
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, October 22, 1997

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, October 22, 1997, at 10.20 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator Sir Fred GOLLOP (President)

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

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

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

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 the Hon. 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 C. LeR. TROTMAN

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Senator J. D. E. BOYCE

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. The Representation of the People (Expenses) (Amendment) Regulations, 1997.
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 14) Order, 1997.
3. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 15) Order, 1997.
4. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 16) Order, 1997.
5. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 17) Order, 1997.
6. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 18) Order, 1997.
7. The Excise Tax (Rate of Tax) Order, 1997.
8. Sugar Industry (Sugar Workers' Provident Fund) Order, 1997.
9. Annual Report on the Operations of the Severance Payments Scheme for the period January 1 to December 31, 1996.
10. Report on the Operations of the Sugar Workers' Provident Fund for the period January 1 to December 31, 1996.
11. The Barbados Economic Report, 1996.

12. Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Barbados Port Authority for the period January 1 to December 31, 1996.
13. The Annual Reports of the National Assistance Board for the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96.
14. Annual Report of the National Sports Council for the year April 1, 1994 to March 31, 1995.
15. Annual Reports of the Department of Labour for the years 1992 and 1993.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President I crave your indulgence before Public Business begins to pay tribute to the life and work of a colleague and peer, Joseph Josiah Payne.

"The clock of life is rung but once and no one has the power to tell just when the hands will stop, at late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own. Live, love and toil with a will, place not faith in tomorrow for the clock may then be still".

Mr. President, over the last three years I have been here paying tribute to the life and work of a number of Barbadians who would have made their contributions. Today is the first time that I rise to do so on behalf of someone who could be considered a generational peer. As I look around this Chamber I can see at least six individuals who fall into this age group. As we all know, Joe was age 45 and it is only six months or so that separated us in age and for me, this is a very painful experience. As I reflect on his life, short though some might have considered it to have been, for me I would say that it was a full and fulfilling life and he made a significant contribution in many areas to Barbados.

He was an athlete of great repute, I believe many Barbadians and Caribbean people are aware of his achievement in the field of athletics but Joe chose to follow his philosophy.

I want to identify with his life because in many of the conversations that we held at party headquarters I realised that we were philosophical peers. His reason for entering the political arena was not because he wanted to chalk up another record in his curriculum vitae, not because he wanted to eventually reach that point which Abraham Maslow referred as "self-actualisation" but because he wanted to give back to the society, he wanted to make sure that his brothers and sisters who were of a similar class and

background, that he could assist in their upliftment and their eventual growth to that point of self-actualisation. With him I can readily identify and that is, one of the reasons that I referred to him as a philosophical peer.

Joe Payne decided to cast his lot with the Democratic Labour Party. Many of us working-class Barbadians who benefitted from that great social movement referred to as 'free secondary education' which I prefer to call 'state-sponsored education', and he, having experienced what it was like to go to secondary and tertiary school, at little expense to his parents, decided to cast his lot and join forces with the political party which assisted in no small way in his achievements. As we would recall, in 1986, the people of St. James North determined that he should be their representative in the House of Assembly. He remained there until 1991 when he was defeated.

During that five-year stint, Joe worked tirelessly at the development of his people and so he focussed on the youth and he determined that for them their future should not be one of materialism but valued-based. He embarked on a programme to prepare young people for the transition from primary to secondary school, a programme of counselling, a programme which offered them an opportunity to look at adolescence and its challenges and to try to prepare them for it, something which I hope that many of us who seek to represent the people of Barbados, especially the young people of Barbados would take an example from. He was also a very ardent member of the social clubs of Barbados, the Lions Club and his members speak quite highly of his contribution in that club.

He served in this Honourable Chamber as Deputy Leader between 1991 and 1994 and I can say that he continued to make his contribution to the Democratic Labour Party serving at the level at the general and executive level of the party. He was a very simple man, and as you look at him from time to time, you could underestimate his worth but he was never one who sought to be heard especially when there was nothing to say, another lesson which many of us need to learn in politics. He spoke when he believed he should speak and his words were words of substance and significant meaning, hence his discussions to the debates and discussion in the Democratic Labour Party were highly valued. He was not an opportunist. He chose on many occasion to take his seat in the back of the auditorium at the Democratic Labour Party and he would often say that he was observing the going-ons at meeting but what went on there never missed him because whenever he saw something going wrong, he would be the first to rise and make an intervention on such occasions.

He will be sadly missed but I believe that there is so much that we, especially the younger members of this Chamber can learn from the life of Joe Payne. Those of

us who seek to represent people at the parliamentary level from his life, we can learn that representation is not about sparring. Today so much emphasis is placed on sparring in Parliament and sparring in the political arena.

11.30 a.m.

So much emphasis is placed on point scoring and one "upmanship". I believe one of the things we can learn from the political life of Joe Payne is that we can quietly and with dedication, commitment and sincerity represent the interest of those who have chosen us to be their representatives without appearing to be in some games ring. I think that is something that we all can learn from his life.

Today as I reflect and as I say these few words on his behalf, I would like every one to know, my colleagues in the Senate, Mr. President, members of the public in Barbados and especially Members of the Democratic Labour Party, that we need to soberly reflect on the life of this young man. I believe there are lessons which we can all learn and I hope that for those of us who seek to be elected Members of Parliament the one lesson we must learn is that when we seek to reach the House of Assembly we must do so for a cause, not false interest, but a cause which is genuine representation, a cause which can be associated with the alleviation and total eradication of any forms whatsoever of poverty, deprivation.

Therefore on behalf of myself, my family and the family of the Democratic Labour Party I say thanks to Almighty God for his life and for his work and I hope his family would continue to benefit from his example, and especially his two young sons may follow in his footsteps in terms of his service. And from all of us, may he rest in peace.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I speak on behalf of the Members on this side and I want to convey my heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Patricia Payne and her two sons regarding the death of her husband and their father who served in this Chamber between 1991 and 1994 when I, Sir, had the privilege of representing the Barbados Labour Party in the Opposition Benches during those 3½ years.

I also knew Mr. Payne in a personal capacity since about 1978 when I first came to St. James. He was not yet in politics as such then. I knew him even before he came into politics because he ran, Sir, in 1981 in the Constituency of St. James North so our association goes back even before he decided to enter the fray of politics.

Sir, his death saddened me especially because he was younger than I am and I remember, Sir, the words of John Donne, "Every man's death diminishes me for I am involved in mankind" and this death diminishes me because it brings home to us the brevity of life and the need to live

life as it was meant to be lived, as the Creator meant us to live.

Sir, his life may have been short but yet he made significant marks in this island of Barbados. As the last speaker said he was a young member of both Houses of Parliament and he belonged to service organisations and he was a noted attorney practising at the local Bar. So his years, although they were short by our standards, yet they were significant in that they were spent in the service of his fellow man.

In the 3½ years that I served with him in this Chamber I found him to be a very courteous and a pleasant Senator who always knew how to behave. Sir, it was a pleasure working with him because there are those of us would testify that there was never any rancour or bitterness in the good gentleman. He called a spade a spade and at the end of the day the camaraderie which should be ever present in this Chamber was always existing between himself and us Members of the Opposition.

So, Sir, with those few words I want to assure his widow and sons that his work will always be remembered and that though he be absent from them in the body yet all around there is evidence that he walked among us and that he belonged to us.

Sir, I now wish that his widow takes solace in these words and I know, Sir, you will convey, on behalf of this Chamber the necessary respects to his widow. Thank you very much.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, Sir, with your permission I want to join in the tributes this morning to a colleague, Joseph Josiah Payne who recently passed away. I was fortunate to be able to attend his funeral service at the People's Cathedral in Bataleys in Speightstown and indeed throughout that service I reflected on an area and a community of which I am very familiar and from which Joe Payne hailed. One could not help but admire the strength of the family unit around which Joe's life would have evolved.

Sir, I want to especially reflect on Joe's contribution to Barbados and to the development of Barbadians especially in regard to his contribution in athletics and his work at what is now called the Coleridge and Parry School. Indeed he excelled in Athletics and to this day holds a record of some 14.69 metres in the shot put event, and he excelled in what we know as field events, events which do not necessarily always get the attention of the public but they certainly go towards the accumulation of points towards that final target.

I reflect that Joe would have contributed significantly around 1965 and 1966 when, probably as a junior in

the field events like shotput, discus and javelin, he would have assisted the Coleridge and Parry School in its triumphs which was led in those days by athletes of the like of Pedro Hinds, Hadley Hinds, Anthony Cadogan and of course the late Ezra Burnham. And Joe must have been also with that group who, on those occasions, would have left Kensington Oval, the scene of what was called then the Inter-School Athletic Championships and Joe would have run to Ashton Hall, St. Peter in what became known as the victory lap of the Coleridge and Parry School.

After that very illustrious career in athletics Joe Payne moved into the field of the study of law and again Joe did not take the traditional route that went the route of attachment to a solicitor in Bridgetown, the older method to which some of our more senior and older attorneys would have been accustomed.

11.40 a.m.

He did this, Sir, and he succeeded with flying colours and again, testimony to his work, his success and his dedication is seen in the tributes which were paid to him by his colleagues.

He joined the Democratic Labour Party in 1979 and as my colleague mentioned, rose through the ranks to be the candidate for the Democratic Labour Party in St. James North in both the 1981 General Elections and the 1986 General Elections. In 1986, of course, he won an epic battle against the Barbados Labour Party candidate of the day.

In 1991, Sir, he began to serve in this Senate as Deputy President and certainly my information is, and this has been supported by the contributions so far that Senator Joe Payne was astute, he was loyal, he was firm and still gentle. He attended all the meetings of the Democratic Labour Party religiously and even to his end and some might say, even to his detriment. Because, only days before Joe left these shores for his final surgery, Joe would have been with us at the Democratic Labour Party Annual Conference this year in 1997.

Sir, to his wife Pat, his sons and his mother, I want to extend condolences of sympathy on behalf of my family and the family, as has been stated before, of the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, I am sure you will ensure that these sentiments be passed on in the appropriate manner. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I would like to associate the Chair with the sentiments expressed in tribute to the late Mr. Joseph Payne, a former Member of this Honourable Chamber. I knew Mr. Payne well as a fellow member of the Bar and only my absence from the country prevented me from paying my last respects at his funeral.

As has been said, he was a man of quiet dignity who, in a relatively short life, served in both Houses of Parliament and made an outstanding contribution to public life. I direct that the Clerk convey to Mr. Payne's widow and other members of his family the condolences of all Members of this Honourable Chamber and I will now ask Honourable Members of this Senate to stand for one minute silence in tribute to the memory of the late Mr. Payne.

The Senate observed one minute silence.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SALE OF LAND AT DODDS PLANTATION, ST. PHILIP TO THE TRUSTEES OF NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to start debate on this Resolution, Sir, which seeks the approval of this Honourable Senate in accordance with section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225.

The proposal, Sir, is that the Senate gives its consent to the sale of a parcel of land, defined as Lot No. 9 at Dodds Tenantry in St. Philip to the New Testament Church of God through its Trustees and that the site of some 992.9 square metres be used as a church.

Sir, this land in question is part of the Dodds Estate which is owned by the Crown and the Government had been approached by the Church concerning the possibility of the purchase of this land for the purpose of ensuring their continuity of tenure on this lot. They had been renting this lot from the Government for some 19 years and the Church in seeking to make its situation more permanent, made an offer to the Government concerning the purchase of the land. The matter was reviewed by the Government's Property Management Unit, which had recommended a sale price of \$2 per square foot, given the value of the land. The Church however, requested that Government give consideration to a reduction in the price and it was finally agreed that the sale price will be in the range of \$1.50 per square foot, which the Government considered to be a reasonable concession given the fact of the important work which the Church performs in these communities. As one condition therefore, attached to the sale of the land, the property must continue in use as a church.

What is being sought therefore, today, Sir, is for our formal approval, as required under the necessary legislation to give this New Testament Church of God at Dodds in St. Philip the security of the ownership of their land to allow them to continue with their excellent programme of

work in the community and I am quite happy, Sir, to beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, Resolutions of this nature are not normally very contentious and indeed, in the case of the sale being dealt with in this resolution, we do not have any objection, whatsoever, Sir, to the sale to the New Testament Church of God of the parcel of land to be described by the Senator, the Leader of Government Business, who just sat.

Sir, I note too, that the price that the Government has finally accepted for the land is in keeping with some concession to groups who play a significant part in the overall development of our community, and of course, no one in their right mind can question the contribution of churches in terms of community development. In this regard, I must comment at this time about some questions which rise in my mind when I am hearing public figures in Barbados referring to churches or groups of churches by way of cults, Sir.

I think, over the last week, if I recall, I had seen some public debate on this kind of matter and I would express tremendous concern, on this side, at the fact that we have a situation where our Leader can be reported as referring to church groups as cults.

I have taken some time to try to find out what impression people might have about cults. If anybody refers to the New Testament Church of God, for instance, as a cult, this would conjure up tremendous questions in the minds of...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, what, may I ask, has this to do with the Resolution to acquire land at Dodds, St. Philip?
11.50 a.m.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, it is a church grouping. I am merely putting what I see as a kind of background how I would like to see these acquisitions and sales proceed in the future. I am just making a few comments in relation to the overall picture that we need to generate in Barbados in respect to our treatment of churches and we have to be extremely careful in this regard. One knows of the instances where cultism has generated tremendous negatives for the country involved and we refer to the unfortunate incidence in Jonestown, Guyana, more recently David Karesh and the...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Boyce, this is irrelevant to the debate. Please deal with the Resolution.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, I am guided by your...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Just a second please, Senator Boyce. I am hearing other voices. I just want to hear Senator Boyce. Please proceed.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, we on this Side want to laud any attempts of this nature to afford churches in Barbados reasonable rates when they attempt to acquire land or acquire places where they can develop.

I recall, Sir, as a young man growing up in St. Peter the eventual impact, for instance, of the Roman Catholic Church when they were allowed to set up first a little church in the community of Ashton Hall and then through the leadership of the Mother Superior and the Sorrowful Sisters they eventually set up what became known as the St. Joseph Hospital. One must not think that the acquisition at Dodds by the New Testament Church of God, for instance, must end there and it must end as being used only as 9 000 square feet from a church building.

Again, getting back to the introduction of the last speaker, I commend Government for insisting that it stays in this use. I am sure that if the New Testament Church of God intends to spread its wings in that area and develop other related projects associated with the Church, I trust Government will embrace these projects with the same kind of vigour because, as I said, I can testify to the contribution of such an effort in the Ashton Hall community in St. Peter. It is something which we need to encourage and support. The Democratic Labour Party would have no objection to this Resolution passing as it stands, Sir.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I would just like to join the debate to add a few more pertinent details to the issue if only to establish beyond any shadow of doubt this Government and this party's traditional respect for, support of and appreciation for the work of the Church.

Now, what I am sure my colleagues who do not know would be glad to know would be that this Church had been renting this same land for some 19 years and we felt that they had, apart from their contribution to society, a claim to the lot. The same land was originally valued at \$2.00 per square foot. The Chief Property Manager in the Ministry of Housing felt that it was too high a price and they eventually negotiated a settlement of \$1.50 a square foot.

The point I am making, Sir, is that this is therefore no flash in the pan attempt by the Government to pander to any particular group to court any cheap popularity but, like I said, it is an indication of this party's and this Government's longstanding appreciation for the Church. For example, Sir, we have no history of ever, as Bajans would say, "busing" the Church over any issue at all. We do

not have to prove anything about our substantial contribution to and our appreciation of the Church.

As a matter of fact, in the current Poverty Alleviation programme, we have made it explicitly clear in seeking and encouraging the programme which we want to emanate out of communities that we are using established organisations, particularly the Church, which has a long practice of dealing with the poor within the communities who have the respect and trust of those to whom they minister religiously and also minister to their physical needs. We have felt that the Church had an excellent opportunity and a great track record to be able to add the kind of dignity, meaning and to depoliticise the whole question of poverty alleviation. We have sought explicitly and determinedly to involve the Church in these matters.

Therefore, this, as I said, has been in keeping with the track record of the Barbados Labour Party and cannot, in any way, be construed to be, like I said, a cheap political shot or it cannot in any way be construed to mean that we have anything against the Church because we will treat each case on its own merits and if there is an occasion where the wider public good has to be invoked I am sure it would be with alternatives being offered to the religious group involved.

Therefore, I just want to add my support to the Resolution and to restate this party's commitment in respect of the Church.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Mr. President, I want to make my contribution at this stage to this debate. I think there is no one in here who can deny that churches in Barbados have made significant contributions particularly to education in this country. I want to commend Government for having the foresight and the thoughtfulness to sell this piece of land to the New Testament Church of God which they had been renting for 19 years at these concessionary terms because I too believe that in this society that there are further roles other than the traditional role of religion that the churches will have to play in this community.

As the last speaker said, Government has placed the churches which are at the centre of the communities as one of the major facets by which it will get its poverty alleviation fund going.

I also had the privilege, a number of years ago, to visit a pretty good facility in St. Philip held by the Baptist Church where a number of poor people in the St. Philip community had the opportunity to get dental care at very concessionary rates.

I also had the privilege about two years ago to visit a church next door to Zephirin's, around the Eagle Hall

area and I was really amazed at the type of social provisions that the Church had made for the community.

I want to emphasize that I think that now that the Church has this land as property that they can feel free to go full ahead with other aspects of social development. I am sure a Government like this would give whatever concessions are necessary. I can see particularly a role for church groups at this point in time in providing services like day care centres, not only for the aged but also for young children and also providing facilities in times like national disasters. The churches have played a significant role in areas like hurricane shelters because they have pretty sound building structures and also in areas of providing training for people and meeting places in communities for community groups.

