine Road to River Road, Belmont Road and we are sure, Sir, that with this project which will involve, as I said, the massive acquisition of some \$8 million in land involving properties, including some 30 old

properties will substantially improve traffic flow and provide better conditions for road and traffic safety.

At this point, Sir, I think it would be deficient of me if I were not to seize this opportunity to welcome the emergence of Barbados' first Highway Code the document which I laid in the House today which had been talked about for generations now but has now seen the light of day, thanks to a serious and much appreciated collaborative effort between the Government departments, the Ministry of Public Works, the Police, and the commercial sector of Barbados. I think they have done a praise-worthy job. People now have means whereby they can educate themselves or educate others as to how they should operate on our roads. This is particularly essential where our younger citizens are concerned, particularly those who go to and from school and sometimes are very innocent of the dangers that might await them around the corner, especially when, in their youthful enthusiasm, they hop and skip and jump and play and start across the highways, thereby endangering their lives and safety and that of others.

Therefore, I think that all praise is due to the producer of this Highway Code and I can only hope that those who see it – I understand it is being widely distributed in all sections of the community and therefore people should have no excuse, particularly in an era when traffic habits and traffic culture have changed considerably, I think we need to have a codified system of behaviour that will seek to influence people and that people do not do what they think they should or what is good and what is bad but that people will have a standardised method of operating on the roads. If this is standardised, it means that all people will have examples as to how they should behave and how other road users will behave and a lot of things will not be done in an *ad hoc* manner and at people's whims and fancies.

I hope it will help to improve the behaviour both of our major public sector vehicles, the transport Board and the private sector, the minibuses and the ZR vans. I know the Transport Board is anxious to have its personnel brought even further up-to-date on proper road habits, road culture and road behaviour.

I know there is a great deal of anxiety and strain across Barbados since several announcements about plans and proposals stemming from a report regarding the Transport Board. I think it is popularly known as the Shorey Report and I would like to assure members of the Senate that it is only a report on the Transport Board which involves vehicles that travel on the road. The Transport Board that lies on Roebuck Street is all part of this project and therefore is very relevant. As I said it is only a proposal. It is a study, a report. It has not

yet been considered by Cabinet. No decisions have been made or taken as to the desirability of whatever aspects of it, but as far as the Government is concerned, it only remains a set of proposals contained in a report which have been submitted for consideration.

Therefore the anxiety and a lot of the rhetoric which understandably comes from people, is anxiety about their future and the future of their constituencies, and how they will be affected. As I said, no decision has as yet been taken and therefore some of this anxiety might be unnecessary in the long run.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I am pleased to make a small contribution on this Resolution before the Senate this morning. I am pleased that there is something good that this Government can say that the Democratic Labour Party has done. I am very happy that finally it is recognised that there are caring people in both political parties in Barbados and from time to time we have to acknowledge when something great has happened. At present it seems as though we are having a collision every day between the pedestrians and the vehicles on the roads of Barbados. I am very pleased that in our negotiation we have funds to improve our roadways, and we have considered the importance of making sure that our people understand how to use the roads.

11.35 a.m.

Some of the roads mentioned here are of particular interest to me. Especially the Government Hill to Collymore Rock area. An area which I use quite frequently, with very great trepidation. The road is extremely narrow and sometimes I wonder – I say we have very good drivers in Barbados – how we manage to negotiate along that roadway. So I am very pleased that we are doing something to improve that area.

Also, the Black Rock road from Spring Garden unto Eagle Hall Road. A very busy area. Pedestrians often step onto the road from very narrow sidewalks there, and I see motorists, I myself sometime always catch myself trying to pull off and run the risk of touching another vehicle. I am pleased that we have looked into these areas.

I am concerned. A lot of acquisitions we are doing here. I do not know, and I am still trying to find out how the Government of Barbados is managing compensating, paying over to these individuals whose properties are being acquired so frequently. That is still one of my concerns.

I have been informed that international agencies make provision for these sums of monies to be paid over. I

would hope that the Government of Barbados would, in a very speedy manner, make sure that these individuals – this is a very thick booklet here. I have not been able to count the numbers involved, since I have seen it only this morning. There are 428. That is a lot. I hope the Government would make sure that – some of these are very small people. When we look at the lots, there are very small lots.

Some of them are individuals, who I believe, probably, do not have the means to go out there and get another property started very soon. Therefore, it is important, and I am going to repeat something that I say on each occasion that I speak on an acquisition, if the Government cannot find it possible to pay over these monies, that some document, a letter of commitment, be given to these individuals. A document which can be produced in a financial institution, in order that these individuals may have access to funds to find alternative accommodation.

So I rise briefly to support the matter before the Senate. I hope that we can have the project going. I really want to see the number of accidents reduced. It is putting a lot of pressure on our team of people in our hospital, it is putting a lot of pressure on our medical insurance scheme and, of course, it is putting a lot of young people who should really be out there in the work force and making a valuable contribution to our economic development. Some of them, even when they return to work they are not back to full capacity.

I hope that this project would be a success and I would like to see the education programme going, and I have no difficulty at all in supporting this, Sir.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I rise to support this Bill. It is a massive undertaking. I do recognise that it is needed because without good infrastructure one cannot really progress.

However, I would like to make a plea, Mr. President, for about 100 yards from the Spring Garden Highway, that little, narrow road by the Lazaretto, that is one of the most dangerous corners in Barbados. In that there are two thick coral stone walls and there is nowhere to go if two big trucks are trying to pass each other on that road. I do not know how you are going to do it, but I hope that part could be included. As I said, it is one of the most dangerous roads in Barbados for pedestrians. There is no place at all.

I would like to congratulate you on the Highway Code. It is very comprehensive. I have not completed

going through it. What I would like to make plea for, and many other adult citizens in this country have also been making a plea, is for seat belts.

The introduction of seat belts in order to help us reduce the number of accidents. It will be no cost to the Government whatsoever. Nearly all the cars are imported with seat belts and if there are not imported, we can make provision saying that no car or bus could come into the country unless they have seat belts. I am making this plea for an urgent attempt to introduce seat belts into Barbados.

I will continue to make it and I will also attempt to see if I cannot bring the legislation through this House so that it can go down to the Other House since it is not a Money Bill. I will like to give the Government the opportunity to put the legislation through the House first.

There is not very much more that I have to say, other than that I am very pleased that an attempt is being made to educate the public in road safety matters. We in Barbados seem not to know about road safety. I think that we have to start with the schools, the primary schools to teach people that at night you do not wear dark clothes. Also that when you walk you face the oncoming traffic.

I would also like to make a plea for us to take note of certain dangerous elements in our society, regarding road safety, that we need to put an end to. I was driving and then about four boys strolled across the road and said "Don't you have any brakes?" "Are they not working?" This is lawlessness. That really scared me. That someone can look at a car and then stroll across the road, and then asked me if I do not have brakes.

We need to start this education programme very quickly because things seem to be getting out of hand. Everybody seems to feel that they can do whatever they like, whenever they like and however they like.

I hope that we would be able to get this education programme over the airwaves as soon as possible. Also, employ other people to give the face-to-face education. The teachers in the school, when they are teaching different topics, to bring in road safety. Both in primary and secondary schools. Children tend to follow orders but the adults seem to be becoming very wayward for some unknown reason.

With no more ado I support the Bill.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: I wish to lend my support to this particular Bill and to commend the

Government of Barbados for this very important act at this time.

I think that it is important, Sir, that education be a significant part of whatever is happening. I support any effort to invite the individuals living in those areas whose properties will be affected in some way, to be drawn together in a consultative manner and to be made aware of exactly what plans this Government is doing. It is nothing that is more important and more impactful than making people aware, soliciting suggestions and opinions from them and moving forward.

We have been doing this, Sir, in education and in other aspects of the plans that we have for the Barbadian public, and I would hope that will continue to make people aware and to bring them on stream with whatever is happening. I am sure that it will help to ease some of the falling out that we have seen in the past.

In this particular Bill, Sir, it includes lay-bys, the replacement of walls, fences as well as the replacing of trees and so on, public lights, and many others. I think that is extremely significant for any development that we are looking at in this country.

11.45 a.m.

I want also to add that I trust there is some way in the plan an idea of building a walk-over. I think that is the term that is used. I recognise that almost every year we have a couple of serious accidents, sometimes they end in fatalities, on the Spring Garden Highway. We are aware that if we are moving through neighbourhoods where people have lived all their lives and then put three and four lane roads we must give them access to be able to cross from one side of the street to the next in a very safe manner. Therefore I would like, if that is not included, to ask that that be also implemented so that it would ease the general public, in particular the pedestrians who would want to cross the street.

Mr. President, this project will certainly cause some dislocation to the people in those various neighbourhoods. At the same time, however, it will create some employment for the people of Barbados. I am sure that the outcome of this project will not only benefit this present generation but from the massive plan I see in front of me I am sure that it will accommodate further generations to come for many years.

I trust that this caring Government will ensure, as recommended by Senator Thompson, that the

acquisitions for the lands and other properties be dealt with speedily in an effort that it will ease some of the frustration that I know many landowners have experienced over the past two or three decades. I think it is extremely unreasonable when people own their property and they are relying on whatever funding can come in to assist them when land is acquired that they have to wait 10, 12 and 15 years, and we have already started to ensure in this Government that people are compensated for their lands. I trust that this process will be speedily done.

There are some dilapidated structures in those areas of the Passage Road and Westbury Roads, to name those two, and provision is made in the recommendations here, Sir, that there be relocation of those individuals and that there be new structures, since the structures are so old by the time they are dismantled then everything falls apart. Therefore plans are in the document to ensure that those who have to be relocated would be given new structures.