With these few comments, Sir, I want to commend Government. I hope that the Church would continue to play its very significant role in community development within this country and that Government would try in future to facilitate other church groups to help with the development of communities in this country.

With these few comments, I want to commend this Resolution to Members of this Honourable Chamber.
12.00 noon

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I had not planned to speak on this Resolution but there is something which has been bothering me for some time. I am one of those people who respect change and recognise the need for change in that anybody or thing which or who decides to stand still in the face of change, will be swept away. Recent events in Barbados disturbed me quite a bit and as we talk of the church, the question that keeps popping up in mind is, is there now a great division between the church and church music? Is the church and religious music no longer one?

I ask the question because I am quite alarmed nowadays as I watch many individuals who participate in what for me in my upbringing was church music, music which appealed to the mind and the soul and the upliftment of the individuals. But today as I look around at individuals as they perform church music and many of the songs which people in the New Testament Church will sing from time to time, I am a bit appalled and some times I believe that we are in a disco. I hope that the people at the New Testament Church of God at Dodds in St. Philip, are administering be it music or the holy word and that they can help the young people in the parish of St. Philip to recognise that church music can be of great inspiration.

I love to read and concentrate on the hymns in hymnals. There is so much that young people can learn from church music and I hope and pray that groups like

the New Testament Church of God would make sure that – I do not want to call it sanity, that some decorum is returned to church music and how people enjoy church music. I know that it is one of those sensitive areas but I think that in our attempt to be a part of everything that is happening around us, we are losing sight of too many things that are a part of us. I have difficulty sitting in a church, even if it is an open-air tent because for me the church is not the building but I have difficulty sitting in a church being entertained by anybody who plays church music, particularly a male attired for disco.

I think that we need to return to our standards and although we may want to attract our young people to the house of God, although we may want to see our youngsters move away from the street corners and come into the New Testament Church of God at Dodds in St. Philip, I think that individuals who we want to put before them to inspire them must be very good models that when they come to the Church of God they must feel that they have gained something and that it is better than what was out there on the streets.

As Members of Parliament that should be our concern and I think that acquisition of land for churches should not be seen only as that but we need to be able to see through the role of the church and how the church can assist us in removing some of these unnecessary evils in our society. As a Barbadian, I am not proud today when I look on my television screen and I see young people who are supposed to be great gospel singers and Christians and all that doing the "boogie" and all the jazzy dances and all that kind of thing. What kind of messages are we sending to our young people? If you are in a disco, you are in a disco and if you are in a church, you are in a church.

I rise to support the Resolution, Sir, and I hope that the church will continue to understand its role and its responsibility in helping to retain their standard and moral values to which we cling and help to eradicate all those foreign value which could do our fragile culture no good.

Thank you, Sir.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I had no intention of rising on this Resolution because I believe that it is a simple Resolution for the acquisition of land, the sale of land which I believe would not have created such discussion. But the last Senator who spoke certainly shook me in her thoughts because when I was a young boy my grandparents belonged to the Pilgrim Holiness Church and I was forced to go to church from the time that I knew myself because I was basically raised by a grandmother and an aunt and they came up in the church and from the time I knew myself, there was always singing and rejoicing in the churches, the Bible says that, you sing and you rejoice.

I would invite the Honourable Senator to go to one of the video shops and rent two videos, Sister Act I and Sister Act II. I never liked the main star in those for a long time. But only a few weeks ago I was invited to watch them a Sunday evening and a Catholic Church in California which was absolutely empty was suddenly transformed and full of people and the little school down in the dungeon sort of brought back life to a community. Are we saying that in today's world we must still follow the old traditional ways of dressing up in collar and tie, socks and shirts and what not to go to church because then we are not thinking of what is happening in Barbados today.

If you look at this building, this building is typical of what was built in Barbados back in 1910 and 1930, ceilings 10 to 15 feet tall because of air flows and everybody kept cool. You had probably 40 000 families in Barbados on the 166 square miles, today you have numerous houses on the same 166 square miles, the air flow is restricted and therefore when you go in churches you cannot even hear, the microphone and the amplification are new additions to churches. In the same way, if we are trying to get to the souls of the people and we want to teach them good behaviour and we can encourage them to come off the streets in their soft shoes or whatever it is and if they can sing and rejoice, are we going against the bible which say that people should meet and sing and rejoice with cymbals and harps etc? What do we want to ask them today?

I begin to wonder whether we use this Chamber just to get political headlines because rather than trying to get the people from down in the back streets etc. who are involved in all the violent actions into the church in their dungarees etc. and teach them a better way of life, you are going to ask them first to get dress up before you can come in.

One thing that I can say is that the Catholic Church has set a lead in this country. You can walk off the street and go in the Catholic Church and worship your God, you do not have to dress up. If you are going to go back to 1910 and 1920 then let us move everything back, we cannot go forward in one respect and keep the other back in the 1920s. We must have reasonable thoughts when we come to these Chambers because the public out there is listening to us and I hope that the churches involved in Barbados will try to get to the souls of the people, try to get to the conduct of the people and let us get back to the time when the Sunday School Teacher if she saw you in the road doing something bad could give you two slaps around your head and the parents accepted it, that is what we want to get back to.

12.10 p.m.

I do not think clothes are going to make any difference and I will invite the Honourable Senator to watch Sister Act II and see when Sister Clarence tell

them to take off their robes, come however they are dressed, and come out and show the public what you can do and it did not detract from their ability and they won the competition. I leave that with you Senator.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
GRANT TO THE NATIONAL HOUSING COR-
PORATION OF LAND SITUATE AT
ST. HELENS, ST. GEORGE

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move the passing of this Resolution which seeks the approval of the Honourable Senate for the grant of lands at St. Helens, St. George to the National Housing Corporation for the purpose of providing house spots.

Sir, this land in question, some 5 803.4 square metres is part of land which has now become superfluous and was part of the larger acquisition some time ago for the construction of a school and recreational facilities in the St. Helens, St. George area.

It is proposed to use this portion of superfluous land for the provision of house spots to alleviate, what is by everyone's acceptance, one of the great and pressing needs in Barbados, that is the need for housing.

It is proposed, Sir, that this land will provide some 9 house spots. An earlier design had contemplated 14 but it was considered that it would not have provided an appropriate buffer between the recreational facilities and some 9 house spots would be provided. But, Sir, as I said earlier, housing is by far the greatest need when you ask the man in the street, what are you looking for and the Government is committed to playing its part and I will speak further about what Government is actually doing in pursuance of the activities there.

Sir, let me first start by making another point because the unfortunate situation has developed where many persons look to Government exclusively for the solution of the housing problem. But as I travel the length and breadth of Barbados, Sir, I am driven to express the greatest disapprobation with the situation which has developed in Barbados. It is a situation, Sir, in which we notice that there are many unoccupied houses, very often housing of good quality which is allowed to deteriorate and there is one sure way, Sir, of guaranteeing the rapid destruction of a building, that is by simply leaving it vacant.

According to the Green Paper on Housing, Sir, the statistics produced by the Department of Housing in

Barbados, Sir, in 1990 by a survey they conducted, revealed some 7 000 unoccupied dwelling houses which made up some 8.5% of the total housing stock of Barbados.

Now how can we, Sir, allow 8.5% of our housing stock to be unoccupied and falling into disrepair? What was interesting to note as well, Sir, is that wall structures accounted for a significant portion of these unoccupied houses. So, Sir, we are not necessarily talking about houses that were unoccupied because they were dilapidated. Very often as we drive around, Sir, we can see the vines, we can see trees growing out of the tops of houses which were obviously in good condition when they were abandoned. My appeal, Sir, at the start of this debate would be for individuals who might not necessarily want to dispose of their property, because we all want to maintain our land interest in Barbados, people who are overseas might not want to sell their land but they can certainly rent the house.

There are situations in which there are family disputes over rights to title and arrangements can be made whereby the house can still be rented and the attorneys for the parties in the dispute can manage the funds which accrue. I know of a situation, Sir, and I am speaking, Sir, in the context of housing being the greatest need of Barbadians and what the Government is doing and what the Government will do and making the point, Sir, that each and every citizen out there can also do a substantial amount to alleviate the situation.

I know of a situation in St. George where a couple built a regular 1 200 square foot-house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, patios and the like and this is a house which is currently no more than 10 or 12 years old but having been abandoned for the last 6 years due to a personal disagreement between husband and wife, the eaves have now been taken over by termites. I imagine the rodents would have taken over. The trees have taken over and it was formerly a lovely house. That house, Sir, could have formed part of the solution of the housing difficulties of Barbados by being rented to persons who would have needed rental accommodation. In the meantime while the dispute between husband and wife was being resolved substantial sums could have accrued to the benefit of both parties and the value of the property would have been maintained because, we as a community, need to ensure that the value of property such as this is not eroded needlessly. But the Government recognises that it has responsibilities. Whilst the Opposition may talk, Sir, we act. They talk about housing today and the need for it as if...

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President, the Opposition is in no position, Sir, to act on any matters to do with the management of housing in Barbados at this time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I am not sure what your point is, but I do not think it is a point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Long may it remain that way, Sir. If their record in the 8 years that they had the opportunity to manage housing is anything to go by, blessed be the community that does not have to deal with the Democratic Labour Party and the management of housing in Barbados because in that period when they had the opportunity to manage it, Sir, and we could only talk about it, they did one housing project in Barbados, one housing project in Church Village, St. Philip and the rents that were charged there were not set to help any small poor people that they are talking about.

Not only that, Sir, their major contribution to housing which had to be blocked by the social partners was a plan to raise the rents in Fernihurst, in Deacons, in the Pine and all of those areas and were it not for the intervention of the social partners who pointed out that such an action would have been contrary to the prices and incomes protocol, all like today, Sir, those persons would have been paying high rents. That is the contribution of the Democratic Labour Party when they had the opportunity to manage housing, Sir. So I know that they are not now in a position to manage anything.

How are we managing, Sir? Sir, we have set about a programme such as what we are doing at St. Helens for the provision of house spots for the construction of units for rental, for the construction of starter homes, for the provision of financing for housing.
12.20 p.m.

For example, so far, Sir, we have started work on the provision of, at least, some 770 house spots. These are not phantom figures as you have phantom figures coming out of the Democratic Labour Party on many issues. These house spots are in places such as Corbins Village, 30 spots, 50 at Apes Hill, 119 at The Hope, 28 at Flat Rock, 122 at Colleton/Groves, and I could go on.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Boyce, would you like to address the Chair?

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: In this 770, Sir, which we have already worked on, Sir, 100 at Cutting Road, Haggatt Hall, 12 at Eden Lodge, 11 at Bakers, 53 at Mount Brevitor, 40 at the Husbands Heights extension, 90 at the West Terrace Gardens extension and we could go on, Sir. So that whilst they were content to build one project at Church Village in St. Philip, and to contemplate raising the rent on the others, Sir, we are now actually working.

In terms of terrace units, Sir, we have constructed terrace units at Maynards. We have terrace units under construction at Pondsides, which is a project they stopped in 1986. They decided that the people of the City did not deserve any housing. We constructed phase one in 1984-85 and they stopped that, Sir and that is their contribution on housing.

In addition, Sir, we acquired additional acres of land on which work is yet to start for the provision of housing for the people in this country. Because we believe that we must act on our beliefs that we must intervene in a situation in which, were it not for the actions of Government, many persons would not be able to own these spots. We are also in the process of preparing a project for doing actual construction ourselves, toward these starter homes. For example, there are plans for several areas around Barbados, including Blackmans, St. Joseph, Breedy Land and Parish Land in Christ Church and we could go on and on, Sir.

The time for the introduction of the Bill would not be enough for me to mention the wide range of projects that we are engaged in. But, Sir, we recognise that this costs money and in order to ensure that momentum which we have started in the provision of housing for Barbadians was not lost, the Government of Barbados launched a \$50 million bond issue for financing housing in Barbados. Fifty million dollars for the provision of housing for the people of this country, an unprecedented move. That action did not only provide investment opportunities for those who have had money to invest, but it also insured that the Government, without dipping into its current finances, is able to satisfy the needs of our people.

Not only that, Sir, we also recognise that there is substantial private sector building activity and we are engaged in joint ventures with the private sector. For example, at Bourne's Village in the St. George/St. Michael's border and at Cane Garden, a project which the Democratic Labour Party abandoned, just as they abandoned the Glebe Polyclinic in St. John, Sherbourne which is a perpetual halfway house, St. Thomas Secondary School and scores of other projects, Sir. Barbados was like a scene from one of these modern day art shows. This was worse than off-the-wall art. This was probably half-way-wall art. It was as if some artist was given free rein over Barbados to construct sculptures, which probably reflected the decadence of society. So, these half-way structures around Barbados would have appeared to a stranger as if it was part of some off-the-wall artistic effort.

But, thankfully, Sir, now that by the admission of the lead spokesman for the Opposition, the Democratic Labour Party is no longer in charge of the management of housing in Barbados, we are able to have the happy situation in which these projects are being done. So, Sir, on this

matter of the private sector involvement in housing, Cane Garden was abandoned as a project and if you visit there now, there are many happy families who have been able to reside in an area as congenial as Cane Garden. And with the school being completed adjacent to them, and with the commercial centre at Warrens just a stone's throw away, they will have a very, very happy existence. But we were able to do it, Sir, by joint ventures with the private sector in which the private sector has been able to complete the construction and to make the sale of those houses. So, we are encouraging private sector involvement in housing as well.

On the financing, Sir, we recognise that Barbadians are by and large very credit worthy people. They are very reliable. Barbadians do not like to really owe anyone. If they must take on a debt to achieve something in life, they will do it and they will pay. We notice, as well, there are several persons who will be able to make the repayments on their loans, but finding that down payment has been a major problem. We were therefore pleased to be in the forefront, Sir, of 100 percent mortgages, where general workers in Barbados and the civil servants who are at the lower end of the pay scale, who were not in a position to go to some of the insurance companies who will ask for 25 percent down payment, or to some of the banks, they are now in a position to pay for their own home.

In this category also are some of these folks who are under this average of \$2 000 per month. Particularly, you will find in there some nurses, you will find a number of teachers, you will find some clerks, you will find postmen, you will find sanitation workers, you will find a range of persons employed in the Government service who will be able, with the provision of financing of this nature, to be able to pay for their own house. That, Sir, is a significant step in the right direction.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Yes, that has already been announced and that is already in operation and that is what the Barbados Labour Party is all about, Sir, commitment to housing and commitment to the development of our people by tangible and practical means. Whilst others talk, we act. Others talk about the poor small black man and we act on his behalf.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: We are confident, Sir, that this grant of land at St. Helens in St. George is another step in the ongoing process by which the Barbados Labour Party Government is enfranchising the people of Barbados, ensuring that the hard-working persons

in Barbados, the working class persons of which this Party was sprung, Sir, are able to enjoy some of the benefits of the good life in Barbados.

Now Sir, the matter of the provision of housing also relates to the ongoing management of the existing housing stock in Barbados. This relates to the management of some of the properties on the existing Government estates which have been sadly neglected. Maintenance was not done on these estates for many, many years and you will find, as you go around that we are repainting, we are changing the plumbing and we are changing the roofs on a number of these units to ensure that the people in those communities are able to benefit from the best possible conditions.
12.30 p.m.

We are also carrying through on our commitment to make provision for the sale of a number of these NHC units for tenants over time. That, Sir, is another means by which we will be able to fully develop housing.

Sir, we are also very concerned, and part of our strategy in the provision of housing is reflected in this, we want to ensure that not only will we provide housing as a means of shelter from the elements, but that housing is provided within the context of building communities. Where possible, we will either be building on or around existing communities or where we need to build new communities we will ensure that all of the amenities are there to ensure that there is the capacity for total development. So that the provision of playing facilities, the provision of civic centres for community development and other activities is as much a part of housing as what we are doing here today by the grant of land to the NHC for the ongoing development. We therefore take a holistic view of this housing programme.

Sir, I could go on and on on this matter because the Government's record stands and is there for scrutiny and is a record of which we are quite proud.

I will make the point finally, Sir, that this is only the start of the programme. The programme has lots more to offer but we only like to make the announcement of what comes next when we are ready for the stage of delivery because they talk and we act.

I beg to move, Sir, that this Resolution for the grant of land at St. Helens, St. George to the National Housing Corporation for housing purposes do now pass.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, we have obviously seen a change in the approach of the Honourable Leader of the Senate in terms of his presentation of the Resolutions. I wonder if this is related to the fact of his declared candidature in Christ Church South for the next General Election because he certainly said a lot of

things just now and I wonder whom Senator Farley felt he was speaking to. He must have felt he was speaking to a body of persons who do not know the reality in Barbados for whose consumption he was speaking.

In an earlier presentation I have heard it mentioned that some Senators speak for the Press and maybe that was the case where the Senator who just sat sought to give the impression that housing now for the first time has become something which Governments of Barbados have to grapple.

Sir, the very record of the Senator's own party, and I recall going through this document and even in reference to the question "demand in housing" and I want to refer to page 5, Chapter 2 of the Green Paper in a yellow cover. There is also a White Paper and then there is another one Habitat II, all relating to the same subject.

Like the Government policy that is being demonstrated, what is happening is that we are having a number of acquisitions and movements of land around the place, but nobody can live on land. You have to erect a building into which a family can go and reside. They cannot pitch a tent at St. Helens or you cannot pitch a tent at Apes Hill, for instance. Well, you cannot pitch a tent at Apes Hill now anyhow because I gather that land has been resurrendered. So the record of the Barbados Labour Party stands to be challenged. The reality that the demand for housing in this country has not come down but, on the contrary, has been steadily on the increase.

As the Honourable Senator moves around the constituency and talks to more and more people, he will recognise that their need for housing is not being fulfilled. Sir, even the recent announcement of new mortgage arrangements leaves out a large sector of this community in terms of the dollars which they can produce or which they can find the disposable income to afford the kind of housing that the Government is proposing.

They are talking, Sir, about \$40 000, \$50 000 and \$60 000 properties but the demand for housing in Barbados lies within the demand for the kind of terraced housing which was the flagship of the early development of the housing stock in Barbados.

The Barbados Labour Party itself in its job creation plan has not paid satisfactory attention to the wages that are being offered in the few jobs that have been created. This is made clear as the facts about the employees, for instance, of Caribbean Data Services, the flagship of the Honourable Minister of "External" Trade and Manulife where we have citizens of Barbados with "O" and "A" levels and indeed with degrees working for \$150 a week. They cannot afford any of the kind of housing contemplated by the presentation by the last Senator who

just spoke. They cannot contemplate ownership of any 5 000 lots at St. Helens or anywhere else so this Government has to stop talking foolishness about the fact that because of difficult economic times some elements of housing or indeed of development in Barbados were held back and constrained.

I heard the Honourable Senator refer to the St. Thomas School adjacent to another housing development which the Democratic Labour Party was responsible for at Cane Garden. I thank God that school was started because if it was not started, where would those children from St. Leonard's School be today? I thank God for the foresight of the Democratic Labour Party in providing the school at St. Thomas for those children to house because the Honourable Senator who keeps disturbing presentations from her seat but would not get up and say anything...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, to whom are you referring?

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: The Honourable Senator who just spoke, Sir.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Honourable Senator cannot make such a statement in this House, that the Honourable Member keeps on disturbing from her seat and would not stand up because it casts reflections on the Chair. It means that the Chair is allowing disturbance in the Chamber. He should be made to withdraw such a statement. He cannot do that.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bolden, I was dealing with the matter. I thought you had a new point to make. Senator Boyce I asked to whom were you referring?

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, during discussion, sometimes one is told of incidences and I was referring to incidences which were reported to me of Senators who from time to time make these contributions from their seat. That is what I was referring to, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I therefore ask you to withdraw the statement.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I withdraw the statement then, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Because, judging from what you have just said, it makes no sense.
12.40 p.m.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, the construction of housing and the provision of house spots for Barbadians go hand in hand and I am saying very clearly that the trademark of the

work of the Barbados Labour Party so far has been one of a mass acquisition of land and in most cases it is good agricultural land for the stated purpose of building houses on behalf of the National Housing Corporation.

Sir, it is strange that the Honourable Senator who introduced the Bill can sometimes be reported to criticise the Democratic Labour Party for developing housing estates like Rowans. That is his favourite talk. His favourite criticism is about the Democratic Labour Party taking land and creating Rowans and Frere Pilgrim and Rock Dundo Park, Cave Hill etc. but then he comes in here today and he makes a glorified presentation about how important this activity is in terms of the acquisition of land for housing and the need to have everybody given an equal opportunity and enfranchising people and that kind of thing. Enfranchise who, Sir?

Sir, the only houses that are being built with any alacrity in Barbados are the \$35 million houses at Port St. Charles. Every time I visit St. Peter I see another four of those units completed. I turn up the hill by Retreat and I go to Maynards and the situation in Maynards with respect to houses that can be afforded by us, the average Barbadian is that no further construction has taken place and my theme is about housing that can be afforded by Barbadians.

Only yesterday, we have got a situation where people in Barbados, the masses of Barbadians have found themselves going home to situations where their water taps have been turned off. I felt vindicated to the fact that I recognised the form of the letter that was pasted on my television set last night and I believe that I made that – a similar document – available to this Chamber for discussion, Sir. So when we talk about housing, when we talk about provision of an essential need for Barbadians we must speak of it in totality. When we have a situation where poor Barbadians are constantly complaining in the first instance of not being able to have housing at all and where they have been provided with housing, being unable, Sir, because of promises of work and no delivery of job, being unable to meet their rents and what we have been saying on this side all the time is that we are not against the collection of rents or the collection of water rates on behalf of the National Housing Corporation or the Barbados Water Authority, of course not. We would be stupid to propagate such a position. We have said that these kinds of actions should be accompanied by the appropriate consideration.

The Member of Parliament for St. Michael South East has made many journeys because his constituency, Sir, probably encompasses the highest concentration of the kind of housing needs that we are aiming to satisfy in the activities of the National Housing Corporation. His constituency in St. Michael South East probably represents the highest density of this kind of population. We have been

saying time and again to the rebuff of that side that there is a need for appropriate consideration for these poor people.

Yesterday, Sir, our call has been repeated by one of their Ministers and I trust that these people will now be afforded the appropriate consideration in terms of relief from the very extenuating economic circumstances which is the reality of Barbados and in spite of the yellow and red balloons that adorned Deighton Griffith School on Saturday and Sunday last, in spite of rhetoric delivered by speaker after speaker, Sir, the reality is felt in the bosom of the citizens of Barbados and I therefore with respect that the reality is not the picture that is being painted by the leaders of this country. The reality, Sir, is very different.

There is a demand for housing in Carter's Gap. I almost cringe to speak about it because when you see mothers, I am not talking about any 20-year old mothers, I am talking about 45-year old ladies of this community having to enter into arrangements, less than satisfactory arrangements, Sir. They have jobs and they can afford the \$40 or \$50 a week which a terrace house demands and they are on a waiting list which this administration is proud to parade across this country and to do absolutely nothing about it.

I am calling today for the Government of Barbados to rethink its policy on housing and to look immediately at the provision of affordable housing units. I am not talking about affordable spot at this time, Sir, I am talking about housing units that people can go into tomorrow and live in, open a door and go in and lock the door behind you because there is an urgent need for this kind of housing.

Asides.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Of course, enfranchisement is important and of course we all aim towards ownership of the land. In this regard, we have heard again this morning lip service being paid to the stated policy of ownership of these terrace houses. There are people in many communities in Barbados, I was going to say Sayes Court but they will look at me and say that he is talking about Christ Church South again, but many communities in Barbados who want to own their terrace lot and they have a right to ownership. When they own these units, it will bring about a self-esteem. They might not own the land but if they want to, they can own the house without owning the land. I might be venturing into an area which I am not too *au fait* with, the area of freehold premises.

Asides.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: The people who live in the terrace units like Sayes Court, the Pine and the

Farm. A number of them have expressed a willingness and a need to own these housing units and Government is undoubtedly dragging its feet in this area and coming in this Chamber week after week and parading before us, in this case there are six Resolutions about acquisitions and they get no further.

We are not hearing about any Resolution to vest the housing units at Sayes Court in the name of Miss Belgrave or Miss Lynch or Miss Rocheford, we are not hearing that but that is what I want to hear. I want to see a Resolution about two pages long listing all the names of the people who live in Wildey Close. I want to see their names being listed instead of just having the little references to the acquisition of disused baths etc. Let's move to a policy on housing which is real and which people can feel and touch and talk about and where people can have a real feeling of empowerment.

Let us stop, Sir, looking to just heap false praises on an administration which in truth and in fact has not delivered in terms of its promises, has been unable to create the economic strength within the sectors of the community that would make a difference so that today, we have a situation where, yes the business class of Barbados can sit back and say that the Budget is a good Budget and things are doing well.
12.50 p.m.

I do not blame them. In truth and in fact what is happening, Sir, at the ground level, at the level of the people whom this Resolution contemplates to deal with, the people who would seek to acquire the land at St. Helens once it has been vested in the National Housing Corporation, some 9 lots even if we get back to the reality some 9 lots to be created at St. Helens and this strengthens my position, Sir. Are we not spending a little too much time looking at the creation of these areas for this kind of housing and no time is being spent at looking to create units which in truth and in fact the majority population of this country, can afford?

Sir, in terms of housing development I cannot sit down until I have stated again that along with it must come an adequate policy of provision of roads, a provision of water, Sir. It must have a policy that includes the provision of adequate sidewalks and we will get to that, I believe, later on today, the provision, Sir, of telephone services and these things must be made available in any arrangement to provide adequate housing spots for Barbadians. They must be available at rates which are affordable to the people whom we seek to serve and therefore Government must rethink its policy in respect to housing because they are saying on the one side, we are being so good and we are being so great and the figures do not bear it out. The demand for housing keeps on increasing and the people

whom they are seeking to serve are testifying to the fact that instead of things getting better they are indeed getting worse and the division between the haves in Barbados and the have nots is widening day after day.

Sir, the Government of Barbados has embarked on a policy of poverty alleviation and/or eradication. Of course the strategy that was first contemplated could be sustained because it was a political strategy in which the Minister went to the first meeting and declared Government's position in terms of this and he promised how he would be back. He has not been back, Sir. It has become an exercise in merely the regurgitation of a number of known positions, an exercise which reminds me of what CADEC, the regional Christian body, Sir, did about 10 or 12 years ago.

If we are dealing with things like the question of housing, which we are dealing with today, Sir, it is absolutely clear, by the presentations that are being made, because I have been to a number of the presentations and I have not seen any of the Honourable Senators on that Side and certainly not the Senator who led the Resolution, he has certainly not been at any of those poverty alleviation meetings. I would have thought that a matter like this would have been of urgent attention to a Ministry like the Ministry of Industry, and the Ministry of Housing and a Ministry like the Ministry of Public Works and the question is, when you go to these meetings and listen to the submissions, Sir, it is clear that the course which the Government contemplates and the course which the people are asking about do not necessarily converge. This is where, Sir, I seek my information and my guidance from what is being asked out there in the community.

No self respecting politician should try to decide for the community what is best for them. The best approach, Sir, is one where you go into these communities hear them, listen to them and find out from them what are their urgent needs. This is where the question of housing comes out all the time. It is the burning need of the majority of Barbadians in the lower echelons of our economic bracket.

We are paying a lot of attention to the development of the upper classes of this community and we are not paying enough attention to having substantial programmes in place to help everybody. If I am challenged on it, Sir, I am prepared to go through it chapter and verse. And when we hear the contributions from other Senators, if they speak, we will hear from them what they have to say, what I am reporting on that is wrong or that is different from what they encounter in their environment because I know what the people of Carters Gap ask for. I know what the people of Sayes Court ask for and it has been reported to me what the people of Wildey and those housing units ask for, Sir.

The Honourable Leader of the Senate, Sir, in his presentation referred to the fact that they were painting houses and I think this is an affront to the people of Barbados. The only attempt by the Barbados Labour Party to paint a house in this country in the 3½ years that they have been in Government, Sir, was the charade that went on in the Farm, Sir, during the 1994 by-election. I state that, Sir, and if it is not true I challenge the Honourable Member to get up and say so, Sir. It stopped immediately after Mr. Mascoll won the seat, Sir. If the election was on a Tuesday, on Wednesday morning everything disappeared. 1.00 p.m.

So they can come in here when it is convenient and make these mouthings and try to make them sound good. But we have to go into the byways and the highways of this country and ask the citizens about the reality. Even recently, Sir, we were getting demonstrations of the high-handedness. When one reaches the stage where one can come to the conclusions within his own mind, without having these conclusions have any contact with the reality, this is what struck me about the presentation by the Honourable Senate Leader, Sir.

His presentation was one in which he believed intensely in everything that he was saying. The Government of Barbados painted the houses. The Government of Barbados has provided housing. The Government of Barbados has provided schools and in fact, Sir, the facts bearing no relationship to what he is saying. It is a figment of his imagination, Sir. The painting started and stopped in St. Michael North West and it was centered around the attempt by the Barbados Labour Party to dislodge that seat from the Democratic Labour Party. They were unsuccessful in that and they will be continually unsuccessful in by-elections between now and 1999, Sir, until the ultimate elections in 1999 when it is due, when the people of Barbados will again have the opportunity to speak to the question of who should run the affairs of this country, Sir.

Asides.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, we are dealing with the facts. The facts do not relate to the presentation by the Minister who just spoke. This must be of urgent concern to this Chamber, Sir. I hope as this debate develops, we will have Members on either side who will join me in indicating to the Minister that it is important that he begins to reflect the reality of the housing needs in Barbados.

Whereas in itself, the provision of nine house spots at St. Helens cannot be faulted, or cannot be opposed, the point is that it does not address the vital housing needs of Barbados in terms of what the masses of the people can afford, Sir, and what we should be seeking to provide for them.

Sir, I am grateful to you.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, it is quite clear that the Honourable Member would like to be a Member of the Barbados Labour Party with its wonderful record of housing and caring for people and that is his problem today, because he has annunciated a policy today which is so strange from any I have ever heard from the Democratic Labour Party. If you would permit me and give me the time, I will give him an education in politics and housing in this country.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: You are going to leave, you are not going to stay. I know you will leave. He will leave. He cannot stay for it.

Mr. President, let us start from the 1970s when the Barbados Labour Party created history in this country, when they took the whole of West Terrace and for the first time in the history of Barbados provided all levels of housing and provided the money for ordinary people to own their own houses in this country. You only had to pay 10 percent down on the land and 10 percent on the house and the Government provided mortgage money over a long period of time and that was the first movement in housing in this country in the modern day.

Let us go back to the beginning of the Barbados Labour Party and look in the Pine. The first political party in this country that ever thought about housing the poor was the Barbados Labour Party. I lived to hear the late Errol Barrow get into the Upper House and said that you should not talk about housing because they have blinds barring off the rooms, and he did not want any. He carried you through that theme. The theme of the Democratic Labour Party when we thought to introduce the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act. He got on a horse and he rode through St. George with Colonel Drax and said that the Barbados Labour Party was stealing Colonel Drax's land and he was going to put us in court.

Then the Barbados Labour Party had to bring every sitting member back to the country to vote in such a way to over-ride the Constitution. He will not stand in here to listen to those things because he does not know what he is talking about. He talks for the Press and I will keep saying so.

Mr. President, which Government has ever put money in the Barbados National Bank to lend people to get houses? Only the Barbados Labour Party. Which Government has put money into the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation to finance housing? The Barbados Labour Party. The Democratic Labour Party has never helped people in this country on housing. I go

further, when they cut the 8 percent off the civil servants, I knew some policemen, postmen, nurses, *etcetera*, who would calculate their salaries in such a way that they had an amount to pay mortgage and an amount to carry home, went home with zero, zero, zero on their pay slips. All under the hands of the Democratic Labour Party.

When he talks about the people in Wildey and the Pine, the Barbados Labour Party from time immemorial, he only is going to make me talk something, put up a proposal long ago that the first set of houses that we would let go to the tenants was in Bayville. The surveyor, I do not want to call his name because he is my friend, a Member of the Democratic Labour Party said that you could not subdivide them.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I am being frank. When we put a proposal to look at the houses down in Ferniehurst and change them into condominiums, they told us it could not be done. The Democratic Labour Party has always had an excuse how not to give land and property to the people. Let the Honourable Member go back and read the Hansard, where their contentions were that if they buy the land they have to pay the taxes and you are going to be poor.

Now, I hear the Honourable Member is telling me that he wants to see a resolution coming in here that we are going to give the people who are living in poverty and need houses. I do not understand where he is coming from today, when his party has always been against ownership of land by people in Barbados. He said they should always be tenants, when we argued that if they have the land in their hands, they will have the title deeds that they can walk into a bank anywhere, give them as security and they can progress. That has never been their philosophy until today, I am hearing it now.

The Democratic Labour Party built one set of houses in Church Village and said they will not be rented, and people who wanted them had to pay horrendous rents of \$90, *etcetera* per week. I could say, now, the first person to go into one of those houses was a police girl who had problems with her rent elsewhere. I had to get down on my bending knees and beg them to let her go into one of the houses in Church Village. But, nobody else went into Church Village for a very long time and those were the only set of houses that the Democratic Labour Party has ever completed during the period they were in office, as far as I remember from 1986 to 1994.

Now, the Barbados Labour Party we built Passage Gardens and I remember the fall-out over Passage Gardens when we were building Passage Gardens because the

Democratic Labour Party said we were going to devalue Dr. Ashby's house, who lives in Passage Road. So, I do not understand where the Honourable Member is coming from. We built Passage Gardens to put ordinary people in Passage Gardens. We built Pondsides and they criticised us for building the houses in Pondsides and cut it down to size to suit them. Now, I am hearing the Member talking about us not housing people. You can only house people when you acquire land. I have said in here over and over again, Barbados is one of those countries that has no Crown Lands. So how we are going to build houses unless we acquire land?

But, the Democratic Labour Party believe in wooden houses. They do not want them to live like everybody else, you understand? Because, I remember they went and negotiated the agreement for the sewerage plant down in Lakes Folly and they hid, but somebody dropped the agreement for us one night. But, we moved the people from down in Lakes Folly and put them in Clapham.
1.10 p.m.

You know what we did? We said "No". They would not go up there like they were down there. We put in water toilets, wall kitchens, wall bathrooms, put up fencing, everything to make them to be as satisfactory and happy as anybody else.

They would like to keep them in wooden houses all the time because therefore you must not acquire land but when the hurricane comes now, and if you take the history of Barbados, more wooden houses have been damaged in hurricanes than any other kind of houses in this country. So you want them to be scrambling about after a hurricane and putting them up in schools, *et cetera*.

The Barbados Labour Party resumed office in 1994. The Honourable Senator seems to think that the Barbados Labour Party consists of a bunch of magicians. Now, I walk through the courtyard every day. The policemen have been complaining about police stations all over this country for years. What did the Democratic Labour Party do? Nothing. The Barbados Labour Party came in looked and saw and at every police station there is work going on. They are being refurbished. This has not been done in their period.

Look at the schools. The schools are falling down and they did absolutely nothing. All that is building and construction. The Barbados Labour Party has had to pick up where the Democratic Labour Party let go in abeyance.

The school the Honourable Member talks about in St. Thomas, they started it and stopped. You know something?