As is committed, Sir, by this Barbados Labour Party in the 1994 Manifesto, it is the plan in this project to have those houses that will be relocated as well as the others that are in the areas where the construction will be taking place to provide each and every one of them with waterborne facilities since many of them at this present time do not have such, so that is also a very good step forward. I am sure Senator Rickinson will be glad to hear that because we know of the serious health hazards that can come about as a result of not having proper toilet facilities. There is a plan here for them to be linked up with the sewage system so that there would be proper health practices for everyone of us in Barbados.

I support this Bill, Sir. I trust that as time goes on that Barbadians will give a little more patience, that motorists will be more accommodating with each other and that they will try to carry out all the wholesome practices that are necessary as pedestrians and motorists, or otherwise, on our streets so that all of us will live in peace and safety.

With those few comments, Sir, I wish to lend my support to this Bill. Thank you very much.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Mr. President, I rise to give my support to this Resolution. I am particularly pleased that efforts are being made to have a public education campaign as far as proper use of the highways is concerned. But I have two concerns, one I made in an early debate which I think I need to reiterate at this point in time, and I want to take this opportunity to call on Government again to seek to address the issue of drunken driving in Barbados.

We are again approaching the season in Barbados which we call Crop-Over quite a few visitors are here, and most people, because of the nature of the activities do have, perhaps, one or two more drinks than they can handle. I think the time is now right when Government should invest in breathalysers so that some control can be given year round and particularly at this time for those people who, obviously, will have a drink and drive. In the interest of protecting those of us, who would also be users of the highways because, in my opinion, it does not make any sense investing all this time, money and effort in a public education campaign if at the same time you are going to do nothing at all about drunken driving. I have not seen the Highway Code and I do not know if this issue is addressed in it. I do hope so, but if it is not, I am calling on Government to do something about this problem urgently.

I also want to urge Government to make a serious effort to look at some form of emission control for motor vehicles in this country. I have had the unfortunate experience at times where you have had to decelerate in order to get away from the dark fumes coming from motor vehicles. I know Government has taken a decision about a year ago, perhaps or more, and we now have an option in the type of gas we buy. We have unleaded which is, to me, a positive development in terms of not only the environment but from the perspective of health. We know, and I am sure that Senator Rickinson can bear me out on this, that the accumulation of lead in the body can create serious health problems.

We have a significant number of people in our community who suffer from asthma. I think it is extremely unfair to such individuals to have to put up with a situation which I think can be easily corrected. I know there is some cost to monitor such activity but I hope in the interest of these people that Government would provide the funding and put in place these systems that would address these two issues.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, I just have one point to make and it is that I hope the land being acquired is really adequate for the facilities necessary in highways in this day and age. I remember, Sir, with the acquisition of land for the ABC Highway the way it was done was in such a restrained and limited way that you would go out in the country and you cannot have a three-lane highway even to overtake somebody, and that is very unfortunate where you have all the land around and no opportunity to get past a vehicle that really is not going at the speed it ought to.

I am saying that we ought to acquire the adequate portion of land in this case to ensure that we have proper sidewalks for all the pedestrians. I think in building sidewalks today we must bear in mind the handicapped. For example, you go into Bridgetown and if a blind man is attempting to walk on the sidewalk he does not know when he is going to drop down and so hurt himself. We need to have sidewalks of the kind that will make it safe for the blind and for people in wheelchairs to be able to get into homes, premises, stores or whatever. That is my plea, Sir.

I support the Bill, and I am quite sure that it will provide comfort to the people who live in the area.

Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I rise very briefly to make one point and, of course, to add my support to this Resolution. That point is that as the years have gone by we have lowered the age of ability to receive a driver's licence to 16. I think this is all well and good. However, my concern is that if the age of majority is what I believe you call it, 18 years old, and which signifies that we are able to do everything else, or indeed to be considered adults, I am not quite clear why we are allowing 16-year olds to have a driver's licence and make them wait until 18 to do everything else legally.

I would want to urge that this be given some consideration to reviewing that position, that is, in terms of raising the age back to 18 or considering some other method to make sure that all parts are equal.

Thank you, Mr. President.
11.55 a.m.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, in winding up I would like to thank all Honourable Senators for the high level of their contributions and assure them that some of the areas of concern which they have drawn to our attention will be taken into consideration as we finalise the implementation of this project.

Before I take my seat and move the final act on this Chapter, I think I need to deal with a couple of items that were mentioned, particularly one by Senator Thompson who said that as far as she knew, with regard to the acquisition of lands, that the funds for such acquisition of lands was built into the funds being provided by external agencies. That is not so, Sir, so far the acquisition is actually paid for by Government and forms part of the funds that Government has to provide to match those of the donating agencies for the project.

In addition, we, since coming into power in September 1994, have been working systematically to erase the backlog of outstanding moneys owed for acquisition of land stretching way back in the past. I do not recall the figure off-hand but I think, from my recollection, there are sums which are set aside every year to deal with this measure over a period of time. Therefore, we are not insensitive to the great pain and suffering and sometimes financial deprivation that attend people who, through no fault of their own, have to give up their properties for the greater social good.

In addition, Senator Welch made some reference to the question of monitoring the whole question of the pollution of the atmosphere. I have knowledge that Government has, over a number of years, been seeking to actually monitor the content of the air, particularly around Bridgetown and from what I have been told at one stage some instruments were placed either on Collins' building or elsewhere on Broad Street to deal with that highly congested area where thousands of cars and other vehicles make their way every day. I think that for aesthetic and other reasons they have had to remove these monitoring devices and Government is now seeking another location to put them, a location which would be out of the way, out of sight, but still would be able to carry out their functions. So we are conscious of these negative factors that attend the existence of motor vehicles and we are seeking to remedy them wherever we can. Sir, I therefore beg that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – BILL TO AMEND THE IMMIGRATION ACT, CAP 190

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, this item I am sure will command the attention and the support and the blessings of all Honourable Senators, because one of the things that cannot be denied is that as a society we have been committed over the years to regional integration and to playing our part in the realisation of the regional integration effort, sometimes to the extent that people think we have overdone it and that we have been the victims, more than contributors, in that we have done ourselves in and have literally, as they say, cut off our nose to spite our national face, all in the interest of regional integration and greater togetherness in the Caribbean.

Sir, the purpose of this amendment is to give effect to a decision of the Heads of Government of CARICOM whereby they want to make it possible for there to be free movement of skilled nationals of the region throughout the area. This Bill that we are seeking to pass today, Sir, its contents and its objectives, have therefore to be seen in the context of the pursuit of the goal of the Heads

of Government and indeed CARICOM to establish a single market and economy within the region. In this regard, the conference of the Heads of Government of July 1995, just under a year ago, took a number of decisions. These decisions, Sir, were:

1. The Heads agreed as a first step towards facilitating the free movement of skilled persons among member states to implement, with effect from January 1, 1996, the free movement of CARICOM nationals who are University graduates, subject to the acceptability of their credentials by the Member states concerned.

In addition, the Heads of Government requested the Secretary General of CARICOM, in consultation with the University of the West Indies, the University of Guyana and the University of Surinam, to establish a data base and/or other mechanism, at the CARICOM Secretariat with respect to the accreditation of universities to assist member states in arriving at decisions in cases where there are questions as to the validity of the credentials of persons seeking to establish themselves as skilled persons for the purpose of entering another country of which they are not nationals.

The Heads also requested, Sir, that the Secretariat convene a meeting of a regional committee of officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Labour and Immigration with the CARICOM and OECS secretariats and the University of the West Indies, to prepare proposals on the type of administrative machinery and procedures necessary to implement the free movement of CARICOM nationals who are university graduates.

The conference also noted, Sir, that the Bahamas had indicated that at this time they were not interested in being part of the arrangement for the free movement of skilled persons as part of this project.

Arising out of that, the Secretary General of the CARICOM Secretariat also gave an undertaking to the Conference to make available to Member States by September 30, last year draft legislation that would give effect to this decision. Barbados received such a draft and gave it consideration and it was our opinion, guided by the legal draftsmen and other authorities, that the draft legislation as submitted from the CARICOM Secretariat was rather complex and cumbersome and perhaps went way beyond what had been the initial intention of the Heads of Government. Indeed, it was felt that the draft, as presented, amounted to the creation of a status for such skilled persons that would be akin to that of citizenship of the country and this had not been the stated intention of the Heads of Government when the decision was taken.

Sir, it was further considered that a more suitable arrangement would be for Barbados to amend our current Immigration Act, Cap. 190 in order to bring about the realisation of the decision of CARICOM. The Bill basically removes the requirements for work permits and provides for the unhindered entry into employment in Barbados of CARICOM citizens by birth or descent of the States listed in the Fourth Schedule, with such persons being holders of degrees, diplomas or equivalent qualifications from, like I said, the University of the West Indies, University of Guyana, University of Surinam or any other University or institution of higher learning or equivalent institution, approved by the Minister responsible for Education in the member countries.

At one time it was felt that Heads wanted to limit the privilege of access to other countries for work, free of work permit requirement, to only graduates from the University. This was later widened, like I said, to include those of other tertiary institutions and also to limit the number of categories of persons, mainly the occupations and the professions, that would have been so involved. This was put to rest because there had been no such intention on the part of the Heads of Government.

12.05 p.m.

The Bill also provides for skilled nationals to be accompanied by unemployed spouses and minor children and dependent relatives and prohibits these individuals from engaging in employment unless they satisfy the requirements for employment as set out in the Bill, or obtain a Work Permit in accordance with the provisions of our Immigration Act, Cap. 190.