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Do not talk about being broke. The Democratic Labour Party, as I have always said, is an external party. It loves people from abroad because they brought some people here from Venezuela to build some houses and what happened to them? I would like to know when it is solved because all the equipment was down in Husbands and they started the houses up in Cane Garden.

I saw a report which says that there is a big dispute between the Government and them so that is the sort of building that the Democratic Labour Party gets in. Any political party must have an agenda and it must have certain structures in place. If the Barbados Labour Party came back into office in 1994, it would be inhuman, it would have been impossible and would be asking too much that a political party could come in and start work immediately. The Labour Party has settled down and is working on its programmes.

I do remember in 1985/86 when the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party was up and down Barbados talking about how much money was in the Water Authority that he was going to use up, how much money was at the schools that he was going to use up. He did not even understand the accounts of Government at the time and when they came to power what happened? The schools he was going to repair were never repaired. Therefore, I want to say that the Barbados Labour Party is certainly on track with what it is doing. It could have done no more than it has done at the moment.

As a matter of fact, I hear people outside saying that the Barbados Labour Party is trying to do too much. All the roads are dug up. You cannot find a carpenter or mason who is not employed today.

During the period of the Democratic Labour Party, all our craftsmen became minibus drivers and ZR van drivers because there was no construction going on in Barbados. There was nothing to do. The unemployment rate went as high as 22% or 26%. Therefore, the Barbados Labour Party is sticking to its Manifesto. I can say all the rhetoric which has been spouted out by the Senator today will not be accepted by anyone else other than himself.

I support the Resolution.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. today.

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. today was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.
1.17 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Senate is resumed.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Sir, I too want to make my contribution to this debate at this point in time. I recognise, Sir, as my leader in this Chamber has said before that Government recognises the importance of housing to the development of the country and the critical shortage of housing in St. George is sought to be addressed by this Resolution.

I am particularly happy that Government did not act high-handed in this matter and that there was the process of consultation to place the residents in the St. Helens' area to the extent that a compromise was reached in which Government was able to provide recreational facilities for the young people of the area and at the same time provide some vital housing spots. Because originally the plan was for 19 houses to be built at St. Helens but these were reduced to a figure of about nine in order to accommodate the playing facilities for the kids. I think playing facilities in residential areas are very, very important because if we reflect on perhaps one of the largest housing developments in Barbados which was done when this party was in power at West Terrace, one of the shortcomings there has been the fact that when you examine it closely now you see that playing facilities were very short and were not provided and these sort of activities can lead to deviant behaviour by young people in the area.

Sir, we recognise that even in areas like St. Helens that people still need to have playing facilities, although it is what we would call a rural area, people still need to have some place where they can vent their energy. For example successive Governments have made provision in housing areas for playing facilities but one concern which I have is that they do not seem to be as much co-ordination between the Ministry of Sports and Community Development and the youth groups like the 4-H groups within the area. I make this point because if you travel around Barbados you will see a situation where you have two or three acres of playing area and a club house and on the perimeter area there is no vegetation at all and I think that this is a concern that needs to be addressed in this country. The land is already there and those of us who are interested in the environment would want to see a situation where trees are provided for shade and to provide fruit for the people in the community. I do not think it is a situation where you can have any economic gain from having the fruit trees there but at least it is available to the general community. I make this point because if you go to the sporting complex at Wildey you will see a swimming facility, a tennis court and a Gymnasium. You will also see the hockey facility but the place is otherwise barren and deprived of trees.

If we reflect on Barbados in the last couple of years when there has been a significant reduction in the number of acreage under sugar cane, I think we need to reflect that Barbados needs to be green and that we must take every opportunity to ensure that when these facilities are built that these trees are provided because trees provide shade and a source of food and vitamins. They also provide adequate protection of soil erosion which is very, very important and I want to see these agencies working together to ensure that this environmental aspect of housing development and playing field development is really addressed. In addition to that, I think that it is really aesthetically pleasing.

Sir, I want to turn my attention to respond to a couple of comments that were made in here a couple of minutes ago. A sweeping statement was made about the fact that people in areas like Sayes Court have been for a long time wanting to purchase the governmental housing units there and that we are not selling these units. Nothing, Sir, could be further from the truth.

I am going to read here from the Green Paper on Housing on page 14 and this is what it had to say:

"Apart from assisting the financial viability of the corporation, the sale of rental units offered for sale included single, detached dwellings and terrace units with party walls. Of the 1,023 single units available to occupants, 84% or 856 have already been sold while another 84 is in the sale process. The remaining 83 units are still to be sold".

Sir, this gives lie to the statement that we heard earlier that Government was doing nothing at all to sell off housing units to the occupants of these houses.

I think that if this Chamber is to remain the Honourable Chamber that it is that people must stick to the truth and avoid trying to create misinformation for the Press and the public, who at times, do not take the necessary steps to check and ensure that the information being fed to them by the Press is actually truthful information because Government started this programme of selling off these units to the general public in the Bayville Housing Development area but there were problems that they encountered. Amongst the problems were the fact that there were certain difficulties in the semi-detached units because there was a common type of sewerage system and electrical type wiring and these problems had to be addressed before the terrace units could be made for sale. But in the areas where there were single units, these single units have been offered to the public and the public have been buying them at a reduced rate obviously because they have contributed significantly to the property through the

paying of rents and have significantly pushed forward Government's plan of putting these houses in the hand of the people who have owned them for years.

If we reflect on the southern part of the island, there were housing development units in Silver Hill and in Gall Hill and also one of the oldest units happen to be at Sayes Court. I believe these units were build either in the early 1950s or 1960s but if we reflect on who was in charge of housing in Barbados over the last 30 years you will see that the majority of time it was the Democratic Labour Party. And if the Democratic Labour Party had at least eight year between 1986 and 1994 to address the obvious needs for housing in the area of Sayes Court well then they have done absolutely nothing about it.

As a matter of fact, in that particular area, the only contribution that the Democratic Labour Party has made to housing in the last six years is when my good friend the Honourable Senator gave up his occupation of his constituency office in Carters Gap so that...

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. President, the Senator is misleading the House when he refers to my contribution about the sale of terrace units, he referred to it earlier in the speech and I was just checking the reference etc. I said that none of the terrace units in Sayes Court were sold. He then referred to a particular page in the Green Paper. This does not address the sale of any units in Sayes Court. That is the precise area that I was quoting and I think the Honourable Senator should be accurate when he is referring to things which I have said. I therefore would like your consideration on the point of order.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Sir, the impression was being created that this Government was tardy, was indifferent to the needs of people and had no policy or no indication to sell off units to people who had paid rents for these units over a number of years, that was the impression being created in here. All I am saying is that the facts reflect that Government have sold some 84% of these units already and that there are others in the process of being sold. I do not see why the Honourable Member should have any problem with what I am saying.

As I was saying before, the only contribution that the Democratic Labour Party has made to housing in that area within the last couple of years was when a single unit was given up by a good friend of mine as a constituency branch office so that at least one household could have had some place to live and if that is their idea of what housing development is, then it leaves a lot to be desired.

Sir, we had a situation during the austerity programme in the early 1990s when a number of people had their salaries cut, were laid off and were

made redundant and the most significant thing about it was that people needed housing. People were reluctant to invest in housing largely due to the fact that they did not have any work and those who had work were uncertain if they would have work a week or two weeks down the road and worst than that, the mortgage interest rates were increased. You would have believed that a Government who cares about people would have put in place a programme to ensure that such people who were deprived of housing and who were sleeping in droves on the streets of Bridgetown would have been allowed some meagre form of accommodation. The Democratic Labour Party is in a position where they cannot say that they did not have any funds because when we came to power in 1994 we found \$12 million lying in a USAID Housing Credit Fund, money that was left available for anybody who cared about people and wanted to help them in the area of housing to make available to people for housing and nothing so was done.

The impression is being created that by providing money and loans to people who work for less than \$2 200 a month to acquire houses and land, up to 90% of the cost of these houses and land that it is a situation that does not address the position of those people who would not be working for \$150 or \$200 per week.

Sir, the whole nature of this practise puts in place a situation where it excludes people above \$2 200 per month so that anybody from \$0 to \$2 200 has available to them facilities whereby they can go to the bank and get money or try the Ministry of Housing to build houses on their own. Even if Government's housing development programme contains houses that cost about \$40 000 to \$60 000 for lower income, it does not prevent any person from getting involved in the Government's starter house programme. It does not prevent anybody from making use of sights and services and getting a small lot of land from the National Housing Corporation and then through the efforts of their friends and relatives starting a one-bedroom house as a lot of Barbadians have done in the past and building up over a period of time with funds that they would have accumulated over a period of time.

Sir, I think it is really hurtful to me personally that we would try to come in here and create the impression that this Government has done nothing at all for housing in this country. I remember well the massive sights and services programmes at Parish Land in Christ Church which was going quite orderly and after a few years you got squatters moving in.
2.30 p.m.

This was largely as a result of the fact that the demand for house spots did not keep pace with the supply. You will remember the squatting which took place at the Belle because the Government of the day refused to put in

place programmes that would put adequate sites and services and make adequate housing available to Barbadians.

I, Sir, want to commend Government for looking after the needs of the kids in the St. Helens' area, for having the foresight to go to the community and speak with them and find out what was in their interest because we are hearing statements in here today about building units and not consulting the people about what they need and this Government cannot be condemned for that. They went to the area, they recognised that people needed a playing facility and they put a playing facility there. They also provided a buffer zone and they provided 9 housing units. I think that the record of this Government stands firm and it cannot be denied that the housing revolution in Barbados was largely the result of the efforts of the Barbados Labour Party and it became so well accelerated when the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act was implemented which allowed poor people living on plantation tenancies to have the opportunity to get land at 10 cents a square foot and then use their small financial resources and the help of relatives and friends to build on, from the back of the existing chattel houses. And today as you walk around the country you can see a lot of small permanent, strong wall bungalows and we have seen the impact of this piece of legislation on housing in Barbados.

I look forward, Sir, to the day when the Urban Development Commission will get its programme fully in place that a similar programme could be implemented for urban Barbados and we can see a further development where the people in urban Barbados can benefit from land at reasonable rates, where they can use the help of family and friends to establish homes for themselves which are permanent, strong and aesthetically pleasing.

With these few comments, Sir, I want to commend this Resolution to this Honourable Chamber.

SENATOR THE HON. Miss O. P. SYMMONDS:
Mr. President, I am going to be brief and I wish particularly to avoid duplication or replication of what has already been said. I do, however, wish to reiterate something that I have said before in this Honourable Chamber and which I think bears repeating, that poor housing and homelessness are scars on the face of any country but in this regard the face of a Barbados Labour Party Government is smooth, beautiful and unblemished.

Therefore, Mr. President, the Government must be congratulated on what it is doing for housing and also to make up for the lack of attention given prior to 1994. There is one thing that distresses me whenever I hear about it and I am sure it does every caring person and I know that my good friend and former student in this

Chamber shares that concern, and in this respect she is in good company with us on this Side; it is the question of house fires.

Whenever I hear of someone, especially a poor elderly person, either being burnt or having his or her household possessions destroyed in a fire it makes me wonder what more can be done to avoid this. Even if we substitute wooden structures for wall structures there is still that danger if people are not made to realise that they must make sacrifices and try to insure their properties. I wonder if a survey could be taken especially in areas which constitute fire hazards to see what the disposable incomes are of people generally and what their priorities are and everything done through the media and through Government agencies to impress on people the need to insure their houses and possessions. Otherwise all that they fought for, all the Government has tried to do, all that individuals have striven for will not only go to nought but almost using a pun be destroyed and turned to ashes. Therefore I feel that is an area which must be given more attention.

At the same time I say again that the Government is to be commended for all that it is doing for housing in this country and I wholeheartedly support this Resolution. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I am very grateful, Sir, for this opportunity to make my small contribution in this Honourable Senate and will only speak, Sir, when I think I have something of substance to say. I will not get up and speak because I have a mouth. I will, like Senator Symmonds and others try to avoid duplication or repetition of comments made earlier.

I want to be very brief, Sir, but I need to make mention of some comments made about the colourful balloons at the annual conference held last Saturday and Sunday to say that sometimes some people could be likened to balloons, colourful on the outside, full of air and when the balloons burst, Sir, you know the loud noise that balloon can make. It startles one, all emptiness, air.

Mr. President, I believe in any administration in any part of the world that will continue to work towards fuelling social upliftment for its people. We have heard statements made in this Barbados about vision is vision and action is action. I have absolutely no problem in identifying the measures that have been undertaken by this Government particularly in the area of housing in Barbados and therefore the vision will come but the action must go with it. If you have the vision and there is no action well then nothing will happen and for many years this Barbados Labour Party believes in giving promises but also performing to suit the promises or the pledges that are being made to the people of Barbados.

Sir, you will recall in the early 1980s the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and the role that was played in helping poor Barbadians and others to acquire their spots that they would have rented for generations after another.

I have absolutely no problem but I think it needs to be reiterated. I think it needs to be re-said, if there is such a word, it needs to be reinforced, Mr. Chairman, that the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act helped poor people like many of us sitting around this table and our parents to be able to acquire a piece of this Barbados. It was a very forward step in the history of this nation and I welcome any other measure that would be put in place to help people in Barbados to be able to acquire a piece of this island.

Mr. President, we are aware of the numerous problems that low income workers experience. But, I am happy to say that I am a member of a household, where my parents did not have opportunities because of the small income that they were getting, they were unable to get a mortgage. They did not have any property either, but, because of some systems that were put in place, they were able to acquire a little spot and opportunities, not through the Credit Union, but through the Civic and other friendly societies, so that they were able to acquire small amounts to buy a few galvanise, a few boards and so on.
2.40 p.m.

Mr. President, the Housing Credit Fund and the General Workers' Credit Fund, gave opportunities for Barbadians who were working at that level, in the lower income bracket, opportunities where they could access loans to repair, remodel or renovate their houses, to expand them and even to start up. I think it is very significant that Barbadians also get opportunities through the Credit Union to be able to purchase their little lots and house spots to improve themselves when the situation arises.

We all know of that enterprising spirit that Barbadians have had where they are extremely overwhelmed to be able to purchase a spot. Then they go about to do things not beyond their means by pursuing that kind of effort where they start from the back and they come forward, or they start forward and come backward, because we have been trained not to go out there and get mortgages and loans to help to improve ourselves. Sometimes it works well, because when you have the loans and you know that your income is very small, sometimes you cannot sleep at night. I know what it is like. Sometimes you cannot eat, you cannot do a number of things that others do, and it helps to make them very thrifty. You know what you can afford and what you cannot and therefore you do not go overboard.

I am happy, Sir, for this opportunity for the people in the St. Helens area to be given the opportunity to

purchase those nine lots. A lot of what I wanted to say has already been mentioned where the recreational facilities are very important. We need as Barbadians, to build back our communities. Too much has been lost from among our little communities where we worked together, we lived together, we had our barter system where we grew things in our gardens and we shared with others. We also gave clothing to others and that helped to cut back on this poverty that a lot of us talk about. Yes, there is poverty and we need to put systems in place to help to alleviate the problems, but I feel that if we do better and proper planning with our small resources, I am sure that we can upgrade ourselves or improve ourselves in a number of areas.

The final thing I would want to make mention of, Sir, is it is okay for many of us to say that low income workers cannot afford a \$40 000 house. That may be true in some instances, but in the light that we know now that spouses can come together, whether it is in a marriage situation or otherwise, or in a living common-law relation, spouses can come together and go toward having that mortgage or that loan organised and I think that is a very forward step.

I also want in my final comments to encourage Government to work toward putting facilities in place where home owners, especially in the lower income bracket, again, can get opportunities for paying for their houses in instalments. I know that in the Insurance Corporation of Barbados that is done and it is done over a three-month period. But, everybody is not a government worker and therefore people who are in private enterprise have difficulty paying. Therefore, I would like to see some systems put in place where instalments of a one-year period can be made toward insurance policies, so that poor people can be able to insure their properties. Because, it is very devastating to see all that one has worked for going up in smoke, or down the drain in a flood or whatever, if a disaster should occur.

So, Mr. President, I want to lend my support to this Resolution and I want to commend Government for its foresight in putting this particular system in place. I want to encourage Barbadians to take chances sometimes and go out there and take ownership of properties so that they too can improve their lot, and that of future generations to come.

I thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. President. My intervention really, Sir, is to try to restate some of the political and philosophical underpinnings which the Opposition Senator, who dealt with this measure sought to attack, if not weaken, earlier today.

We, the Barbados Labour Party which formed this Government and which is on the threshold of celebrating its 60th anniversary, have no apologies to make for our contribution to the society and our contribution to the general populace and satisfying the housing needs in this country. You will recall earlier, Sir, that the Barbados Labour Party Government, through the voice and words of Senator Bolden, was the one who initiated and pioneered mass public housing in Barbados. For example, the Pine Housing Area, Grazettes, Cave Hill, the only housing area in St. John and countless other sites around the country were all part of the handy works of the Barbados Labour Party.

Senator Boyce, Sir, made a great deal of song and dance. Mostly song and I will say, little dance and loud sound about people wanting houses in which to live. They do not just want acquisitions of land they want to get houses to go into. But the Barbados Labour Party has to respect the situation and respect the law.

Before houses can be built, land has to be acquired from somebody and somewhere. We are not in the position of encouraging squatters in the Belle, like a Minister in their last Government had done. Now we are reaping the whirlwind in that respect. It has to be done in an organised, systematic and legal manner. We have to go through the process of acquiring and preparing the land to provide the facilities for persons to live. We do not intend to provide just a house, a roof, walls, windows, doors and a floor, but we intend to provide all the amenities to give the housing what is known in those circles as livability, where people are part of a community, and they are part of a thriving community and they are not just interlopers or intruders.

We are not going to try to usurp the law or make short cuts. We are not going to have a crash programme in housing in a sense that we are going to set up any squatting situations, but we want to provide livable and sustainable communities by doing things the proper way.

I am amazed that the Opposition speaker who spoke, did not make any reference to St. George in his presentation. I well recall, Sir, when other issues relating to housing in St. George had come to this Chamber, there was an expression of an interest of a preference by the Opposition benches for tennis courts and things of that nature, rather than providing houses. I am surprised that nobody is talking about tennis courts. They were lauding the virtues and desires of tennis courts and how the youngsters in the area needed tennis courts more than they needed housing. I am glad to see that they have learnt the error of their ways and they have come to accept the rights of what the Government is seeking to do for housing in St. George. I think St. Helens is near the James Bryan Complex where you already have a sporting complex.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I know the complex because to me it is the best kept facility of its type in Barbados. It is in excellent shape, well-taken care of and I have been in there. If you go in there to relax, the fellows do not like you to put your foot on the rail. They will come and tell you to take your feet down and that you have to respect their property. It is kept in impeccable condition and the people are proud of it and I am proud to be part of the St. George's community in that respect.

Senator Boyce, in order to establish that the Barbados Labour Party had not offered any reference for their failure in eight years to provide any really meaningful approach on housing, said that the demand for housing kept rising and rising and therefore, we in the Barbados Labour Party were doing nothing even in three short years to stem a satisfied desire.

But I would like to point out to him, Sir, that one of the reasons why – apart from the backlog left by the last Government over its failure in the eight years to build any sustainable housing programme that has contributed to the demand – but the demand also arises because, people in Barbados still have the inherent love for their own house and land, their own 14 x 9. I remember some years ago reading somewhere that per capita, Barbados had one of the highest rates of house ownership in the entire world.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Yes, Sir, Senator Laurie is expressing shock at that. He probably thinks he would be referring to animals, but there are houses. Barbadians have a love for housing and therefore we will never be able to satisfy the desire, if only because it is part of the Barbadian psyche and part of the Barbadian culture to have a house. I suspect then that it does not matter how well this Government does, no matter how much the next Government does, as long as that national characteristic is perpetuated in the Barbadian culture, there will always be a demand for houses.

In addition one of the other reasons why the demand is so high for housing, Sir, is that confidence has again been restored to Barbadians. Barbadians who had suffered the 8 percent pay cut and who had seen themselves lose their houses because they were unable to pay their mortgages during the very tough times under the Government formed by the party which Senator Boyce represents in this Chamber, people who had to rent out their houses if they wanted to keep them and go home at their parents to live, people who had to sell their houses, those days have gone and people once again have confidence. They are willing to invest in the future. They

are willing to save and make the long-term investments which is entailed in a house and a mortgage because they feel that the society is once again offering them an opportunity to make an affordable living and also to realise their dreams. So that is another element that he does not understand and does not really want to appreciate.
2.50 p.m.

References were made to Port St. Charles. The only thing in terms of housing the Barbados Labour Party has been engaged in is Port St. Charles, a rather sneering remark and trying to cast rather unfavourable association with the Barbados Labour Party to Port St. Charles. Port St. Charles, apart from being a project in its own right which, from all appearances and all accounts is already beginning to justify itself and pay its way, and justify people's investment, the fact too is that the same poor black people, the same masses that Senator Boyce refers to that we should cater to, those are the people who work on these projects. When they work on these projects, they get money and that money makes them able to afford to want the kinds of houses that we are trying to provide for them so there are 450 jobs at stake there. Those are about 450 families thereabout and when you translate that into a family three or four times, multiply that by three or four, thousands of people will be affected directly by the Port St. Charles and can stand to benefit from it.

I am always fascinated by these accusations about the Barbados Labour Party and the perpetuation of this myth that we are only interested in the big rich white people as against the small poor black man. Because, Sir, I would like to remind Senator Boyce of some historical facts of the kind of housing that the Democratic Labour Party in its previous term in Government made possible in Barbados, housing which saw the decimation, the desecration of prime agricultural land which went into the hands of land speculators, for houses that could be afforded and occupied by, not the small poor black man but the new landed gentry. So you had lots of grass, maybe a few fruit trees and several dogs. You have Mangrove, Neils, Rowans, those are the kinds of examples you should also bear in mind, Frere Pilgrim and many of them.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Living there has nothing to do with buying it. That has nothing to do with cutting up the plantation and turning it into housing. I am dealing with the principle at stake. We well remember, Sir, Mangrove in St. Philip being bought one morning for a few hundred thousand dollars and sold for millions the same afternoon. That is the kind of speculation and the kind of housing...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: It is called insider trading now but it had another name. In my day that was called corruption.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, I would like to end by saying that the Democratic Labour Party likes to pander to, and pretend to cater to, and loves the poor black man and whenever it does it seeks to institutionalise the poor black man because they realise that if they do not have the poor black people they would not have anybody to laud over, to patronise, to condescend and make them feel that they are better off. So they in their philosophy always see the desirability and the worthwhileness in helping the poor black man.

We in the Barbados Labour Party do not see any virtue in perpetuating generation upon generation of poor black people. We, through our overall Government policies and through unprecedented attack on poverty and well thought-out programmes which are now beginning to catch their foot, believe that we have a moral obligation to seek to eradicate poverty, if not alleviate it.

I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I will be brief as usual. I was very fascinated to hear this morning about the 7 000 house spots that have houses built on them that are not in very good condition but need something done about them. I am not too sure what will be done about it but I think it is a very important point that was made by the Leader of the Senate and I think it is something that must be addressed by the NHC as quickly as possible.

In addition, we know there are some 20 000 house spots that have been approved by the Town and Country Planning that have not been built on. So why are we going ahead and keep acquiring land?

This Government, I believe, has acquired something like over 200 acres of land since it has been in power. Are we talking about homeless people? I have never seen homeless people. I saw something on television the other day where Government was boasting that Barbados has very few homeless people. You drive through the streets of Washington and you see people lying on cardboard on the streets right in front of the Washington Memorial. You hardly do not see that in Barbados. There is very little homelessness *per se*, so this story that housing is No. 1, I mean, Jobs is No. 1. I read that somewhere. Somewhere I read that Jobs is No. 1 and surely if you do not have a job

you cannot afford to buy a house so let us deal with that first. Let us deal with the jobs and then those people who get a job can then buy a house but if they do not have a job they cannot buy a house.

The next thing I would like to address is this question of looking down on wooden houses. I live in a wooden house by choice. I just built a wooden house. I just finished building a wooden house that costs me \$15 000. It was built by a small contractor who is a small man with a couple of other guys. He can only do that out of wood. If you are going to build a concrete house you would need an architect. You would need a very full-grown contractor and all that sort of thing.

We have the technology in Barbados. The problem with wooden houses is they rot. They rot because they get wet. If you build the house in such a way that the wood does not get wet then it will last for years. I am in one that is 15 years old and I do not have any rotten wood where I have it protected. Therefore the technology is there and it is this psychological thing.

I remember a certain good friend up on the hill at Cave Hill told me it is okay for you. You were born in a plantation house. I was born in a chattel house. I now have to live in a plantation house that is why I am going to build a house that costs \$350 000. This is crazy. Somebody has to get up and say to people that this is nonsense.

You look at Shop Hill and some of these places all along that whole escarpment you see horrendous houses up there. I remember one day I went to see a doctor. I drove to his house and my little grandson said: "Grandad, is this the airport?" This is horrendous. The man is there with two children living in a house, about three storeys high. Why? Why are we doing this? If those people took that money and invested it into business rather than sinking it into a house that when their children grow up and go away they are going to be like two old people running around in a huge big barn it would be far better.

This idea that it is something *infra dig* to live in a wooden house is a myth we must expel. We must dispel this from the psyche of Barbadians. There is nothing wrong with a wooden house and therefore I think people should look at it.

The other point is I would like to appeal very strongly to Government on this housing programme to look at drainage. I am forecasting that Cottage Grove Development is going to cause major problems in Market Hill. They have 30 acres of land which has just been taken out of agriculture and is going into housing. What is going to happen? That area is going to shed water like nobody knows. When you put in housing, roads and so on,

water that was normally absorbed into the ground is going to run off and go down through Market Hill and is going to cause serious problems so we have to plan the drainage very carefully.

Drainage in Barbados is a very serious problem. We do not and we cannot let one drop of water go into the sea. We must try and trap all this water. We must put it into the aquifer underground because we are getting very short.

We talk about housing as a problem. Water is a much more serious problem than housing. You can live without a house but you cannot live without water. We have an impending drought. We are being warned by people who should know that we are not going to get rain between now and June next year. We are going to get greatly reduced rain. This is going to cause a serious problem of water shortage, a serious problem for farmers, both livestock farmers and crop farmers. I see a position where we have been able to survive the dry season by irrigation. I see that being cut out in order to keep water for human consumption.

I think Government must seriously set up a task force right now. There is grass out there right now which could be harvested and put up, grass that could see us through this impending drought but if we do nothing about it, the farmers are not going to do it because it is too costly to take that risk for them to go and put it up and then they may not use it. Somewhere or the other Government has to set up a task force to look at this question of the threat of a drought and do something seriously about it.

Thank you.
3.00 p.m.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Thank you Mr. President.

A lot has been said already but I would just want to add a few comments to the item before us at the moment and this is the passing of the Resolution for the land at St. Helens, St. George to the National Housing Corporation.

Just as recently as Monday, I paid a visit to the National Housing Corporation. What took me there was really and truly to try and plea with somebody down there to source a piece of land for a very elderly lady, 91 years old who have been served notice to quit. She has been living for 33 years on this existing piece of property paying \$8 per week for this piece of land. I really went in person in the hope that somebody would take pity and I am not calling any names but I think that we are going to get through. I do not hold any grudge against the person who served the notice because we all realise that people who

have their land need to do what they need to do with it. But what I would want, Mr. President, is to urge the National Housing Corporation in order to give some comfort and solace to those who have been on the waiting list for what seems to be like time immemorial and urge them to computerise, some how, some way all of the applications that they currently have and to add to that list the applications coming and not just when persons apply to acknowledge these applications and the individuals have to wait ten or twelve years or sometimes longer.

We all know that the problem was exacerbated by the lack of provision of housing during the period not so long ago. I am trying not to get too political but I would want to urge them to do this because when people keep coming to you and saying that they have been waiting for ten years then what can you tell them. I do not want to use unparliamentary language or make disparaging remarks about the NHC and their ability to give some measure of understanding to individuals who have been on the waiting list for such a long time. But I hope that they will quite speedily seek to do this and then re-correspond once again to those who are still on the waiting list to bring them more or less up to date as to what is going on. They should be able at this point to indicate to them too the number of acquisitions already done for land and that there is now land available for them to do construction and also inform individuals of the first tranche of \$30 million of the \$50 million already realised to go towards construction of some of the units on many of the lands that have been approved for housing development.

Mr. President, I would want also to urge the NHC that serious consideration be given to persons with a physical disability. At the moment, the units built as terrace units are not suitable for persons who have a disability by virtue that most of them are upstairs places and I want to suggest that they put in the plan in each and every unit or set of houses being constructed under the NHC some facility for persons with disabilities and to reserve some lands for persons, particularly the elderly persons so that when they have to move off of lands where they have been for a long time that their comfort is not disturbed unnecessarily long.

I started by making reference to the old lady that I was working on an item for her and it is a year now since she received notice, the court notice ends next week and at 91 years old I do not think that any senior citizen in this country needs to be unduly stressed by the fact that they may have their house put beside of the road which I believe the law will have to advise me, technically speaking, if the landlord can do that, come and remove the house and put it beside the road. I would not want to see this happen to any person. Even a young person as I am, if I were to find myself in this condition, I know that

I would be more than a little bit stressed and so I want to urge the NHC to, in their plans for housing construction in St. Helens and in many of the other areas where we have already acquired land that they make provision for the elderly persons in terms of reserving a couple of pieces of land and also to create suitable housing for persons with a disability.

With those few words, Mr. President, I support this Resolution.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I rise to add my support to this Resolution.

Sir, housing is one of the major problems facing our country. I just want to correct one of the Honourable Senators. He said that we have no housing problem just because you do not see people living in the streets on cardboard as they do in the City of Washington in the United States. That is bare foolishness, that is bare, bare, foolishness because in Barbados there are lots of people who still live at their mother, they are married and have their family but because of the lack of adequate housing they are still living at their mothers because our social apparatus would not allow this sort of manifestation of homelessness as in other countries. Just because you do not see a man living on the street on cardboard does not mean that the person is not desperately in need of a house.

It is just that we have a different social structure in Barbados than in Washington. A mother would not want her married daughter to be living in that situation so they put a little corner for her in her house. Also there are a lot of people in Barbados living eight and ten to one house. It happens in this country of Barbados. It shows that a lot of us in here are not in touch with reality. We live in our cocoon, totally separated from the rest of Barbados.

Sir, this thing about a \$15 000 chattel house. Except that it is a singular act of exploitation, I do not see how you can get a house for \$15 000 in Barbados today be it wood or be it stone. If it can be done, I am sure Sir that a lot of people out there would be more than happy to hear how you can build a proper house for \$15 000 because the material alone for an ordinary two-bedroom house, if you are talking about wood, Sir, we know that wood is very expensive. Probably if you had a gift of the wood you could get a carpenter to come and get it built for \$15 000. So if the Honourable Member means that the labour is \$15 000 well then, I can agree with him but it is virtually impossible in Barbados today to get a two-bedroom house with proper facilities for \$15 000.

Sir, I hope that the Honourable Member does not think that we should go back to those days when we had an out-house. A \$15 000 out-house, I can understand but if

we are talking about facilities, which our people deserve, I do not see how \$15 000 can get that man a house. Our people have gone past the days of the out-house. That, Sir, would be for my younger days. Life, Sir, is about moving forward, about progress, not going backward. So, I want to commend Government on the efforts that it is making to provide housing for people.

3.10 p.m.

Sir, something strikes me as being odd. Every time Government acquires land for housing certain elements in our society are quick to get up and talk about taking land out of agriculture when we know, Sir, that there are thousands of acres in Barbados of good land that is owned by the same type of persons, who may be there waiting for years. They would not plant on it because they are hoping that they would get permission to turn it into residential land. So they deliberately avoid agriculture on that land with the hope that some time down the line they would get permission to subdivide it. As a result, Sir, we have thousands of acres of good land in Barbados that is lying idle.

When the agriculturists in Barbados, I do not mean Government, get their act together and convince Barbadians that they know what to do with the land then they can talk. But, Sir, it is strange that I have not heard the Honourable Senator Laurie publicly comment on the fact that an estate is going into a golf course.

He would come in here, Sir, and decry Government for providing land for housing but when it comes to these other things I have not heard a peep out of the Honourable Senator and I want him to tell the people of Barbados where he stands on these important issues.

It is clear to me, Sir, that we have a little conflict when it comes to land use. Every time land is going for housing poor people, certain elements in our society and in the Senate are quick in their condemnation of Government as though, Sir, the people of Barbados deserve to be running from pillar to post. It is only when the land situation is settled that people will make full advances into providing the sort of housing that we want for our people, dependable housing, the type where you will not always have to go and change a board here and change a board there. That is what our people must aspire to and unless we get the land situation settled properly we will never make the sort of progress that we would want to make for our people.

Sir, it is a known fact that one of the greatest fillips to housing in Barbados was the enactment of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act in 1980. That single Act was a revolutionary one which brought about real change in the housing conditions of the people of this island and as

we go around the country, Sir, we can see the results of that action. People have transformed what before was a little wooden shack into magnificent houses of which we all can be proud. This is all because they were given title to the land and having title to the land they could then approach the bank and without any more Government help they can then look after their own housing needs.

Government is seeking to do the same thing here, to provide land when more people will have the opportunity now, using the Barbadian way, to start small and keep on building and before you look around twice you have a substantial house to last for a generation or two. This is just another step in this process.

I will not stand idly by and hear unenlightened comments which seek to denigrate the serious efforts of Government to provide proper and adequate housing for the citizens who have built up Barbados over 300 years or more of its existence. So I stand on the side of progress and I will support any measure which brings great advancement to the people of Barbados.

Nothing galls me more than to see in some parts of Barbados when you look around, people living in substandard housing conditions, unable to lift themselves up and we in this Chamber have to make sure that we put measures in place so that these people can upgrade themselves. Sir, we give them a little helping hand and they will do the rest. But unless Government makes that little step they will remain at that low level. That is why, again I will repeat, the Government must be commended for not only this Resolution, but every time we come in here you will see Government is seeking to provide land for the people of this country who have put them in power and who deserve and desire an improvement in their social conditions.

So, Sir, with those few words I wholeheartedly support this Resolution and urge this Honourable Chamber to unanimously support this Resolution. Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution and to endorse the comments of the last Senator that spoke. This debate has been characterised by an inordinate amount of bombast that has been very light on content but very loud. It also has demonstrated an appalling lack of sensitivity about the conditions that are applied to Barbados today.

As you go around the constituencies of Barbados you have to understand the conditions of housing that obtained. It has been explained by the previous Senator but not in a very fulsome detail of the appalling overcrowding, the terrible social conditions that arise out of this because of cramped space and not only families living together but groups of people living together. These people really do

demand and seek and thirst for their own home. They want to improve their conditions. Even so some of the housing conditions in the tenancies of this country are really, really appalling with floor boards broken in, mud floors, holes in the wall, roofs that leak, open to the elements, open to vermin, this obtains in pockets of Barbados today and the Barbados Labour Party is determined to address this problem, that is why we have a comprehensive land acquisition programme and a programme in place to develop housing throughout this country with a public/private sector coordinated approach.

But the Barbados Labour Party is not going to wake up one morning and do something half-cocked like build Sherbourne. It sets out to acquire the land, to put plans in place to make sure the contractors are aligned, to make sure that the funding is in place and to make sure that the projects come on stream and work in a cost-effective manner to deliver the product to the people of Barbados at the most cost-effective and most rapid way.
3.20 p.m.