Sir, we are not going to have an absolute open door policy where the flood gates are going to be open as some people seem to think. But there will be administrative and other checks and balances which will police the issue in order to ensure that it functions in accordance with the intention of the Heads of Government. But, Sir, this whole objective has to be seen not only in the context of what obtains at the political level, but it also stems out of the work and the report of that very famous publication of the West Indian Commission called, "Time For Action" which if I may quote page 139 of that document. It states:

"In recognition of this fact the West Indian Commission in its Progress Report to CARICOM Heads of Government in July 1991 also recommended that a start be made with the free movement of CARICOM nationals beginning with all graduates of the University of the West Indies (UWI) and other recognized institutions and duly accredited media workers. This latter category was included

in response to the Commission's view that "communications" is essential to community and that the right of West Indian journalists to be assigned anywhere within the region will significantly enlarge the capacity to improve communication and advance the realization of the aims of the Community."

Sir, I must confess to having a vested interest in this section that deals with the media workers because, like my colleague, Senator Rickinson who whenever she hears "nurses" it triggers a response within her mechanism, it also happens to me where the media is concerned. I recall, Sir, going to a meeting in St. Lucia, I think in 1993, which dealt with this issue of the free movement of media workers and it had people from all over the region – Customs Officers, Immigration Officers, people from the CARICOM Secretariat – and a great deal of work was done to pave the way for the free movement of media workers. It seems to have died a death or it seems to have come to a standstill. So I am not sure exactly where they stand in relation to the other workers. So they are not necessarily and specifically covered by this Bill. But I would like to see that this measure be brought out. I am not sure whose fault it is that nothing more has been done about it, but whatever is the cause, I would think that a very good case can be made for trying to come to a definitive position where the media workers are concerned.

Sir, this report "Time For Action", also deals with the question of whether there is likely to be an invasion of non-nationals into Barbados to enjoy and to capitalize on the goodies and goodness of Barbados to the perceived disadvantage of Barbadian nationals. Sir, apart from the fact that I think it is an unrealistic fear and anxiety that is displaced and probably borne out of some unfortunate sense of hyper-nationalism or what not, I think that we have to be committed in our action. We have to put our money where our mouth is at this stage, and also put our country where our heart and our intention and our heads are. Therefore, Sir, my belief as to the possibility that there will be an invasion of Barbados by others just because we have this facility, is borne out by the report of "Time For Action" on page 139 which I might quote:

"The logic of freedom of movement for all categories of West Indian professionals, skilled personnel and workers generally, and entrepreneurs including higglers and hucksters, will have to be permitted to work itself through the system. In much the same way as the manufacturers and producers of the Region have come to regard the Caribbean Common Market as a widened domestic market, the people of the Region are now pressing for a wider field for ambition without necessarily having to seek their fortune beyond its boundaries. West Indians are now

signalling their desire to be able to practise professions and to make their skills available throughout the length and breadth of CARICOM"

It also goes on to say on page 141:

"Within the context of the emerging Single Market and Economy the Commission is satisfied that the old bogies of invasion of peoples from other territories are not only anachronistic but are indeed ill-founded. Few West Indians, if any, will be leaving their corner of the West Indian homeland to relocate elsewhere unless the free play of market forces and the law of supply and demand indicate that it is prudent for them so to do. Those inclined to take the plunge out of desperation are far more likely to go for broke in the terms of migrating to the more traditional metropolitan destinations. In the move from Community and Common Market to Community, Single Market and Economy, it is inevitable that greater ease of travel by CARICOM nationals throughout the Region should be accompanied by increasingly greater freedom of movement of such nationals wishing to work in parts of the Region other than the country of their birth. That will remain an important goal for us to reach as we deepen the process of integration."

Mr. President, this is the kind of regional context and background against which this Bill comes before the Chamber here today. Despite what is contained in this amendment, the fact is that the existing policy with regard to Work Permits will remain unchanged in Barbados. For while CARICOM nationals will not have to apply for Work Permits, they still have to register with the Immigration authorities who will keep record of such movements. While we are concerned and for those who still might have lingering fears of being disadvantaged by non-nationals coming to take what they think are theirs, one only has to realize that already this provision exists for artistes coming into Barbados. There are frequent shows which Barbados stages as of late and those persons no longer have to apply for a Work Permit. They come in and they make their business arrangements, they pay their taxes, *et cetera* but they no longer now have to go through the process of applying for a Work Permit where they had to apply weeks in advance, going through a very costly and cumbersome process in order to see that. Despite the fact that we have these several shows, nobody as far as I know, has been accusing other artistes from other countries of just picking up their instruments or pallets or whatever and coming to Barbados, just because they can come into Barbados on a Work Permit. Like the West Indian Commission said, they come as the matter demands and the demands for their services, their performances and sometimes their goods. As that arises, then they come and seek to satisfy such

a demand. In relation to a show, if there is a show being planned they come in and perform for a show and then they pay their taxes, as I said, and they employ some Barbadians in the process who make money out of the activity and then they go either back to their homeland or elsewhere seeking to satisfy demands elsewhere.

Sir, we are convinced that the whole question of the matter of supply and demand will regulate this whole procedure and that Barbadians will not find themselves virtually unwelcome in their own country. In addition, Sir, such a movement is an historical tradition particularly involving Barbados where for generations in the 1950s and 1960s and even in the 1940s, we have gone elsewhere and made tremendous contributions to the development of other people's countries. We have done very well and we take great pride in hearing when Barbadians or people of Barbadian ancestry in these various countries around the world have risen to the heights, who have made great contributions and have been recognized for such contributions. Therefore, we cannot expect to have our cake and eat it too. We also have to be open to other countries in our regulated format. I do not think that anybody can say that Barbados has not been better off because of the variety of cultures now not operating within the Barbadian social context. We are not as homogenous as we used to be and, if one even thinks in terms of eating/dining or entertainment, there is now a wider variety of bits and pieces of other cultural traits which Barbadians can enjoy and to which the tourism product from which we benefit significantly, can also be exposed.

12.15 p.m.

Talking about tourism, I think it has to be realised, in considering this measure, that out of this facility, out of this ability of certain categories of CARICOM nationals being able to come to work in Barbados, reside in Barbados, bring their families, *et cetera*, they will obviously generate regional tourism also, because they also have families and in the same way that people from the offshore sector bring in their families and relatives, and there are business visits, pleasure visits, vacation visits, we will also see traffic involving people's relatives and friends and business associates who also want to come to visit Barbados for all the good we have to offer as a country.

Sir, in this regard then we open ourselves to people of other countries and we also have to remember that we will be free to go to other countries too, because there is an element of reciprocity in the whole process. This is being borne out by the fact that all the countries, except Bahamas, have agreed to the establishment of such a facility by passage of legislation. As a matter of fact, some days ago our neighbouring Trinidad and Tobago passed similar legislation to give effect to such provisions and

such decision of CARICOM, and from what I read in the Press they also took the opportunity to allay fears that they were only seeking to restrict it to certain narrow categories of persons. I think at one stage they mentioned accountants and engineers, but the profession does not matter as long as you have the accreditation, as long as you have the *bona fide* qualifications and the other criteria, one should be able to go to Trinidad where there are opportunities and try to take advantage of those opportunities for one's personal benefit obviously, but also for the benefit and the development of Trinidad and Tobago or for wherever else it might obtain.

It therefore will provide Barbadians with an opportunity to do the same. Like I said, we have historical precedents for such a pattern of behaviour and in addition Barbados has also signed an agreement with the OECS, which should also make it easier for greater interchange of personnel and intellectual capital, because we know in social and economic development that the free flow of all the factors of production are important, not only capital but also labour at whatever level, in order for there to be meaningful and sustained development of the countries concerned.

It also has to be remembered, Sir, that the Minister of Immigration in Barbados will have an overriding, an overarching view of the whole procedure and he will also have an overriding supervision of what obtains and an overriding discretion in order to police and to ensure wherever possible that we seek to protect the goodness of Barbados. In other words, if a person, for example, is a graduate of the University of the West Indies but the legitimate authorities have determined that he or she has certain unsavoury practices in his background, the Minister of Immigration here will have the authority and the legal right to circumscribe the entry of such a person into Barbados, so it is not going to be a free for all, it is not going to be like Kadooment Day on Spring Garden, but it is going to be regulated within a particular framework that will be common to all the CARICOM countries involved.

Sir, we realise that in taking this step it is going to be a challenging one for some people. It will also pose certain challenges for our Immigration Department, but the Immigration Department is rising to meet the challenges it perceives will come with this Bill and what it seeks to do. The Immigration Department, as you know, has been going through the process of computerisation and, as a matter of fact, only recently I was able to approve the creation of six new posts of data entry operator for work in the Immigration Department to allow them to bring the immigration data up-to-date so that we will be able to monitor at a better level and more efficiently and effectively the movement of persons in and out of Barbados.

This is the background against which this measure is pitched. We realise that as a Government we cannot pay lip service to CARICOM, that we have to take judicial steps, we have to maintain our word and fulfil our commitments, and in bringing this measure to the House and seeking its approval, we have to recognise that under the spirit of the Treaty of CARICOM Barbados is bound by the decisions of the CARICOM Heads of Government. Thus we have a particular interest in the realisation of the establishment of a single market economy, not only as an intellectual exercise or what it can hold for the development of Barbados, but because we have a vested interest in the sense that our current Prime Minister has been given responsibility for the realisation of this process and to carry it forward. This is all part of that activity.

Like I said, it had been hoped that it would have come into being across the region from January 1, 1996. We are a little late with it, but not too late and I think we should be in a position to welcome the visitors from our neighbouring countries to the CARICOM Heads of Government Conference in Barbados from 3rd to 7th July, satisfied that we have done our part in fulfilling and meeting our commitment to give at the highest level of CARICOM.

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

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, as I examine the Bill which appears to be a fairly simple Act, when one looks into it one can see that it is really touching at the core of regional integration. To me it seems as though we have finally decided that in order for us to have a Federation we have to inch our way there and that the best approach is not necessarily trying to bite it all at one time but stage by stage we can eventually see the region as a common union and see our people as one people.