Now, some comments were made earlier on about concerns with drainage and so on. These are valuable comments and things that will be taken on board and I agree that there is a lot of work to be done. But the Barbados Labour Party throughout history has demonstrated the greatest concern for housing in this country and it is this Party that once again has come to the aid of Barbadians from all walks of life and in many different disciplines to provide adequate housing for those that want to get it.

Let me tell you, we are talking about low income housing, but we are also talking about cost-effective housing for young professionals, people coming out of the university, people coming out of the community college, people, who are bank tellers and who are moving up the chain in the corporate world. There is a broad class of people in Barbados that urgently demand housing. It is in short supply. The Leader of the Senate brought to our attention that there was a lot of properties around Barbados. And he quite rightly said that these properties are caught into certain traps and have gone disused for years.

We urgently need to address this problem through various legal mechanisms or various incentives to make sure that these properties become available to those who can afford them or assist in their up-keep. Creative ways need to be found to achieve this. I think too, Mr. President, that in addressing this problem we should be looking for the solutions. We need to get constructive criticism. We need to understand what will be in the interest of people of this country and not just detraction from a programme that has obvious benefits to the mass of Barbadians for political gain.

If there is constructive criticism and some of it has been levelled today, we take it on board and we will adjust our programme to suit. Because we are a party that is a Party of the people and a Party that addresses the problems of the people. Now let me tell you something, Mr. President, that housing is one of the most important aspects or desires, of a human being. The desires of human beings are security, housing and food. These are absolute necessities and it is the responsibility of Government to ensure that policies are in place, so that people can achieve the ownership or the rental of adequate housing and shelter.

Mr. President, much has been said about wall houses and wooden houses and I think that has been a bit of a red herring. The fact of the matter is that we need to have houses built with proper building codes regardless of the material being used that will ensure that there is safety from fire, to ensure that they are resistant to hurricane strength winds and to ensure that they give adequate shelter in an environment that is pleasing to the human spirit.

We have to take into account green areas. We have to take into account playing fields, and we have to take into account the access to school areas and so on and so forth. All of these things, Mr. President, are being done by this Government.

So Mr. President, without stretching this on any further, I totally support the acquisition of this plan and the continuation of the housing programme of the Barbados Labour Party Government. I wish that people in this country would understand the urgent need to address the housing needs of thousands of Barbadians across the length and breadth of this land.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I support this Resolution and in keeping with the request by the Honourable Senator Barker, I stand on the side of progress and also, I stand on the side of vision. Mr. President, to give you an example of this, NAAAB has submitted our Manifesto for mental health to the Government, requesting at least, two houses and this is on page 11.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You used a word Senator, please tell us what that is.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: NAAAB is Nurses Assistance Aides Association of Barbados. In a proposal to Government on May 29, we recognised the progress and the vision that is being talked about so much and we have asked Government to give this organisation at least two houses on every Government Project, to be allocated to its Members.

We have done that simply because in the organisation there are persons who are Nursing Aides who earn about \$1 000 per month or even less and really do not qualify for the type of mortgages that are available, be it \$30 000 or \$40 000 mortgages. I am very pleased, and I know it is only a few homes, but I hope this is a start and it will continue. I am very pleased that efforts are made to provide low cost housing so that persons who are in nursing and others, like the Aides and Nursing Assistants, who do not get at least \$2 000 per month will be able to own their own homes.

Mr. President, I have looked at the Green Paper on Housing and support it. I would like to see quite a lot of the proposals start to work. I know it is going to take time and organisation, but several persons have made contributions and mentioned about the need for house insurance.

Mr. President, this is very important because it is so expensive that persons who are on low income and who are retired are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain house insurance. I hasten to add that in the Green Paper on Housing, the Government has promised to look into this matter and institute some sort of assistance for the needy and other persons and I hope they remember the retired persons.

Mr. President, I would like to stress also the allocation of these houses to those persons who really need them and not let us hear about persons who own their own homes and yet have access to these low cost houses or other properties that are available. It has happened before and I sincerely hope it would not happen again, that people who do not have any property whatsoever, will be given first choice to the house spots or the houses be it starter homes, or whatever.

Mr. President, I think that I should also verify some of the very impairable conditions in which some persons are forced to live, simply because they cannot afford either a house spot or a home.

3.30 p.m.

There are several people living in one room, 8, 10, 12, sometimes more to the extent that they have to sleep in relays. Several go under the street light sleep for two hours and then go to wake up the others and they take it in relays in order to get some sleep. They are proud people. They are not going to talk too much about it but these are areas that really need attention. These are the people that need to be given first choice for both house spots and houses.

Mr. President, I will also like to add to my contribution the need to educate the public and the new radio licence. I sincerely hope whoever have been

given these new radio licences will assist in educating the public about the building code that is expected to be implemented.

Mr. President, I would like to see that implemented sooner rather than later so that persons who are either building, or thinking of building, and the Government itself will use this code in order to build the required type of homes that will be needed in the future. Because sometimes the money goes very quickly when one retires and one might not be able to renovate one's home to be in keeping with the building code because I can see that even if a retired person has a room or two or an apartment rented out in order to get a certificate one would have to conform, as is in the Green Paper on Housing, to any building code that has been established. The sooner this is publicised and we are educated about it, the better it will be for all those persons concerned.

Mr. President, there is one concern that I have regarding housing in that it makes me uncomfortable as a resident of this country to know that there might be some housing complexes in the country where one cannot go and look at the houses and admire them. If it is one house and it is enclosed that is okay but when one has about 20 or 30 homes and they are all walled around inside, it does make one uncomfortable about that. I feel and I hope that the country would be safe enough so that persons would not have to resort to that type...

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I am not calling any names, Mr. President, because I did not ask permission.

I only hope that the time will come when it will not be necessary for persons to build walls so that people cannot admire the architecture of the buildings, drive around and have a look, *etcetera*.

Mr. President, what I would also like to see made public, and this is a very sensitive part, is the criteria for the allocation of the houses. One of the ways to prevent discontent among persons is that one needs to be transparent, as is in the Green Paper, and make public the criteria on which houses are allocated so that if one does not get a house, one will not feel as though he or she has been overlooked deliberately because they are not a member of an organisation, or a political party, *etcetera*. One has to be very careful about that and establish criteria, make it public and educate the public about the criteria so that it will be transparent how the houses are allocated.

In another area I see that provisions will be made for providing houses and groups of houses not only for the

elderly, but for the homeless. This is commendable. It is hoped that you will be able to get these projects off the ground sooner rather than later and let us know when you are starting them so that we know that you are trying to address the problem because one tends to get comments like this when even though the Government might be trying to acquire houses but then the knowledge stays within a Ministry or a department and the public is not notified about exactly what is happening.

So, therefore, Mr. President, I would like the departments to use the media a bit more to give factual information to the public and say, "now this and this is what is happening. We have built so much and so much houses in the area and this is how they have been allocated. We cannot build all the houses at one time but your time will come. Just wait and we will be able to get our population properly housed, at least to the satisfaction of the Government."

Mr. President, the Leader of Government Business also mentioned about the need to maintain the houses. I would like to remind this Honourable Senate of a contribution by the Honourable Senator Bolden who said that in another country, houses that are in disrepair, what has been done there is persons are given 100% mortgages in order to refurbish them rather than bulldozing them, in particular if they are wall houses. That is an area I would like to see the Government make some attempt to look at and see how this can be done.

I do not know, Mr. President, how one is going to avoid family disputes. Something needs to be done about that because I myself have watched two young people with a house and one person in it and did absolutely nothing to that house, stayed in that house in a total state of disrepair. When the man had to move out the woman moved into a house that was virtually falling down and had to virtually rebuild the house.

The only answer to this is for disputes to be settled in the Courts speedily where there are housing problems between couples be they common-law or married persons. The only answer I see to that is to try and see if at least one can get the house sorted out as soon as possible so that we could avoid these homes going into a total state of disrepair.

I would also like to commend the Government for making an attempt to sell the National Housing units to the persons who are occupying them to make sure that they are in good condition. This is a step toward housing the population which nearly every Senator who has spoken so far has recognised it as very essential or if not a necessity if one is going to receive the acceptance, praise and satisfaction from the population concerned.

Mr. President, with no more ado, I support the Resolution. I sincerely hope that the attempt to house the population could be speeded up a bit faster.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I know that housing is one of those sweet topics, especially when a political party is on course for an election. One can expect to hear its Members pouring out all types of mouthing about housing. I sat here and I was a bit appalled at the level of inaccuracy of some bits of information given and I believe that I would fail in my duty as a citizen of this country and a long-standing Member of the Democratic Labour Party for me to sit here and not correct certain misrepresentations made earlier.
3.40 p.m.

The Green Paper of which the Members on the Government Side so heartily boast states that the construction of the housing stock of Barbados between the period 1970 to 1990 that 16 500 houses were constructed as compared with 8 000 or so houses constructed in the period which ended in 1980. Now, if I am correct in my figures the Democratic Labour Party would have occupied the Government of this country for ten of those twenty years, therefore, it is fair to assume then that under the leadership of the DLP that construction reached its peak in 1989. I do not want to get here and indulge in little cheap political gains about housing but the records must be made clear.

I also heard the Senator on the Government Side state that the Democratic Labour Party cared nothing about people and housing and that during the 1970s the Democratic Labour Party did nothing. I purchased a house in 1973 in a housing development under the Democratic Labour Party in Wildey, St. Michael. I still live in that house today twenty-four years after and I want to state that at that time the house was categorised as a lower-middle income house for \$20 000 with a financed loan for 25 years because I also heard that you were not getting mortgages and that kind of thing.

The point I want to make is that it is alright to try and inflate what your party is doing but it is bad to try to deflate what another party has done while it has been in Government in this country. I think that we all recognise that housing is a very important element of the lives of Barbadians. I have worked for two North American companies and one of the things that surprises them the most is that Barbadians from the lowest income level in this country boast of owning a home. You travel to North America and you see Vice Presidents who still rent hotel suites or flats all over the place and they ask the question all the time, what is it about Barbadians that make them want to own their own house, what is it about owning your own home? I had to explain at all times how housing was

a very important part of our culture. It is a really cultural thing to own your own home in Barbados even when it is a chattel house. My grandmother, who passed away in the month of June as a pensioner, her last dollar she would spend repairing her timber house and every year she spent her money to make that little timber house look right. There was so much pride that I am haunted by the fact that if I do not maintain that house that my grandmother would not forgive me even from her grave. That is how we feel about our houses in Barbados.

Sir, the onus is on any Government of this country to respond to the housing needs of its people. Housing is a form of empowerment for people. I think we all recognise that and if you are really serious about the empowerment of our people and about closing the gap, I think one of the ways that we can do so is to make sure that people feel a pride and joy and comfort of owning their homes.

I have a concern about housing of the retired and aging people of this country. It is something that I believe the Government needs to pay a lot of attention to. Even in this Government it is recognised that for timber houses the cost of material alone keeps rising at a significantly greater rate than the cost of labour. A number of our retired people in the country live in timber houses and I think that Government is going to have to become a bit more creative in this area.

I believe that we have to offer housing to our aged but housing that they do not have too many problems to maintain because on a small pension, it is difficult and at the end of the day it comes back to the Government's social welfare services to help in the maintenance of these homes. I would like us to target a special housing project for retired people. I know what I have in mind and I have already passed my suggestion on to my insurance company that we embark on a different, a very creative programme of housing for retirees in this country especially since we are trying to cater so much to nationals who are returning home and since many of these individuals have grown accustomed to a certain quality and standard of housing in the countries from which they are coming. I think that we have to embark on a special programme for returning people.

In 1988 I spent some time in Albany, Upstate New York. Senator Laurie makes a point about housing and this is not critical but I do not think he gets it over the way that he wants to say it and maybe because he is Senator Laurie and not Senator Thompson that he has not been able to say it. I think we have to be concerned in 1997 about what types of houses we are building in Barbados. We have a crisis almost on our hands as we look around and there is competition for the use of land in this country and we have to work out how we are going to cope with it.

While in Albany I stayed at this house which had everything in it that I would enjoy in some of the plush houses in Barbados and it was only during the evening while in conversation that I discovered that it was a timber house. All the houses in Albany are timber houses but they have this special protective material on them on the outside which serves to keep the cold element out in the winter and then they do not feel too hot in the summer. I think we have to explore all these measures available and see whether they are affordable and see whether it is something that we can consider in Barbados. I do not know about the cost of the material but I was totally surprised that it was in a timber house because I saw everything that I would have enjoyed in wall housing.

Now, I would be the last person in this country to ask any Government of Barbados to introduce a measure which would put fellow Barbadians from my background or my origins back to any period, not that we are ashamed of but we would not want to live through it again. At the same time I would want to encourage the Government to provide housing for all. It is obvious that it has to be a mixed bag. A large number of people in Barbados who, even on 100% mortgage, meaning what people would call a no down payment mortgage, still cannot qualify for a mortgage because I looked here and I saw that a 500 square foot modest timber house would cost about \$36 000. This is what the Green Paper on Housing is saying and that a 3-bedroom modest concrete house would cost \$92 000 to construct so let us ask ourselves a few questions.
3.50 p.m.

If you want to provide housing for all in Barbados and these are the figures we are talking about for construction, when on earth would we realise that goal. Doesn't it say to us that we have then to look for some very practical approach? It is not something that we can prolong because the cost of construction is going up each year that we defer this thing.

I am still a little cautious sometimes when I hear of a starter house. I know there were days when in Barbados we started from the back. We kept the wooden structure at the front and over a period of time we came forward and we ended up with a total wall house. It seems to me though that the quality of the timber is very inferior compared with the timber then. Today when you are repairing your home, you do something today and two or three years when you come back it is termite ridden and this is something that we really need to look at in this country as we talk about standards.

I was told that greenheart has the same life expectancy or life span as concrete. They tell me this so I took a stone wall down from around my house. Put back up the pillars in stone and put greenheart all inside my wall

because I wanted to see this brown wood effect at the front of my house, in less than 5 years I had to take those greenheart pieces out.

Now these are the things we have to look at in Barbados. We have no forest in this country. We cannot cut trees down and construct our own homes. When are we going to be able in this country to stipulate the standards for the material imported for house construction and set minimum standards for these houses when constructed? It is a rather painful thing that as Government embarks on programmes with private contractors, these are joint programmes that Government enter into from time to time, a number of people end up with houses on their hand on which they have to spend a lot of money. The quality of the material used is very inferior.

Now I can boast about the house I live in today. I do not know how many people in Barbados today have a purple heart roof in their houses. The house I purchased in 1973 has purple heart throughout. I have never seen termite in that part of my house and the foundation, every mason or carpenter who does something on my house says it is unbelievable, this house with purple heart and this quality workmanship. These are things that we have to strive for again.

Really we are falling down in this area in terms of the quality of our material. So I support any programme which aims to improve the housing stock of Barbados and to empower Barbadians in the form of ownership of homes. I guess the Government can feel proud at this time that it can go on a massive housing programme. I think that we all accept that the period 1990 to 1994 is one in which not many houses were constructed in Barbados. I do not believe that is something, unless you want to score political points, that you can shout about all the time but at the end of the day when we boast about our gains I would like to say to the Government now that we have it all, let us make sure that all indeed benefit.

Let me say this evening that I do not think anybody would believe that having heard all of this jump-up that we are only talking about a little piece of land that was reserved to be a part of the James Bryan Sporting Complex. A Member on the Government Side said that I preferred a tennis court to housing. From time to time in this Senate I have said I would never apologise for this. I have said that we need to make communities complete.

Now, if you are very familiar with this particular area of which we are speaking this evening then you would know that all around this particular area at St. Helens we have some massive houses. There is the Locust Hall housing development on one hand with houses that range from \$200 000 to \$350 000. There is Rowans where

Senator Murray lives, because Rowans is not far away, there are houses in the vicinity of \$250 000 to maybe \$400 000. Then there is the Cottage Development over the other end which has houses in the range of \$250 000 to \$400 000 and recently we came in here and we had an acquisition for a housing project which I know would never have houses in the \$55 000 to \$65 000 range. So we are going to have another housing project over there in this \$250 000 to \$450 000 area whilst sitting in the midst of all this are the villages of St. Helens, Market Hill and over the other end we have Applewhaites, Paradise Village, Jericho.

Now the point I will continue to make, if we are going to have a good mix of the people in these areas what is wrong in asking a Government to allow that area of land to remain a part of the sporting complex, to have the tennis courts placed there and to stop those people at Locust Hall, Rowans and other places from going to Rockley and bypassing the surrounding villages to play tennis when we could develop a proper tennis culture. What is wrong with that? That is a point I will continue to make.

We cannot just assume that because St. Helens is a village and the people there are not accustomed playing lawn tennis that they would not play. I ask the question, how did Garfield Sobers get into golf? How did the Piggott fellow that people boasted about get started? They started as caddies. So the point I want to make is, put the hard court there and allow the people up there, the people from Rowans and those areas who can play tennis, a lot of whom their children go to Harrison College and Queen's College and they play tennis it would give them an opportunity to play with the youngsters in those areas and they would become friends.

All I was thinking of is community life so I want to make the point that my appeal to Government to allow this area of land to remain a part of the sporting complex has more to do with my belief in a total community than a preference of tennis over housing. I want to make that point very clear. Therefore I remain very firm in my decision that this area of land for 9 houses that we have not far away from that area is a whole lot of land that can be acquired for housing. It is not agricultural land. There are areas of land around that can be used for housing. I agree that we can anticipate some problems around Market Hill, which is a high rainfall area. When that Cottage development gets going, I think we will have quite a lot of flooding around there and I want the Government to give that very careful consideration.

4.00 p.m.

I do not know what is going on in Barbados. The more we construct houses in this country, the more flooding we seem to be getting. We have to ask ourselves some questions. Are we stipulating the correct standards for

construction in this country? Why is it that the rain can fall for under an hour and you have to drive through pools of water in this country. Something is wrong. Sometime last year, a resolution came before the House for some Commission to do a drainage study I thought it was a very good thing. I voted for it, but I have to admit that things are not getting better at all in that area and I would like to encourage the Government to make sure that as it embarks on these housing projects that proper drainage is put in place.

With those few remarks, Sir, on this Resolution, I thank you.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Thank you, Mr. President. I never intended to really spend a lot of time on this particular issue, but seeing the erroneous statements that have been made by the two Members of the Opposition, people who speak about things that they neither understand, nor are competent to deal with, it is necessary for other people to deal with them.

I, like Senator Barker, stand on the side of progress and on the side of a Party which has no excuses to make and which has a very, very proud record of housing in this country. As a matter of fact, the Barbados Labour Party pioneered the concept of low income housing in Barbados. When the people who get disillusioned with politics, because of their own personal problems with their own political parties come to tell you about politicking and the building of houses for politicking, I am going to explain here clearly who really did build housing for politicking and how many houses were completed.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I do not usually rise on points of order, but that is a total misrepresentation. He said the Opposition, on the Other Side, but I mentioned about politicking, but it was not about building houses for politicking. I make statements about jumping out about housing because of on-coming Elections. Get your understanding clear, Senator Lynch.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Mr. President, some people would like to distort the issues. The point is that during the period of 1986, some people built their houses.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I take it, Senator, when you say some people, you are not referring to Honourable Members of this Senate.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: No. No. No. The Government of the day, built houses, which to this day, they were never able to complete. When the Honourable Senator quoted from the Green Paper on Housing, and spoke to the fact of how many houses were built between the period 1970 - 1990, I think the Honourable

Member also forgot to state that a lot of houses were started and not completed. It is blatantly clear and obvious in this particular report that many, many houses were started and it states here very clearly that these houses were started and then abandoned. And, the reason for that was on page 13,

"The decline in construction of new rental units was attributed, for the most part, to the financial viability of the corporation."

This is page 13 of the Green Paper on Housing. The programme is heavily subsidised.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, on a point of order, Sir. I quoted the Green Paper, page 5 which stated that between 1970 to 1990,

"One of the more noticeable features is a relatively constant rate of growth in the stock over the period. There is an overall increase in the stock of dwellings,"

not incomplete "by 16 572," I said, 16 500, and that it is "higher than the 1980 position" in which I said when there was an increase of, I said, 8 000, this said 8 073 units. So how can these be incomplete when they are talking about stocks of dwellings, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Okay, that was a point of elucidation. Continue Senator.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Mr. President, the Green Paper is clear. It says here on page number 6. The Senator stopped at this paragraph about 8073,

"The above pattern fairly matches information obtained from continuous monitoring."

It says,

"While the annual monitoring here is 931 units, the trend is indeed an increasing one, particularly for the period up to 1989 when the highest level of construction starts were observed. In that year 1 453 units were started, compared with 689 in 1980 and an average of 771 for the period 1980 - 1986. The increased levels of housing construction which were observed from 1987 were very short-lived, since a marked downward trend was observed after 1989 with starts reaching their pre-1987 levels by 1993."

The point I am making, Sir, again, looking at the record of the Democratic Labour Party that what we got were starts and no completions. That is a fact, just like the St. Thomas School, like the Ministry of Education and like

the Cane Garden project. That is what we got after they destroyed the economy.

Now, Sir, housing is critical to the socio-economic development of this country. The Barbados Labour Party has made it clear, and our Manifesto is a contract with the people, not like the other people, that we have decided that the main thrust of the housing policy will however be for the provision of incentives and facilities to encourage those people who will help themselves.

Particularly in the rural areas where people have not had access to capital and have not had access to a lot of the amenities that people have had in the urban areas, the Government has been clear in terms of where they want to take the concept of building. But, you cannot build houses in the sky you have to have land to build houses on. You must build houses on land, and therefore before you can attempt to build the house, you must have access to land.

Sir, the Green Paper says on page number 42, 'Implementation Strategies',

"Access to land is a strategic requirement for the provision of adequate shelter for all. It opens up avenues for self help and allows households to break the vicious cycle of poverty. The inability to access land is invariably an underlying cause of squatting and the occupancy of lands which should otherwise not be used for housing."

Sir, it is clear and I have heard Senator Laurie state that we continue to acquire land. The only way in which we can build houses is if we first acquire the land and Senator Bolden made the point. This Government and this country does not have a lot of Crown Lands and therefore you must first acquire lands if you are going to build houses. But, Sir, there are lots of underlying economics about this whole concept of acquiring land first. We are very, very clear in our own methods and the way in which it must be done.

I heard Senator Boyce state that when have we built these houses? Sir, the 24th Annual Report of the NHC was made a document of this Chamber. On page number 14, "the Building Programme" states that during that time, 99 units were already finished and completed. Of those 99 units, you had 86 at Cane Garden and 20 at the Crane. You had 20 at the Crane so during that time there were 10 terrace units that were also built at Maynards. There was also housing built after the floods at Weston so in all we have already built 120 units in the period from March 31, 1996 back to March 31, 1997. This is in stark contrast to the following. In the Green Paper it says: "This funding was discontinued" - they are talking about the funding that was available to the NHC - "in the late 1980s, restarted in the late 1990s as Government employed stringent

fiscal measures, particularly during the period of structural adjustment. The effect of this was that between 1990 and 1995, only 52 rental units were completed." And those were completed at Church Village in St. Philip. 4.10 p.m.

For a period of five years the Democratic Labour Party Government built 52 units of housing. You tell me, Sir, that that is not a crying shame in a country with such a high demand for housing then obviously the Members on that side are not very clear what the concept of housing is or where housing plays any part in our socio-economic development.

I will also say this, Sir. We do not only believe in building houses just for the sake of building houses. During the period, and I have marked it off for Senator Boyce, during the financial year 1996-97, 762 applications were received for the rental of houses on various estates. Now of that number 100 families were already accommodated on the estates and it states clearly the estates on which they were accommodated.

During the same period under review 2 687 applications for the purchase of properties were made, 279 lots were already conveyed in the period under review. This was a 12-month period. You built 52 units in five years and did not sell any land. Two hundred and seventy-nine lots were conveyed in the period under review in one 12-month period and of these 147 were in the new estates and 132 in the old estates.

The point I am making, Sir, is that we are not Houdini in the Barbados Labour Party, or the Barbados Labour Party Government, but I would like the Members on the Other Side to realise that during the period we are speaking about, the Barbados Labour Party more than did enough to provide housing for the people that were requesting it. Obviously there continues to be a problem.

When you talk about the underlying economics, let me say this. Members in the Other Place on the Opposition Side said that in their walks through their own community they have realised that people are making more requests for housing than they are making requests for jobs. They said so. Now, tell me, Sir, let us use common sense. Do not let us politick about it. How can somebody be making a request for housing if you do not have some means of paying for housing? Overall things must be better. They must be in a much better economic state that people could be requesting housing. A fellow does not have a job and is going to request housing? He is a crazy man? I do not believe in that, and Senator Boyce knows that.

Aside.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Sir, I also heard the concept of this whole issue about the best economic use of

our lands and Senator Laurie carries on about whether or not we are acquiring agricultural land. Let us be frank and fair in Barbados and let us look at the whole concept of where Barbados is positioned in this whole world that is realigning itself. We have to feed ourselves, yes, but what is the best economic use of the lands we have in Barbados?

Senator Barker was perfectly correct when he said that people are holding on to lands that they can plant on but they are keeping them simply because they want people to acquire them for building purposes. These people are speculating in land for their own personal gain. In this country we need to be clear about how we use the lands we have in our possession.

I believe personally that we must relook at the concept of how we sell the lands we own in this country or the Government's land but, at the same time, I am saying this. The best economic use of our lands is the most important thing to this country. There are a lot of lands that people call agricultural lands and people claim when they come into this Chamber that they are agricultural lands, but they keep those same lands and wait for people to buy them from out under them to build on.

Sir, the best economic use of our land and where Barbados is going as a country, where Barbados positions itself in the whole global economy is more important to me or to everyone else in Barbados than simply trying to grapple at lands, claim that they are our lands, we are keeping them, we are not selling them and we are not building on them. Most of the land they are talking about that they claimed was agricultural lands have long been out of agricultural use and anybody who is in the Ministry can attest to that.

I keep hearing this emotional argument about the concept of feeding ourselves. Since we have removed the basket, I want you to go and look at where Barbados acquires most of its food because you heard the people saying that the woman has pumpkins that she cannot sell. Find out if Barbadians really eat the things that are grown in Barbados. That is what a lot of Barbadians have to come to grips with.

The best economic use of our lands is what is fundamental to our development, not some strange emotional concept of holding on to lands simply because it was planted up in canes and cassava 10 years ago. That is madness. We in this country have to be really clear about where we want to go with the use of our lands.

Aside.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Golf courses may be a better bet for some of those lands because at least we would make some money from them.

Sir, it is very clear. I want to move to the concept of where we are in terms of the provision of borrowings. It tells me in this paper on Habitat II, that statistics show that 55% of some Barbadians will be unable to afford a home. One of the reasons for that is that there is 34% of our labour force that earns less than \$200 a week.

There is another statistic here that says that 25% of persons earn between \$200 and \$300 a week accounting for a quarter of the labour force. Therefore, some 40% of the population lives on a medium household income of approximately \$14 000 a year. Now, Sir, I think that is a very serious matter and that is the issue we are seeking to correct because that is the real critical issue. All this talk about people lying down on Baxters Road as opposed to Washington is not my concern. I do not know of many people laying down on Baxters Road but I know this. If you are earning less than \$14 000 a year it makes it almost difficult for you to own a home.

Sir, in the General Workers' Housing Loan Scheme and the concept is – a general worker is defined as a person between the ages of 18 and 60 provided that his or her earnings do not exceed \$2 178 monthly, \$500 a week. There is now a concept already of people combining incomes and being able also to get this loan.

I think we made a fundamental point in our Manifesto in relation to housing when we stated that we are interested in helping people who also are willing to help themselves. I like to hear Senator Boyce and all the other Senators talking about the people who cannot afford to buy this and they cannot afford to pay for that. You know that the same people Senator Boyce talks about, the people down at CDS and Manulife Data Services, all those people who earn over \$150 a week, almost \$200 a week, a lot of those people also earn some incentives within the same environment to earn more.

The first Annual Report of the Facilitation Unit on Returning Nationals (FURN), I want to bring this into bearing. It says that revenue from people who are repatriated as returning nationals, from people overseas sending back money to Barbados amounted to \$9 million. People believe that in Barbados that the only income that people have is the income that they earn every day. When two people work for \$200 a day and those two people are able to pool their resources and their income to be able to earn enough to be able to acquire one of these loans, the loan does not necessarily have to go up to the ceiling of \$50 000, but they can acquire a loan that they can get started. That is the amazing thing. The amazing thing is that we intend to look after the poorest of the poor.
4.20 p.m.

This concept of being able to acquire a loan from the National Housing Corporation, to be able even to start is

the most important concept because we have got too many people in Barbados that live below the line who cannot go to a commercial bank or any other mortgage finance company and easily acquire a mortgage and that is the important fundamental thing. Do not let us get into the overly political part about who is DLP and BLP, the important point is that we are making provisions possible where people will be able to go to get a loan even if they are at the lowest earning levels. That is the point, no matter that we do not build houses in a particular time frame, we have built over 100 units, we have been able to provide people with 279 lots for them to build houses on and we have made a provision at the National Housing Corporation for the people at the bottom of the ladder to get a loan and that is fundamental.

On this side we have nothing to be ashamed about because our housing policy is sound, our concept of how we alleviate poverty in Barbados is sound, we are the party of the people and we are going to be the party of the people for a long, long time. I would say this, it is about time that the people who come in here recognise that Arthur's war on poverty is working. The people who come here and want to tell you for political reasons that we go to annual conferences and we keep noise, our annual conferences run for 12 months, we run it from October back to October because we are winning and we are continuing to get more and more people into our fold, that is the concept of the Barbados Labour Party.

Asides.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: It has a lot to do with housing. Those who come along and want to fool you and want to tell you that we are not doing well, the public is there to make it clear, we are doing well. I had hoped that you all would start giving Owen Arthur and his Cabinet credit for what has happened in Barbados and stop this political nonsense.

Sir, with those few words, I am very obliged to you.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 4.45 p.m. today.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.
4.30 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER NO. 3 – APPROVAL FOR THE VESTING IN
THE BARBADOS INVESTMENT AND DEVELOP-
MENT CORPORATION OF A PARCEL
OF LAND SITUATE AT NEWTON
IN CHRIST CHURCH

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: The approval of the Honourable Senate is being sought for this transaction which involves the vesting in the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation of land belonging to the Crown at Newton, Christ Church and this is being done in exchange for land owned by the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation at the Grantley Adams Industrial Estate and at Six Men's in St. Peter.

This matter has developed over some period of time. The Barbados Investment and Development Corporation as you are aware, Sir, has considerable holdings of property spread across 10 industrial estates including Grazettes, the Harbour, Pelican Village, Spring Garden, Wildey, Pine, Newton, Grantley Adams, Fairfield in St. Lucy and Six Roads.

There has been a plan as well, Sir, to develop Industrial Estates at Six Men's in St. Peter. Back in 1983, therefore the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation purchased some 5 090 hectares from Colleton Plantation and undertook work which was required to turn that into an industrial estate including the installation of roads and so on.

In 1988 the Government of the day decided to convert that from industrial development to housing so that that land was lost to the IDC and was instead used for housing persons who were affected by beach erosion which had occurred in Six Men's by persons living on the other side.

Additionally as far back as 1967 the Barbados Development Board as it was then had purchased some 11 acres of land from Coverley Estate for the construction of an industrial park at the Grantley Adams Estate and it was noticed over time that as far back as 1985 that the airport security fence had in fact taken in some 4 acres of that land which was owned by the IDC. After efforts were made to recover that land it was decided that for security reasons and for proper planning of the airport's future expansion that the land would be formally transferred to the Crown for control by the airport to facilitate its on going development. So that, that too was lost from the stock of land available to the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation for pursuing its mandate for industrial development.

It was decided therefore that in exchange for loss of those lands which were part of the property owned by the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation that the Crown would in fact provide additional lands.

The Crown is in possession of some lands at Newton to the east of the existing industrial park in the area which is bounded by the ABC highway going eastward to the roundabout at Newton by the traditional Newton Road which would take one down to Oistins via Lodge Road and the marl road which forms the extension from the entrance of the Newton Industrial Park going past, on your right, what is Coca Cola nowadays and what used to be Concrete Products Limited, I believe it still is, back on to the ABC Highway. That area bounded by those 3 roads consists of some 23 acres and would be used to develop really what will in effect be another industrial park. But the main purpose of the transaction was to reimburse the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation for lands which it had lost to the Crown by virtue of the encroachment by the airport development on lands owned by the IDC and by the conversion of the land at Six Men's from industrial development for which sums had already been extended by way of infrastructural development and to ensure that the IDC was able to continue with its particular mandate.

So this land therefore, Sir, boosts the capacity of the IDC in the future to develop additional facilities for use by the industrial sector and as I said, the lands they have are located in 10 industrial estates most of which are fully developed. The 10 estates cover some 98 acres of land and they provide some 2 million square feet of production space with a value somewhere in the region of \$132 million in terms of the value of the buildings and other infrastructure in the area.

These facilities are used, Sir, to provide support for the manufacturing and information services aspects of our economy. The manufacturing sector, for example, between the small, large and all the various subsectors there are some 491 companies employing, according to our latest statistics, somewhere in the region of 15 000 persons and contributing significantly to the economic development diversification of Barbados.

It is interesting to note, Sir, that in terms of the recent performance of the sector there have been a number of changes occurring. First of all the change of fortunes of the sector has been noticed by the growth of the last 3 years. It has also been noticed, Sir, there has been a greater contribution of the export aspects of the industrial sector to the overall output. So that in 1996, for example, where there was obviously somewhat of a slow down in local demand the sector was still able to show positive growth by way of extraordinary growth and a 26% growth in exports.

But what is also noticeable in there, Sir, is that the overall figures can be easily affected by a few large contributors. For example the contribution of C. S. Caribbean Flavours Limited, the Coca Cola

concentrate exporting facility which could tend to distort the figures in the way that Intel, because of its sheer size, could have distorted export figures many years ago. But that is another important indicator of the underlying strength of the sector and the positive trend is that in 1996, 12 new companies started to export and that is important because in the event of there being a fall-out in one of the large companies who because of its numerical strength is able to affect exports in particular directions it means that we are able to show that we are getting the message across to a larger number of companies, particularly indigenous firms and helping them through our technical assistance programmes to penetrate export markets and to be able to break into the exporting sector as new companies.

I believe I have already spoken to the Honourable Senate about our specific programmes for export development where for the last two or so years we have specifically targeted manufacturing companies with good potential which have never exported so far and through a programme of assistance for a year which would include advice on the product and package design. We provided assistance with their management and any reorganisation as required. We also provided assistance with their corporate identity information, business cards, letterheads, as well as trade missions and product testing overseas.
4.55 p.m.

The results are that at the end of the year we were able to show that the majority of those firms have made their first exports. So that as part of that overall export thrust, Sir, we have been able to expose some 20 firms to International Trade Fairs in London, Atlanta, New York and various other major cities. We have also been able to take at least 16 firms on Trade Missions to a number of CARICOM countries. For example, Belize, Grenada and a few others. All this has been accomplished during the first six months of this year.