I believe this Bill before us today is a continuation of some efforts which we are making in the region to bring our people together. When I look at the Common External Tariff and now I look at this Immigration Bill I believe our Governments seem to be looking in the right direction. It is unfortunate that sometimes we make these decisions because we have no other choice. Why is it that we have not been able to see that as a Caribbean people we should have been operating as one for a long time? I believe that with the emergence of NAFTA and the European Union, Caribbean people have finally got out of a very deep sleep. I believe we realise that with the removal of the Soviet as a threat to the world powers that the other powers really do not need us anymore. There is no need to shelter us, there

is no need to hover over us as parents and that suddenly they cut the umbilical cord and we are on our own and the only way we can survive is to come together as a people. In saying that I must express a concern which I have, because I notice in recent times that although certain developed countries have been expressing an interest in other areas of the world they still want to tell Caribbean people who should be their friends. We need to recognise that in numbers we are paltry in the Caribbean and that we need all of our Caribbean territories if we are to come together and form any kind of bloc that could make a dent in the international arena.

12.25 p.m.

I believe that without Cuba there is probably just about 5 million in numbers and I think that it is very important that we understand that we are Caribbean people and we need to embrace each other.

In 1991, I had an experience which I would like to share with fellow Senators. I was with a group of Barbadians, 72 of us on our way on an aircraft to Jamaica to a convention. It might have been the year after Hugo had done significant damage in this area and as we attempted to land at the international airport there we got into difficulties and we had to make an emergency landing in Haiti. Also on board that aircraft were 4 or 5 Americans and Canadians and somebody who was an assistant to the Pope.

To my great shock, when the Haitians allowed the Americans and the Canadians to pass through, 72 Barbadians and 13 Caribbean people were placed in a small room. We had our passports taken away and we had to remain there for some hours because there was no special agreement between the Caribbean islands and Haiti. I started to become very restless and asked a number of questions. Doesn't Haiti belong to the Caribbean? Are we supposed to be one people? How is it that the Americans and the Canadians were granted special treatment and the Caribbean people were treated as though they had been criminals?

I hope that we can work very hard towards closing these gaps that we have and these differences we have among us as a Caribbean people. Sometimes I get the impression that the people of the Caribbean are ready but the politicians are holding them back.

Every year I attend a Caribbean Congress in a different Caribbean territory and it is a very beautiful opportunity to interface and to interact with my brothers and sisters of the other islands and you don't feel that you belong to somewhere else, yet we are not one. In

formal discussions we always say how well we do together and why is it that we are still not one. And the answer is the same: everybody in the Caribbean believes that the politicians are holding us back. Now, I am a politician and I want to declare that I am one of those people who support the regional integration movement and I will do all that I can, as I have been doing over the years in my work throughout the Caribbean in the Caribbean Association of Life Underwriters.

A number of non-governmental organisations in this region should work together as one and achieve so much for people in the region, yet at the level of Government and politics we seem still not to be able to move ahead as rapidly as we should. We need to ask ourselves why is it that our people, the ones on whose shoulders the decision does not necessarily rest, I know they have a say in it, why is it that they can come together and achieve so much and at the level of Government we still have to negotiate back and forth. You hear of Heads of Government Meetings, you hear of agreements, you go back for another meeting and you hear it has not been resolved and there is talk and talk and the Caribbean people are becoming impatient. So when we get to this stage that we can bring something before Parliament to see something tangible happening, I am extremely pleased about this.

I want to see the region come together as one because I recognise that we are going to have a number of problems in the area of international trade. International trade is going to be a real challenge for Caribbean people and already we are concerned about the removal of trading barriers and we are concerned about the goods which come in from North America and other places and which would put our own goods and services under pressure.

We need to start finding the answers. We need to work out where in the Caribbean can we produce volume and at the type of price that we can still find areas in the international market place.

I read a lot about comparative advantage and what Governments need to do and I think in the Caribbean region that is something we should look at. We need to look to see which of our territories can produce which goods and services at the best price possible that we can penetrate the world market.

I have a dream for the Caribbean, a dream which I shared with my colleagues in Jamaica last year as we debated this type of issue. I believe that speaking from a Barbadian perspective that as we go about looking at a common union I believe Barbados can be used as the

international, financial services sector of the Caribbean. I think we need to hone our skills. We need to look inwards and find out which territory is best at what and work from that point. I think in terms of our size we can forget about manufacturing because Barbados really cannot manufacture on that large scale to penetrate the world market. Barbados would not be there for international trade in terms of manufacturing, but for the financial services I believe we can use Barbados as a plank.

In recent time, there has been a lot of talk about cross-border trading and we know that we must get our regional stock exchange going, if our money market which we were talking so much about is to pick up and take off. So, I welcome this legislation because it allows people who have the skills and the knowledge and know-how to move from territory to territory and our business people to help to equip each other and help to expose each other to the strength of the economies as we go about looking at a regional stock exchange, because this is going to be a major challenge with the difference in values in currency that we have now.

This is one step towards where we should be heading. In recent times, we have been talking about a uniform Insurance Act and I want to touch on that a bit because the legislation talks about qualifications which universities would recognise and in the EC territories we have a number of islands dealing in insurance and they are about to implement the Uniform Insurance Act but they don't have any proper licensing legislation in place. They have registration only.

Through the Caribbean Association of Life Underwriters, we have been trying to help to equip them but we could not go away and do training and the things necessary to put them on the road towards the proper licensing procedures so I am hoping that the professional designations of people in the life insurance industry will gain the same recognition as other professional designations, because the Supervisors of Insurance of the EC territories are not exposed to individuals who have these designations and for the past 6 or 7 years Barbados has been used as the point for assistance for the EC territories. I hope that Government will take note of that so that when Barbados is asked by Dominica to come in and put on a working session with the supervisor of insurance there helping her to get things in place that we would have no difficulty in that area.

In the area of eco-tourism and we are talking about the Caribbean, we have to recognise that in the Caribbean some of our islands are more picturesque than others. Although we all are in tourism when you are looking at it

as a common unit, this is going to rub some people the wrong way, but we will have to start to give way in certain areas.

Some territories will have to accept that they are better in some areas and some will have to accept that we are not necessarily the best point for tourism, especially for eco-tourism. There are really a few Caribbean islands which are extremely beautiful and which are better suited for that type of tourism. Barbados is a beautiful place. It is becoming rapidly a very developed country and as a result sometimes I wonder if we have not started to lose some of that natural, rustic beauty that one associates with a tourist resort. I am hoping that we would recognise this.

Also, Mr. President, as I rise to support this legislation I would like to repeat that I do so from a background of a very firm supporter of the regional integration movement. Any measure brought before this House which seeks to strengthen that movement I will always support. Senator Murray made reference to the fact that Barbadians would feel that they are being replaced. That was the debate which went on during the Federation. As a matter of fact that is why the Federation did not succeed. People started to see themselves threatened by this same Caribbean people that we were trying to embrace as one.
12.35 p.m.

I think there is need for national dialogue. Legislation such as this is significant legislation, and people cannot help but feel that they are going to be pushed out. I think that it is only reasonable that this legislation be debated around Barbados.

People always feel a sense of insecurity when something is done which opens the way for others to come in and compete. That is what they are going to say is competition.

I do not think that we should fool ourselves and believe that because it is passed in the Senate that Barbadians have accepted it. At all levels of our society, among the artisans, the very skilled, even among the highest level of professionals, there is going to be a feeling that others can come in from other territories and put them out of work. So I think that it is very important that we have a good line of communication going with our people.

I think we should use the Government Information Service to discuss with Barbadians that they must see the bigger picture. The picture is much bigger than passing a

bit of legislation for the free movement of skilled and qualified people.

It is about eventually, and very soon, eventually means very soon, bringing the region together as one. A body of people who can come together and to penetrate the international market and get the recognition which we so much deserve.

On that note, Sir, I support this legislation.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill to amend the Immigration Act, Cap. 190. I recognise that this Act seeks to comply with some of the recommendations of Time for action.

I think it is interesting that this is just the beginning and that we are probably happily going back to the bad old Colonial days when our ancestors and others freely moved around the Caribbean. I actually am a living example of Caribbean integration. I do not have to say that I support integration. I live integration and a lot of Caribbean nationals live integration. My father was born in Grenada, my mother in Trinidad of Barbadian parents and we have all kinds of relatives all over the Caribbean. St. Vincent, Guyana, all over. So a lot of us lived this integration.

I also lived the fact that growing up in Trinidad during the days, I am old enough to remember, when you had the base in Chaguaramas, people came from as far North as St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla to Trinidad. Of course, we also have areas of Trinidad where we know that settlers from Barbados lived in Tunapuna, settlers from Grenada, Point Fortin, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Laventille, so we who have lived in the Southern Caribbean have lived integration.

One of the things I think – in ruminating about this whole question – the Bill that is in front of us is for us see what is happening in other territories in terms of the people who they are prepared to accept now into the territories. I think that legislatures and law makers have to begin to think about themselves, not simply as people who create laws, but as people who are now purveyors of certain kinds of perspectives and consciousness.

I am saying this because if we are not careful of how we perceive the integration movement now, as we are independent separate nations, we might be confusing the general populations in our Caribbean islands. I am saying this because we do talk about the fact that we

appreciate skills, we appreciate the fact that all our people are not academic, that we know the value of all our human beings.

The perception remains that some people in the Caribbean are more valuable than others. I may be a little concerned that we start off, and I am not talking about Barbados alone, because I have seen the legislation in Trinidad. We start off by saying that we want the people from the university. We start off by saying that we will have them in.

Although we are talking about the movement of skilled nationals, we do not seem to be opening up, and I find this interesting, because Barbados does have, as many as the other islands, people coming to cut cane for example. We do have people who, I know have come in to help with buildings; masons, plumbers, carpenters and so on. I keep saying that on one hand that we value our human beings. How is it that we say on one hand that we do not think that it is only the academics who are important, and yet when we start off on a Bill like this, we do not show that same balance? We do not show that we are serious about the fact that we value people with skills.

Yes we will have people from the University of the West Indies, of course. This has been happening informally everywhere, that people from the University of the West Indies, they marry, they inter-marry, they go from island to island. True they had to get a work permit.

Why don't we balance this off by saying, "What happens now to the sugar cane cutters who are going to come in here? Do they still have to get a work permit from within the Caribbean to work here?" Or are we going to just ask them to move freely while we have our university graduates?

So I am concerned about this sort of message that our deeds do not match our words. That we are feeding this notion in the Caribbean that some people are more important than others. That the academics, yes, but the skilled people are not really ready yet. I know that this is just the beginning and I hope that we will soon have the entrance of other skilled people besides professionals.

I also ask myself who are the real beneficiaries of this process in the Caribbean? You know why I keep thinking about things like these, because I think the Federation failed because the majority of people really did not feel involved in the process. It was something that was imposed on us. We cannot again make the same mistakes. We

cannot pull them in. I think this is feeding the cynicism in the Caribbean about politicians and the whole question about laws. Feeding the sense that there are special people who are going to be taken care of but the majority of us, we are pawns in this game.

These are the kinds of concerns I share. I feel that the more we do things like these, the more we undermine the process that is why I say we law makers have to be purveyors of a perspective, of a consciousness. The more law makers are perceived as favouring some and not others, the more we find the majority, most of our people, are not pulled into this process. Not pulled into the awareness that we are one. The sense of injustice is going to really undermine democracy if more and more of our people are not going to be involved in it.

12.45 p.m.

The other thing I want to say is, I note that the spouses, unless, of course, they are guardians of the University, are going to have to get their work permits. I find this is a bit difficult that you come in and your spouse is not a graduate of the University so he or she will have to go through the process of finding a work permit to work. I find that a little difficult. I think the legislation could have allowed the spouses to work without work permits, especially if they are Caribbean spouses. These are things I suppose in time will be worked out.

Now, the other thing I am concerned about, since this is an Immigration Act, I am wondering what kind of fair play and justice and what sorts of systems are in place in the Immigration Department. I think the Minister of Immigration is going to have to look carefully at what is going on. I am saying this because I am concerned about the fact that Barbados has been welcoming thousands and thousands of people, tourists, groups, and nationalities. They have been fairly generous. People have come in, as we know up to recently without passports and on drivers' licences, and things like that.

Today, I think it is important while we are talking about this Immigration Act to probably think about reviewing the procedures in the Immigration Department. I am concerned that there still is a perception that there are some people who can come into Barbados without much hassle and there are some who cannot. I am particularly concerned, and I want this to be very clear, about the fact that Ethiopian Ministers of Religion find it difficult to enter into Barbados, when we have people who are Evangelists from all over North America and all those places come in freely, quite easily.

I have this problem. Why is it in a country like this where we have the descendants of scattered Ethiopia that we have problems like getting Ethiopian Ministers of Religion coming in, people, mind you, who are not going to be a burden on this society, people who are going to be paid for by the Ethiopian Dioceses? I have something in my hand. The very fact that I have this in my hand, a whole collection of application forms for Ethiopian Ministers. Why it is in my hand, and why I am talking about this is, it shows you the kind of contempt for which we even treat our own because the Immigration people should have these files. They should have these applications in their offices working on them from April, but I have them in my hand.

I spoke to a senior member of the Immigration Department yesterday who said she would look into it. I wonder what she would be looking into when I have this in my hand. So when you talk about Immigration you have to wonder whether we are having a fair deal for our people, whether they are Caribbean people or whether they are other people who could come into this country. There is a Catch 22 situation. Every time they ask for something there is something else you must get. They ask for character reference, they get it, then they want Police character reference. So we have to be truthful about what our Immigration people are doing, whether it is to Caribbean people or whether it is to people who look like us and are not tourists in the sense that they are from Canada, America or Europe.

I am not only concerned about the movement of Caribbean people. I am also concerned about the fact that the more we move around the Caribbean waters, the more we have to begin to question things like what territorial waters belong to each other. I think the more we bring our Caribbean people moving freely across the Caribbean, the more we would not have the problems of who are fishing in others waters and all that, the more we see ourselves as one. So there are lots of good spinoffs from the fact that we begin to embrace each other.

I have always said that we need to have the free movement of peoples in the Caribbean. There is a kind of chemistry. There is a kind of creativity which the meetings of these different islands and cultures would bring to any country and this is definitely cross fertilization. As a matter of fact, I think places all over the Caribbean will benefit from this movement. But I think this is only the very smallest of beginnings and the most unhappy in terms of the message that the people who can now move freely, who have always moved freely anyway, are the graduates of the West Indies and a few academics when the majority of our people are going to feel that they have the same value and worth that these so-called academics have.

I will end by saying, while I support the Immigration Act, Cap. 190, I think this is just the beginning. I hope very soon we will have an opening up of this Act that will include people of skills. I still wonder what is going to happen to the cane cutters who come to Barbados next harvest if they are going to have to find a work permit or whether we are not going to work on something that will allow them to work in Barbados.

I also want to say again that I think it is a cause for concern among all conscious Barbadians that Ethiopian members of the religion – the Patriarch was here last year and made all of us feel that we were one people and wonderful and here today, not even a year after, all the message goes back is that we are good at showing a lovely face but when it comes to brass tacks we cannot get our own people coming here.

I am not going to talk anymore about the so-called television evangelists who come from the United States and take out quite a bit of our money. I am talking about situations where people are going to be bringing money into this country and they are given trouble. We have to watch what is happening in Immigration. We have to ask the Minister of Immigration why is it that these Ethiopian Ministers of Religion are having trouble to get in here.

Of course, I would like to end by saying, I heartily support this Bill, but I hope it is only going to be the beginning of better things to come in terms of our Caribbean people.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill and I am pleased to support it. Apart from the short-lived Federation and until the establishment of CARICOM, there had been centuries of separation both geographically and politically. It is true that here in Barbados teachers, agriculturists, journalists and preachers had gone to work in many parts of the English-speaking Caribbean and they had all made an outstanding contribution. On the other hand, we in Barbados did not travel as frequently as we do today. That is a fact. Most Barbadian travellers were seafarers and traders. Undoubtedly, the University of the West Indies has helped to forge Caribbean unity, and in Britain the same thing happens, Mr. President.

When I went to Britain in the 1950s to study I, like most Barbadians, knew little about other parts of the Caribbean except in an academic way, but from the time one got on board ship because, of course, you could not afford air travel in those days, one met other West

Indians and began to realize from then that we were one of the same kind. We learnt about the Caribbean there and in England in a personal way that we would not have learnt if we had remained at home. In some instances, people did not even realize the force of Caribbean integration there as students and later on as immigrants until some of us returned home.

Cricket has been an enormous unifying force, fragile, yes, but powerful. Thus the survival and integrity of the West Indies Cricket Team are essential. Because of changing global situations, as some people have already indicated, this coming together at this time is inevitable. 12.55 p.m.

Mr. President, I do not think it would be easy. There are dragons that will have to be slain. Insularism may from time to time rear its head but politicians and others in the Caribbean who strongly believe in the integration movement will have to continue to speak out. The burden will also fall on educational services. I think we have consciously to cultivate an attitude and it is also true that economic realities will help to solve any problems.

I am not worried, Mr. President, as some people seem to be. It is obviously a beginning but an important beginning. It is an attempt to build or rebuild a bridge and I would hope that this time the bridge will stand firm whatever strains may emerge. I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill because I myself am an integrationist but I am also going to examine it briefly from the other side of those persons in the community who are so eloquently voicing their opposition to this Bill. They are scared. They are afraid that people are going to come and take their jobs. In that connection I think that we have a lot of work to do. We have to mount some education programmes about professionalism in this country. If you are a professional and you do an excellent job it does not matter which country you work in. I have competed all over the world for jobs and done an excellent job. The problem in this country is that people feel they can get a job, turn up when they like, do whatever they like, take all sorts of time for lunch time and do not do the work properly. This is the best thing that could happen to Barbados and the Caribbean. Open the doors. Let the people come in. Let us compete for jobs. May the best man win because there are far too many inefficient people, and I am very concerned about this and I think we need to be concerned about this in our country.

There are far too many people who just go and say, I am here just working for the type of money that you are

giving me. They are not interested in improving themselves. They are not interested in dressing properly. They are not interested in giving you an excellent day's work. They are always looking over their shoulder. They are interested in which politician could put them there so that they can go back and complain and tell tales about other people and this is not good for our society. As I say, Mr. President, this is the best thing that could happen to Barbados. Open the doors, let all of them come and let us compete for jobs.

We need to start serious professional educational programmes and I am going to tell you how because I am very concerned about that. I attended a graduation ceremony. I was dressed up to kill, the other people dressed up to kill and one of the teachers calling the names, dressed like a saga boy like this, shirt open, up on the platform, and after I spoke to him and said, you had no right doing that. They do not see anything wrong with that.

Now, Mr. President, when these young people turn up with their open shirt, saga boy, for a job.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs P. E. RICKINSON: These are attitudes you are instilling into young people. All of them are not like that. But you cannot have people employed behaving in this manner and do not know how to behave. This is why some people are going to get scared, for the simple reason that if you have someone from another territory who is willing to do an excellent job, of course they are going to get the job.

Mr. President, I feel very strongly about it because it seems that everything is falling apart and people do not seem to know how they should behave any longer. There are certain types of behaviour that one must observe. One must not mix friendship with professionalism. If one is going to a job, one must be professional and one should not be reading about this person is not speaking to the other person in high position. That is not professionalism. If people in top jobs behave like that it means they are not really worthy of the job. We need to find the best person.

Now as far as integration is concerned, Mr. President, in addition to this there are many levels of integration among various groups in society including the nurses because we have the Caribbean Nurses Organisation which is a regional organisation and they were in Barbados not very long ago. In this connection and other connections here again we need to teach people what they are to do and how they can use their regional counterpart to assist them with the development in the various professions. People

in other areas of the region have a lot to offer and when they visit us we should try and use them to the maximum and do not feel that they should not be here in the first place. In other words we need to have quite a lot of education and the education needs to start in the nursery schools and the primary schools and then we need to look at the people who are in jobs and start giving them in-service education in professionalism, and also make sure we show them the difference between friendship and professionalism.

Mr. President, I support this Bill fully and I look forward to an extension of allowing all suitable persons to enter into Barbados. I could give another example before I sit down. If one has a master carpenter who is doing an excellent job from one country, because I do not know why people are becoming so slap dash, obviously we are going to employ the best carpenter or the best mason which means that that will give those other persons incentive to compete and make sure that they become master masons and master carpenters. It has all sorts of good implications for the development of Barbados and professionalism in this country. I do not mean the high-class professionals.

When I am talking about professionalism I am also talking about the masons and the carpenters and the road sweeper. Whatever you do you must be the best at it, be it electrician, road sweeper or whatever, people in this country must be taught you must always excel to be the best at whatever you are doing. Another thing, Mr. President, that we need to start educating our people about is the work ethic. It is lacking. The work ethic is sadly lacking in this community and for us to increase productivity we have to get back to the work ethic. We also have to learn that we work today and we save and have to make certain sacrifices and you will benefit from them tomorrow, and not to look at what people have accumulated over the years and go and take it in two minutes. These are things that we need to liberalize the media to start massive educational programmes even if you have to give all sorts of private licences to radio programmes. It could be 2, 4, 6 or 8 licences to people to open up the media so that we can get education going. In this respect, I support this Bill.
1.05 p.m.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill and, as some of the other Senators have alluded to, it is the beginning of what could very well be a piece of legislation to serve the country in good stead years down the road. I remember, Sir, some 20 or 25 years or more when every quarter there was a popular orthodontist who came through the Caribbean and you would see scores of school children lining up to get their passes to leave school. Because at that time there was not

anyone with that skill or, if there were, there were not that many. Sir, this orthodontist came through the region and fitted many a child with braces and did quite a bit of corrective remedial work.

I would like nonetheless, Sir, to address something which Senator Davis said earlier on and that is to say that fears will always come about. I followed the lead up to the Maastricht Treaty as Europe moved towards one bloc and there were these fears at all times, Sir, when even before the wall came down the West Germans were fearful that folks from other parts of Europe would be coming and taking over their positions. In recent times, we see with the NAFTA, the Canadians themselves being a little fearful that those coming from as far down as Mexico may come and supplant them.

Sir, it is but natural for persons to feel a little bit on edge at first. However, Sir, I would like to remind the Chamber that it was this BLP Government, just about the time that I was probably being thought of, Sir, which made a sterling contribution to the spirit and the doctrine of regionalism. Here it is at that time when we were thinking regionalism (developed) countries were thinking in terms of building walls and alienating themselves from each other. Now at this time when the walls have come down we are now trying to forge links and come together. As Senator Thompson said, I hope that this would go on from strength to strength. I would hate, Sir, to see various islands asking for clauses to suit themselves where they can opt out and opt in as soon as they do not agree with bits and pieces of legislation which suit them at that point in time. There will be certain sacrifices but in the long run I think it would redound to the benefit of each member state.

Sir, I had the privilege a few years ago when I represented some overseas companies to work through the region from Montserrat to as far down as St. Vincent and it was always a pleasure going in to work and to promote and next time around to see that what you had promoted had come to fruition. But what was somewhat disheartening were those occasions when an Immigration Officer would sort of take the law into his hand and flippantly impose a charge sometimes when departing. In truth and in fact, Sir, you were not going there to compete with anyone. You were going to introduce and promote a product, you were going to introduce a technique or some benefit to the island which at that point in time was not present. So it was always this feeling by one or two, not many, because you cannot say that was the spirit which obtained throughout the country. I was a bit sad recently, Sir, to hear a very senior civil servant in one of our member state countries speaking about people from one country not being well treated by Barbadians. I do not think that anything could be further from the truth. I remember people coming

from Guyana, and it was Guyana that he was referring to, where in their low point they were coming through Barbados and Barbadians were particularly pleasant towards them. Sir, they did excellent trade with our supermarkets. They brought in Bangamary fish and they brought in all sorts of things. You name it and they brought it. They traded in pharmaceuticals from the Guyana Pharmaceutical Company (GPC) and, although Barbados had an agent for most of those products and although the product was available at a cheaper cost from the local representative, I think that it was just the nature of the Barbadian to extend a helping hand. I think that the high point of their trade was trading in gold and they demanded payment in U.S. currency. Sir, I think that statement which was made only a few days ago went to a very low, the lowest of low I would suggest.

Mr. President, as we start to embark on the finer points which at some point in time will lead to the greater points of true regionalism, I would like to lend my wholehearted support to this Bill. I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, we are sometimes scolded for speaking of the good old days. Somebody wrote a book about growing up stupid under the Union Jack – Tom Clarke – and I think that was supposed to be in contradiction of the idea of the good old days. Yet, Sir, I am looking at what we are doing today and seeing it coming so late. I have to say that we have been there before because I grew up stupid under the Union Jack too. But I think that my travelling days started around age 21 years when I was a student at Codrington College and I could travel throughout the entire region on a thing called a "Permit". When it was not the Permit which allowed you to hop onto the Carib Clipper or later one of the Federal boats and go through the islands which I did, there was the requirement of the one passport. If you had a British Passport, you were a British citizen and a citizen of the Caribbean and I find it very interesting that we have retreated, as it were, from this position. There was also the one currency. You put money in your purse or your pocket and when you got to the first port you could spend it and you did not have to find a booth or a bank or some place where you could have change made. So we had this kind of situation before. In fact, I remember as a student going to Guyana and being allowed to invigilate high school examinations in order to get pocket money during that particular vacation.

1.15 p.m.

So I think we are again on the right track here, because we have over the years talked more about being a common region and a common people than our ancestors have talked before and it is necessary now to put into place

the evidence that we are indeed one people and see ourselves in this way. I think that this Bill sets out to do exactly this.

I think we need, though, to beware lest we treat people who are outsiders – and I also include our tourists in this – better than we treat our own people. In this regard I think a lot will have to do with the way the particular law or Act is regulated, what the regulations are, how it is administered, because we know that we do suffer in our travels about the Caribbean at the moment without this kind of legislation at the hands of some officers at points of entry who seem not to be aware that they and we ourselves are part of the same region. In spite of the fact that I think some Senators manage to travel with diplomatic passports, even then you will hear stories about some people who have been less than kind to some of us in our travels through the region.

I am just sort of issuing this warning that we need to reach the people who are going to administer the law, to make sure that the way they administer it is in keeping with what is the mind of the particular legislation which we hope to pass today. We need to ensure not just that we have freedom of movement through the region, but that we have hassle free movement through our region as well. I would say that should include a reduction in the time it takes us to get through the Customs in any Caribbean airport. You could spend hours sometimes just waiting to check in or check out.

One thing concerns me, Sir, and I hope the Minister in his summation will give some assurance on this, it has to do with the definition of a graduate. I fear that there could be a situation where some of the Immigration Officers or some of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, or whoever they are that are responsible for this, will want to interpret graduate in a way that will suit their purposes. I hope there will only be one interpretation. For example, a graduate could be thought of as one who graduated but who does not necessarily have a degree or significant diploma to show. Or, a graduate might be thought of as one with a degree. Is that what you are looking for? Persons with degrees? Or, you might think of a graduate as one who attended one of the institutions identified, and I refer even to a dropout. What do we mean by this? Is there going to be any way around the legislation by the way a graduate will be defined from time to time? I hope that this is not the case and that the regulations to the legislation will make it clear what we mean about a graduate.

There are some institutions in the region that currently are permitted to allow their employees to move without let or hindrance in the interest of regionalism, and that

has been a good thing. But then there are some others that have not been included. Senator Davis expressed her views about the Ethiopian Orthodox Ministers or Priests who are not allowed to come in, or for whom it is not made easy. I can say it is not only the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, there are other regional churches. I know that the Anglican Church in the Province of the West Indies at this moment is having a lot of difficulties moving men about, and it is particularly noticeable and creates hardships for those dioceses that have got two or three islands, sovereign island states, and where there is an attempt to move a person who is a member of the particular diocese in the Caribbean but who naturally lives in one of the islands. I am speaking of the possibility of moving someone from, say, Grenada to St. Vincent or St. Vincent to St. Lucia, or the other way round, and in our terms they are of the same diocese of the Windward Islands. They have that kind of problem to live with daily because this very thing we seek to do has not been done in the past, and they remember, like I do, the days when under the British Empire that was a possibility. We really have to step back a bit and I hope we are seeing that stepping back was really to leap forward and not to step back to obstruct things.

With this legislation these institutions, like the churches in the region, will benefit. I know that we in Barbados are currently, and since the end of the year we have been, trying to process an application for a Priest who happens to be a Guyanese and that has not yet been completed. This legislation should help in this regard.

I have been a student of Codrington College and sat alongside people from all the various territories from time to time and we found a common unity and brotherhood in the same institution. In the earlier times I indicated there was the opportunity to move about and spend some time here and there with friends of other territories, but then as we grew older we found that as colleagues now we were not able to exchange visits and move into somebody's job for six months or a year on exchange, simply because the movement we are now seeking to put in place had not been possible. We are by this making some progress and I hope that this will be seen, not as the be-all and the end-all, but as one small step that will eventually lead to greater movement in the region such as envisaged I think by Senator Davis. I too look forward to the day when we will open it up and allow people to move and let the market requirements dictate what happens, as Senator Rickinson has indicated in that way.

I would like to see people of other skills, not simply academic aptitude, our plumbers, electricians, carpenters and masons, and also I would like to see that there is some arrangement by which some of our small business people who are *bona fide* business people given a chance to try

their hand, to try their skills in some other territory, as well as our being willing to receive some of those who would come here.

So, Sir, I have no hesitation whatever in supporting this Bill and I hope it will be the beginning of things to come.

Thank you, Sir.
1.25 p.m.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, again I would like to thank Honourable Senators for the high calibre of their contributions. I know it is very popular these days to bash politicians, particularly those who are senators, as being virtually useless but I can assure you that the quality of the contributions is an expression of the full circle that has now gone through the Caribbean.

There was some reference to the failure of the Federation in the past with some of it blaming politicians. But from what I recall, having lived through those days myself, Sir, I seem to recall there were politicians, yes, but it was politicians exploiting the fears and prejudices and anxieties of the people of the various territories. I remember and it is one of my most enduring memories – a cartoon in *Jamaica Gleaner*. It was in the days when they were talking about Federation and the referendum was coming up and there was this massive white pig in the cartoon, the word Jamaica written across its massive body, and then we had little piglets, St. Lucia, Dominica all nursing under the pig. In other words, the cartoon was saying that if there were federation all these little islands would come and live off big, fat, sweet Jamaica. That is not the sort of thing you hear of today, fortunately.

I think that that in itself has contributed to the fact that we have been able to reach this point. I know some people are dissatisfied with the pace at which things have been going but we are dealing in politics, with reality and to me this is a pragmatic, reasonable exercise and we come here because the forces currently at work in the Caribbean have made it possible and feasible for this to evolve out of the current prevailing situation in the region.

One cannot therefore separate what we are doing today and not be cognisant of the fact that we have reached here and the difficulty in reaching here despite all the promises in the past which to me stem from a political state that we all yearned for, which we all attained virtually, all except in the case of Montserrat and which we all are very proud of, that is the state of independence. Having reached independence, each country has its own flag, its national anthem, its pledge. One is encouraged as a child and as a citizen to be nationalistic etc. Those,

Sir, are countervailing forces against regionalism, so therefore one must strike a balance so that while you are getting certain benefits from one it therefore has certain inimical effects on the rest of the movement towards regionalism.

As I said, we are evolving into a different process at a different stage and one has to remember the mighty European union to which Senator Gill made a relevant reference, took maybe more than a generation to reach where they are and they themselves are even now grappling daily, if one listens to the international news, with certain issues. In the case of Britain, Britain with its national interest over the "mad cow disease" is now refusing to cooperate on any issue whatsoever with all the other countries in the European Union, until they get a resolution of their mad cow disease situation and their beef is allowed to go into the European market. So these are the practical realities of life in countries and one knows, and sociology will tell you, that when a country is doing badly the immigrants are the ones who take the blame.

We went to Britain in the days when they needed Caribbean people and people of colour from the rest of the world. We worked hard to rebuild their hospitals and transport system and then once things got better, up rose petty nationalism among the British and now they want to exclude us. The same thing happens on a small scale in the Caribbean. If things are going bad in a country they always seek somebody to blame. Unfortunately, it is human nature that people tend to seek somebody else to blame it on and they blame it on immigrants because, as has been mentioned, there is justifiable praise of the quality of the work of Caribbean immigrants in Barbados and the same happens when we migrate to North America or Europe. We also go as immigrants. We work hard. We have dreams. We have achievements that we want to obtain and therefore when immigrants come here from the rest of the Caribbean they themselves want to take advantage of what Barbados has to offer whether it be education or financial or material, and they themselves are motivated to work harder than Barbadians who would have turned their backs on certain jobs at one time and out of that then one gets the realisation that they are working very hard.

Sir, I was sorry to hear about the concerns and unhappiness expressed by Senator Davis about her Ethiopian Church brethren and I suggest that both she and any other person who has dissatisfaction with the operation of the Department of Immigration should speak to the Minister. One knows that Minister Simmons, the Attorney General, is a very open person and is easy to contact and very willing to get involved in resolving any disputes that might exist. Unfortunately, I am not able to say more on that at this stage.

On the question of graduates, the concerns about what is a graduate, if one were to turn to page 2 of the Bill, Section 2A it says:

"The requirements referred to in subsection (1) are that a national

(A) is a holder of a degree, diploma, or equivalent qualification from the University of the West Indies, University of Guyana, University of Suriname or any other university or institution of higher learning or equivalent institution approved by the Minister responsible for Education."

So the whole question of accreditation, tertiary education, is going to be determined by the Minister of Education within that particular social context.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, Mr. PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into committee on the Bill, SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMONDS in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Madam CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1-3 were called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, Madam CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
1.35 p.m.

On separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I beg to move that the sitting be suspended until 2.35 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.

ORDER NO. 3 – SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, this Bill is a proposal, which basically seeks to eliminate a certain anomaly in the judicial system. The background to it, Sir, is that when Barbados' separate Court of Appeal was established around November 1991, it was necessary then to provide for existing Judges of the High Court who were then called, and styled, Puisne Judges, appointed to the Court of Appeal with the power to continue sitting in the High Court for the purpose of completing the outstanding matters which might have been in their hands before they were elevated to the Court of Appeal.

This was done by amending the Supreme Court of Judicature Amendment Act, 1992-14, which basically said that persons who immediately before the 4th day of November, 1991 held the office of Puisne Judge and on that date became a Justice of Appeal, or, on or after that date was appointed to the office of a Judge of the High Court, and who is subsequently appointed to the office of Justice of Appeal, may sit in the High Court as if he were a Judge of that Court for the purpose of delivering judgement or doing any other thing in relation to proceedings which were commenced before him whilst he was a Puisne Judge or Judge of the High Court as the case may be.

Such an amendment, Sir, permitted then, Justice C. Husbands, now Sir Clifford Husbands, and now our Governor-General, to complete a number of matters which had been partly heard before him in High Court, not withstanding the fact that he has been elevated to the Court of Appeal.

The current situation, Sir, is that the latest person to be appointed a Justice of Appeal is Justice Errol Chase, a recent appointment. He also has a number of matters outstanding before him in the High Court and it is desirable that he be allowed to finish these matters while sitting in the Justice of Appeal. So far everything is on all fours.

However, under the existing law, Mr. Justice Chase would be precluded from finishing these outstanding cases

by virtue of the very same section 4 to which I referred earlier. He was not appointed to the office of Judge on or after that date, namely November 4, 1991. As a matter of fact, Mr. Justice Chase, was appointed a Puisne Judge in 1988.

The term Puisne Judge, Sir, is no longer in vogue in Barbados' legal system, but its preservation was necessary under section 4 because those persons who were previously appointed as Puisne Judges, prior to November 4, 1991, were entitled a Court of Appeal allowance of \$4 000 per year, insofar as they were able, seeing that there was no separate Court of Appeal, and that they could be called upon from time to time to sit on the Appeal Court in the interest of justice.

Now when the separate Court of Appeal was established, that allowance could not have been taken away from them because it would have done damage to the system and it would have been unconstitutional to have done so, by altering their terms and conditions of service to their disadvantage.

This anomaly regarding Mr. Justice Chase was drawn to the attention of the Attorney General, and it is therefore thought necessary to amend existing legislation in order to permit Mr. Justice Chase and any other High Court Judge appointed to the Court of Appeal to finish their cases which were pending in the High Court.

This Bill therefore, Sir, seeks to do just that and really is a very straightforward matter and I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I am not going to pretend that I really understand all of this, because I did have the Act and I do not really know what is in the Act. However, judging from the presentation, I fully support that this be passed so that the judge could finish matters that he started before sitting wherever he is sitting now.

I am saying this, because I have read that sometimes it has taken two years or so to give judgement. As a lay person, to me that does not sound right, Mr. President. I feel that if one has matters one should be able to get judgement as quickly as possible because of the stress and the legal costs that it takes.

I will also make a plea with the judiciary, from an experience with a student of mine who was going through a divorce court, for a speedy resolution of

all family matters. In that there have a special family court to deal with family matters regarding divorce which involve children.

I am saying this from the point of view of someone who saw a student became mentally unstable, admitted to the hospital and who has never recovered to look after her children. The stress of waiting and going through the divorce proceedings which were finally finished, with the husband refusing to go out of the house, *et cetera, et cetera*.

I will really like to take this opportunity to call for a family court to speedily bring to a resolution all divorce matters. Not only the females suffer but the males, the children, the whole family and the whole society.

I therefore support this Bill and look forward to a reform of the judiciary service. Also, Mr. President, while I am on my feet about this, I have read about the various people who are on the death row and the appeals, *et cetera, et cetera*. I only hope that we could look forward to a speedy resolution of this matter so that the cases could be moved forward very quickly so that both the victim and the perpetrator could have the matter resolved speedily in the interest of the society and in the interest of health care. And in particular, Mr. President, the children. The children really suffer. Really and truly they end up with all sorts of psychological problems which we in health see later down the road.

I support this Bill.

2.45 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Let me just say to Senator Rickinson that if in future there is any difficulty in understanding any of the legislation brought before the Senate that the Clerks who are all legally trained will, I am sure, assist you in whatever way possible.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, in relation to the appointments to the Court of Appeal, I think I speak for a number of concerned Barbadians about the fact that Attorneys General who are political appointees end up on the Court of Appeal. This is something that gives some people some concern. I am not referring to the particular persons who actually held those high posts but I do feel that political appointees should not be seen to be put on the Court of Appeal because sometimes when you have cases which would be the citizens versus the Government, one would have worries about the political ties of that judge and one should not have these kinds of things. I think it is something some people are concerned about and I thought I would like to voice this concern.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I am so shaken up by some of the sentiments expressed by the last Senator that I temporarily lost my bearings.

Sir, I do not at all agree with the sentiments expressed by Senator Laurie. It seems that once you are involved in politics that you are tainted for life and therefore you are not capable of anything positive. I think that is a precept and a myth that need to be eradicated and exploded.

If a man is a doctor and is a politician, people feel comfortable going to him and expect to get the exact medicine and that he is not going to give political medicine. They get medicine. I believe that if a man is an accountant and was a politician he can still render professional service and advice as an accountant, because I wholly believe in the principle of compartmentalization of roles. When you are in one role you function in one way and when you are in another you function in another way. Therefore, there is no need for any cross over.

In Barbados we have had a number of people in judicial positions who have had political posts and there is no track record, history, evidence, accusation, rumour or gossip relating to the fact that these people have allowed their past political ties or political behaviour to in any way influence their judicial decisions. I am sure Senator Laurie has no evidence of that, otherwise he would have given it in his presentation. The fears of his "concerned Barbadians" are unjustified, unfounded and I think are reprehensible, if I may say so.

Sir, Senator Rickinson made some very useful comments particularly about the question of the length of time it takes for judgments to be delivered. While we are seeking to make this amendment, on the other hand I think I should also very briefly assure the Senate that this is not being regarded as the be-all and end-all of improving the lot and functions of the judiciary, but that we realise that part of the problem with the delivery of judgment has been the fact that the multiplicity of roles that judges in the past have had to play, does not always allow them to quickly and expeditiously write judgments because they have to take all the submissions in longhand and then it takes a while for them to be typed out by the secretary.

We are seeking to do this by providing secretarial assistance to judges. There is a move afoot, which I understand is going to come to fruition very shortly, whereby each judge will have secretarial assistance to speed up the process. In addition, we are in the process of providing Computer Aided Transcription facilities for

the Courts. The ads have been in the newspaper quite recently and people are about to be appointed as trainers. If one looks at the Estimates one would see that there is some \$600 000 to provide for this service of Computer Aided Transcription facilities. Basically one is taking, not shorthand or longhand, but using the computer, the kind of thing one saw every day in the O. J. Simpson case and which is quite prolific in some countries.

Trinidad itself has adopted the system. They have had some problem with theirs because they have found that it takes at least two years to properly train a person in that system. Therefore, we expect that a course for training these people will begin in September. We should therefore be well be on the way to, at least, eliminating that bug bear which I know has caused some discomfort and suffering to people who have been awaiting judgments in cases in which they were awarded damages in accidents, *et cetera*, and therefore have put them under great financial pressure.

I therefore, beg, Sir, that this Bill be read a second time.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put to the Senate and agreed to.

COMMITTEE

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, Mr. PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, SENATOR Miss. O. P. SYMMONDS in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, Madam CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, Senator Rickinson has graciously decided to pursue her Resolution today.

Mr. PRESIDENT: If the Senator is desirous of dealing with her Resolution today, we will accommodate her.

2.55 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President, I think I will take this opportunity while it is available.

Mr. President, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this crucial resolution which is in keeping with Order 61 of the Standing Orders of the Senator of Barbados that the Honourable Senate appoint a special Select Committee on Health to examine, report and make recommendations concerning public health care services.

Mr. President, I hope to persuade this Senate that such a special select committee on health is crucial to the attainment of the principle objective of the Barbados Labour Party's manifesto, 1994 which is a document of this House, Mr. President, of transforming Barbados into a dynamic, prosperous and favoured democracy capable of sustaining a high quality of life for all its people.

Mr. President, this House is the underpinning of any stable democracy in Barbados which is a necessary ingredient for attracting and keeping foreign investment which will help us to reduce our unemployment and our under-employment and also by so doing raise the levels of living of our people.

It is a fact, Mr. President, that entrepreneurs are more likely than not to invest in a stable economic environment than in a country that is plagued with epidemics of dengue fever or tuberculosis or AIDS, or substance abuse, or any preventable disease and condition which directly reduces the productive potential of the individual and more importantly is a recipe for social unrest.

It is also a fact, Mr. President, that the debilitating diseases of diabetes, stroke, cancer, heart disease, heart attacks, a lot of their complications usually affect people at the peak of their economic activity, that is about 40 years and over, thereby reducing their productive potential significantly and causing the bottle necks in minimising costs of promoting the competitive development of Barbados.

Mr. President, a healthy population is indeed a better recruitment base for people who are engaged in reflective activity such as long-range planning, scientific

research, inventions, risk taking and other entrepreneurial functions of various kinds. It is indeed the very basis of economic growth, development and property which promotes and sustains the high quality of life of our people.

The profile of our population, Mr. President, which is aging and the profile of our health, it has changed radically over the years but there has been a lag in the development of our health services to keep pace with these changes and also to satisfy the hopes and aspirations of our people. We have had increasing health expenditure and it tends to be focussed on institution and clinic care which require more and more doctors and pharmacists and nurses upon which patients depend and upon which the demand has out paced the supply. What we have been seeing recently is longer and longer queues and consumers complaining that they cannot get their aged admitted for example into the geriatric hospital and even we have read reports of people leaving their elderly at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Now when this is done it leads to complaints about waiting for operations and eye care and medical care and this increases the demand over the supply for care at polyclinics. Indeed it leads to dissatisfied and untreated patients going to accident and emergency at night which turns it into a clinic and then they turn around and complain that they have been waiting all night for treatment although accident and emergency was not set up to be a clinic.

Very little emphasis has been placed on sustained health education with community involvement in health to get individual groups and communities themselves to accept responsibility for their health and their environment. Now, Mr. President, this is a proven strategy for reducing cost, increasing productivity and simultaneously increasing the levels of living of our people. This is crucial especially when we examine our aging population and note that by the year 2010 just over 30 percent of the population will be maintaining social services for the other 70 percent which includes dependents under 16 and over 65.

Mr. President, this 30 percent of the work force could be further reduced unfortunately by the presence of AIDS and substance abuse and incarceration for crimes if all of these are not substantially controlled.

It is also crucial to seriously take the pleas of our consumers of health care and professionals alike to improve the ethical standards of care so that the Councils truly represent their peers who themselves do not violate the ethical codes of behaviour.

Mr. President, it is recognised that a lot of these developments were inherited by this present administration. It is also recognised that a special team has been appointed and placed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital but Mr.

President, they are straddling the front fence, they are neither investigators nor administrators. They are trying to combine the role of investigation and administration and therefore they will find it impossible to fully examine problems which are numerous and which were many years in the making.

It is also recognised, Mr. President, that we have set up a task force in nursing which itself is a problem, with persons presiding over the deterioration of the nursing services who are key persons in this role, and who continue to tell some of the nurses who give complaints that what they are saying is not true. Given the foregoing it is desirable that such a vital factor of our national life as health should have the closest parliamentary scrutiny with a view to making recommendations to meet these challenges and this is best done by the proposed select committee on health.

Mr. President, just one or two more words. In an era when you are hearing about euthanasia and organ transplants and tissue transplants we need really to look at these carefully and see what implications they have and what laws we need to introduce in order to protect the health of our people. I thank you very much for allowing me and I reserve my right to speak further on this notice. 3.05 p.m.

Mr. President, I move that this Resolution be now passed.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, I am glad to see that at last we have got this train rolling, so to speak. I know that this is a very dear and precious subject of Senator Rickinson. But in the light of the fact that the Leader of the House was dealing with this matter previously and he is unavoidably absent, I beg to move that further consideration of this matter be postponed.

The question that further consideration of this matter be postponed was put to the Senate and was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I think that has brought us to the end of today's business and I beg to move that this Senate be now adjourned *sine die*.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to, and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the sitting accordingly. 3.10 p.m.

CONTENTS

PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY 1145

1. The Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 1996.
2. Annual Report of the Public Utilities Board for the year 1995.
3. Barbados Highway Code, First Edition, 1996.
4. Medium-Term Macro-Economic Strategy.

MOTIONS RELATING TO BUSINESS AND SITTING OF THE SENATE

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY 1145

Appointment of Senator Miss O. P. Symmonds to perform the duties of Deputy President for the remainder of the sitting.

Suspension of Standing Order 45(2) for the remainder of the sitting.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY 1145

1. The Immigration (Amendment) Bill, 1996.
2. The Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Bill, 1996.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR THE BRIDGETOWN BY-PASS ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 1145

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1146; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 1148; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1148; Senator Miss C. Y. Forde, 1149; Senator N. P. Welch, 1150; Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L. Springer, 1150; Senator Miss J. C. Odle, 1151.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE IMMIGRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996 1151

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1151, 1163; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 1155; Senator Mrs. V. J. Davis, 1157; Senator Miss O. P. Symmonds, 1159; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1160; Senator D. T. Gill, 1161; Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L. Springer, 1162.

ORDER NO. 3 – THE SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996 1165

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1164, 1166; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1165; Senator C. K. Laurie, 1166.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPOINT A SELECT COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE, REPORT AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SERVICES 1167

Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1167; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1168.

SUSPENSION 1164

ADJOURNMENT 1168

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1168.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

DAVIS, Senator Mrs. V. J.
 FORDE, Senator Miss C. Y.
 GILL, Senator D. T.
 LAURIE, Senator C. K.
 MURRAY, Senator the Hon. G. S. H.
 ODLE, Senator Miss J. C.
 RICKINSON, Senator Mrs. P. E.
 SPRINGER, Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L.
 THOMPSON, Senator Mrs. A. P.
 WELCH, Senator N. P.