The growth of the sector, Sir, can also be measured by its contribution either in terms of job creation where a number of new businesses started. For example, the first six months of 1997, we were able to attract and facilitate the development of 22 new small businesses, as well as three new international large businesses. We were able to create 2 391 jobs in the industrial sector in Barbados during that period, Sir. Ninety-eight percent of those jobs were through continued expansion of existing enterprises.

For those first six months as well, we have been able to attract just under \$25 million in foreign investment and \$9 million in local investment. That compares well, in fact in many cases, it is beyond the average for 1996. For example, in 1996, we created 2 597 jobs in the industrial sector and, of course in 1995, 3 214 were created. In terms of overall business established, 62 in 1995 and 69 in 1996.

So that we are very much on trend in terms of our performance, so far, for the first six months of the year.

Sir, of particular interest and importance in this particular debate on making additional lands available to the IDC, is the fact that because of the general growth in the sectors of which we deal, there has also been a growth in demand for facilities, either for manufacturing, information services or other aspects of small business. Whereas in 1994, Sir, 61 280 square feet of space was allocated by the IDC, we were able in 1995 to allocate 143 715 square feet of space and in 1996, 124 338 square feet.

During this year, one of the newer buildings that I opened during Industry Week, by the time we actually opened the building it was already 90 percent tenanted. One of the key components of industrial development and investment promotion, and one which is critical to success, is a situation in which one has to be able to quickly facilitate an investment in a new project. So we need to have on hand a stock of production facilities where an investor, whether he is from Marchfield, St. Philip, St. Lucia, the United States or wherever, if he has a hot project on which he needs to move, can first of all obtain production facilities quickly. But also, particularly in the case of the local producer where there might be a question of a limitation of funds for investment in the business, if he saved the trouble of having to use his funds for the provision of infrastructure, then he is able to use those funds for working capital and other critical aspects of getting his business off the ground. So that the provision of good quality, reasonable cost and industrial space is a key component in Barbados' investment promotion and industrial development strategy.

This acquisition for the vesting of this land at Newton Industrial Park for the creation of another industrial park will aid significantly in that process. Because, I can tell you, Mr. President, that there is very limited availability of space in the existing industrial parks, particularly in the areas of high demand. We therefore need to ensure that we keep ahead of the demand, if we are to continue to prosper. So that already, Sir, we are pursuing, at the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation (BIDC), a vigorous building programme which will seek to meet in the medium term, the requirements.

We have just completed the construction of Building Number 4 in the Harbour Industrial Park, Sir, which is a 44 500-square foot office facility. It goes for the cost of \$8.3 million and which has already, Sir – because it is 90 percent occupied, even though it has only been opened for the last two months...

We are also in the process of developing, on the last available lot in the Harbour Industrial Park, which are

the lots adjacent the Barbados Cosmetics Limited and BICO Limited. We are developing another Information Services Office facility there at the cost of some \$7.3 million. We are also, Sir, in the process of redeveloping Pelican Village. The invitations for tender should go out in another week and we expect construction to start before year-end. The tenants have already had a meeting with the IDC. They know fully well what the plans and the procedure will be for the phase construction, to avoid dislocation of their businesses. That is another project which will provide enhanced opportunities for the small business people in Barbados to pursue their vocation in dignity and pride, and in facilities which will enhance their income earning capacity.

In addition to that, Sir, part of the vigorous construction programme which we are undertaking, includes the construction of a small business complex at Fontabelle at the property adjacent to the Barbados Advocate which used to be the residence of N. E. Wilson. All that remains on that site are the ruins and that is to be replaced by a modern facility which will provide a one stop shop for the small business community in Barbados to obtain advice on how to start their businesses, how to do business plans and all the very technical assistance areas. There, they can also obtain assistance with design and whatever else that is required. It will also provide a permanent home for the Small Business Association's Secretariat. It will provide as well, the offices of the Micro Enterprise Lending Institution and the Barbados Enterprise Growth Fund.

We are currently having discussions with the Micro Enterprise Lending Institution which is to come on stream by the first of January. We are also currently having discussion with the Barbados Enterprise Growth Fund to look at reconfiguring our design to have those new financial institutions located in the same facility as all of the other small business development agencies so as to benefit from the synergies which will be generated by way of having all of the facilities in one location. So that location will become the home of small businesses in Barbados. You will not have to wonder where you should go.

In addition, Sir, Building number 8 at the Harbour Industrial Park is to be renovated as well. That is the one which is known as the 'Cluster Block'. It will be converted for the use of information services as well, in order to make use of the enhanced telecommunications and other facilities which is already in place.

Major renovations are also going on at Building No. 12 in Wildey which is a 30 000 square foot building for manufacturing space which now needs a complete

electrical, plumbing and other fittings. It is being outfitted for smaller manufacturing entities.

Building No. 1 at the new Industrial Park is being totally renovated to suit the expansion requirement of a United Kingdom based company operating in Barbados which makes a precision product, what are called intra-ocular lenses but they are very precise optical devices that are being manufactured and we need to outfit that space for that purpose.

There is considerable work which is going on at present but part of what we are doing by way of vesting this land in the IDC is preparing for the medium to long-term where, as we exhaust our capacity to provide facilities in the existing 10 industrial parks, we would obviously need to have in hand and in good time additional land because before we construct buildings we now have to install infrastructure in terms of roads, electricity, water and so on. It would also be required that we obviously arrange financing for the construction of the additional buildings.

Sir, we are satisfied that this action today by the Government, that is, vesting this land in the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation in exchange of lands which were lost from the purpose of industrial development at Six Roads and Grantley Adams Industrial Park, will go a significant way in ensuring that the mandate of the Corporation for the industrial development of Barbados is continued.

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

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, the area of small business development and international business as it relates to the export sector, the informatics and that sector is of some concern to me. My concern has to do with the plight of the workers in industry in this country. I have over the past few weeks been observing certain goings-on in this particular sector. Even today as we beat our chest with great pride in our achievements in this area I think there is something we have to feel very concerned about.

One of the questions I would like to pose to the Government of Barbados, and this is not the Barbados Labour Party but the Government of Barbados is this. How is it that individuals coming from other jurisdictions where there are stringent minimum requirements in the workplace, where so much emphasis is being placed on economics, where lighting and the positioning of a computer on a table, the height of the chair, the position in which your wrist and fingers are placed, where the role of emphasis is placed on such matters, why is it that these individuals can come into Barbados, set up business and fail to transfer such emphases here?

I want to sound a word of warning to Ministers of Government who, as they go about targeting businesses for this country, need to pay greater attention to the health of the workers in these businesses.

Now, I speak for the female population of Barbados because the majority of individuals in these businesses are women. My concern is the increase in the disease, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, among our women. This disabling chronic disease is of grave concern to the insurance industry in Barbados.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I call it a disease because people are going off on disability. I watch a number of women with their swollen wrists and their swollen fingers. I know it comes as a result of the positioning of the hand and having to touch the upper keys on the computer and where you have the wrist located that is the carpal.

What is happening is that we have in Barbados very young women and young mothers who are becoming disabled, some of them short-term disabilities, some longer because it seems to me that when they expose themselves to the surgery, which is supposed to be corrective surgery for the Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, that some of them are losing the use of the muscles. There is some nerve damage as a result.

I would like to appeal to Ministers of Government in this area. We must be concerned about this. We know that many of our females head the households in Barbados. The largest number of households are headed by females in this country and I do not think we would want at this time to have such a percentage of our women disabled. It has serious implications for the regular health services. It has implications for the medical health service schemes in Barbados and it has implications for our social security system. These are the very people we need to be out there making contributions to this scheme because of our aging population and we can least afford to have this type of serious injury. I think Senator Goddard prefers me to refer to it as injury in the workplace.

I would like to insist that as much as we need to have these people's money and as much as we would want to create employment in this country, we really do not want to encourage people to come here if they are not prepared to adhere to our labour – if we do not have the laws – our labour relations and our labour culture, and if they are not prepared to operate according to certain basic minimum human standards, and that concerns me. We must insist that there be greater care in the workplace and the welfare of our workers must be placed more at the forefront.

We have discussed housing today and we have accepted that these individuals are still paid below what can be considered acceptable wages. If we want to see accuracy and individuals meeting deadlines and a good work ethic, go to these places in Barbados. If there is a good work ethic in Barbados it can be found in these industrial places. They have no choice. They are online workers. They have to produce pieces of work by particular periods of time. They have deadlines to meet. They have to be punctual. They cannot mess around. The level of proficiency and accuracy is very high in that sector and that is what the people say. That is why they say they choose Barbados. Therefore, I think we have enough in terms of our product that we can exact more as we attempt to bring them here. I want us to place greater emphasis in that area.

The small business area is one of my pet areas. Over the years in my profession I have been fortunate to advise a number of people who embark on businesses in this country. I note that in the Budget mention was made of a Micro Enterprise Fund. Now, there are a few things I want to say on this.

When we bring people with university degrees only and put them to manage the affairs of individuals with a lot of hands-on experience, we create frustrations. When we bring people from the regular private sector in finance and put them to manage funding which is really meant for seed capital or start-up capital, we have another problem. These people have a mind set. They have grown accustomed to head and belly collateral and even though the Government would stipulate that funding is developmental, and therefore although it is not giveaway money these individuals must understand that they cannot subject these persons who will seek funding through the Micro Enterprise Fund to this kind of pressure. I have been a commercial banker and I know what small business people in this country experience as they attempt to ply their wares. Sometimes one gets the impression that they are crooks and not people who embarked on viable projects. I had a lot of experience with the Barbados Development Bank too and recognised that there was a time when, in that institution, that type of mentality prevailed.

5.15 p.m.

If we are really to develop a viable small business sector, I do not want to say businesses that would start at a small level but grow to become bigger businesses because I do not want people to have this mind fix that they should remain small. But these are things that we should look into. I want to see us get people who have experience in business. We do not have to use staff for everything since we have consultants who we can bring in. We are too much tied to an eight-hour day and if it means that we have to have consultants in the evening and

the business people have to come in the evening, then you must set the time this way since if you want the money you must meet certain requirements.

We have to be very creative and innovative in this area if it is to work and we also look forward to a proper small business tax regime. I think that there is a reasonably good model in Canada where we can come up clearly with our definition for small business and that these businesses will not be subjected to the same rate of tax as the bigger businesses and also that they are given the space to really develop. We have to recognise that we have not been a business culture, we cannot fool ourselves about this, we have been schooled to be very good employees. Those individuals who have succeeded in business in this country are those individuals who have come from a business background. Some of us who have been exposed to high level of education have been brave and have dared the system and decided to enter into business but traditionally we are employees and therefore it is a lot of work that we have to do in this regard.

In Barbados, those individuals who have sought to go into business have really been the ones who could not make it in the system. Let us face it, all they had was an idea. They had no money or no education beyond probably second or third form and even if they went to fifth form they had no 'O' levels and therefore decided that they knew they could do it and decided to go into business. I think we recognise now that we need to have greater sophistication, skills, knowledge, intelligence and habits to business and that we must target individuals for business. Now, how are we going to do this?

I believe that we need to go beyond making business part of the school curriculum. There is a bit more than that that we have to do. I believe that there is a need for greater interface between students in the class room and individuals in business. In the same way that we take children on tour of a brewery to see how we make malt or beer, I think we now have to start organising regular tours and not just one day occasional tours but as a regular part of our schooling we have to expose our young people to business.

Not that I believe that all Barbadians are cut out for business. I believe there is a limit and a point at which we must stop and I think we must find a way to target those people in this society who have this genuine feeling to be business people, who have skills and ability and who have no money and maybe not enough knowledge and work on them. I really look forward to success in this area. Besides, I think that the development of a vibrant small business area is one of the ways that we can really reach our goal of empowerment of our people because the creation of wealth begins with ownership and once we can create the

environment in which our people not only want to own their own business but others would want to be a part. This is a problem that we have on our hands, the protectionist attitude that I want nobody to be a part of this business because it means that it will be taken over.

The Stock Exchange will go nowhere in Barbados. It will continue to be one of the most inactive of the three in the region – Trinidad, Jamaica and Barbados – until and unless we can get in the minds of our people the importance of share ownership and what it means to be a shareholder in a company. How are we going to get the sisters, brothers, aunts and uncles of these individuals to go to their banks and take off \$10 000 or \$5 000 and decide to be a part of that business because I think that in order for us to really achieve something meaningful to move these businesses beyond the put of being just small businesses, we have to create that willingness and understanding out there amongst fellow Barbadians to be a part. We have to be able to remove that level of distrust because that is what seems so much to be a part of our culture.

I am concerned about this area because we are now working very assiduously at building a capital market and we are now looking into the areas of mutual funds and registered savings plans and these other instruments which have done well in the more developed economies and so-called first world economies. I do not believe that we are doing enough work in education in Barbados and the Barbados Investment Corporation must work hand in hand with the Barbados Securities Exchange. I believe for their work to be successful there must be collaboration between the Barbados Investment Corporation and the Securities Exchange of Barbados. They must mount programmes together so that people can see the connection between ownership of shares in a business and see the total picture.

The time has come for us to not segment these things, not to deal with them in compartments but in order for us to realise a national objective then there must be greater co-ordination and collaboration between these departments.

I realise that we have in Barbados a company, I am trying to classify it properly, a company doing computer programming in Barbados, I am talking about Total Technology. And we have a number of non-Barbadians working in that area.
5.25 p.m.

Now I am really hoping that we can turn this thing around quickly and that we can have a larger percentage of our population... We spend so much money in education, surely we must start some targeting in our educational system.

If we know that we are going to be placing our emphasis in certain areas we will have to take that education system and subject it, on a regular basis, to traders, not necessary total reform, but we are not going to realise our objectives if we continue with a system that does not respond.

I know we have introduced in our schools computerisation at the elementary level and even at the secondary level but I want to see the follow through and I am hoping that the Ministry of Education has made sure that those children's desks and chairs and so on are positioned correctly so that carpal tunnel syndrome will not reach at a younger age than the working age.

I hope that in our education system we will start to condition our people to get into this area. This is technology at the highest level and I do not want us to have to be importing it. If you are going to be excelling in the area of international business I do not want a company that is coming here and is bringing in 100 employees with it because Barbados cannot respond. We do not have that number of persons here. So I hope you will work really hard in that particular area.

I have no quarrel, Sir, with this Resolution. I recognise that our export thrust seems to be continuing. I hope we have our eyes wide open for this free market and our economy as it is opened up, that we have our contingency and other plans in place to offer the kind of assistance. I know we cannot bring protection all the time, tariffs and non tariff barriers, but that we have certain cushions in place still because we cannot afford to, within a short space of time, kill off some of the very people that we are trying to develop.

So, what are we going to do? Are we going to allow individuals to just start businesses or are we going to say to them, that based on global economic trends this is the best area for you to get into? Is this what we are going to do? Are we going to allow them to start up and get going and then as we open up this free market system they are killed? What are we going to do? Because then we would have made 2 steps forward and 3 steps backward.

I believe that in this particular area the challenge is great for Barbados and today as we feel excited about our successes I believe there is the need for caution and concern. I hope the Minister responsible, Senators Goddard and Farley, I hope they will keep very alert and help Barbados that we can survive the ravages of the free market system and that we can continue to progress in the future. Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution and congratulate

the Minister of Industry and Commerce on his very fine performance in the export trade of Barbados. The stimulation of this area of the economy has done exceptionally well over the last couple of years. I just have a few short comments to make in regard to the liberalisation of the economy. It disturbed me somewhat to hear the Honourable Senator talk about the ravages of the free market or open market system. I see it as an opportunity for Barbadian entrepreneurs to capitalise on extra regional and regional markets. In fact I see it as a great opportunity for entrepreneurs to move abroad. In fact we are witnessing that today with the use of current day technology and particularly the system as afforded on the Internet that allows small producers and niche market producers to reach a market place that was only accessible by large companies in the past. Therefore I do not think we need to look at the future with trepidation but we should look upon it as an exciting opportunity for all Barbadians to participate in the global economy.

Now, the Honourable Senator mentioned the expanded area of software development and I might say that the Government recognised in its early days that this is an area of opportunity and it moved to expand the throughput through the Community College. It moved vigorously to instal computers in Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and it has also embraced the assistance of the private sector and stimulated the expansion of Information Technology programmes at the University of the West Indies and also has assisted in the introduction of enhanced programmes in physics and mathematics which are the two areas that are very crucial to the area of software development.

Now in any programme that has a very rapid start-up and a very rapid growth such as the software development surely we will have to use the human resources of the globe where they are best available to do the business in Barbados. But this stimulates the Barbadian public. It stimulates the educational facilities and it stimulates business activities. What is not well known is that there is another company that is also doing very advanced software development using the new Java language and of 25 of those programmers 23 are Barbadian. So while we focus on one side of the coin you must look on the other side of the coin.

I might say that it is not just about software development but it is also graphic artists, it is also people who bring knowledge based content, who are also computer literate so it may be lawyers, medical technicians or doctors, even nurses who would contribute to the process of software development. You might recognise too that many of the individuals involved in this activity have either Ph.D. or Masters Degree level accomplishments so we are talking about something that is very sophisticated, very cutting edge of technology and producing world-class

products for world-class companies. It is this environment that we are fostering.

Now, as you know, EduTech 2000 which the Senator mentioned has got off to a start at the St. Mary's Primary School. It is hoped that this would roll out to another 18 schools by next September.
5.35 p.m.

I think that the Ministry of Education is well seized with the issues and direction that we must go in transforming our educational system to allow people to become digitally literate. By that, I do not mean that they have to be necessarily experts in Word Perfect or experts in a spread sheet application or a data-based application, but to be generally familiar with it. They should be familiar with the Internet, with the culture and the strategic thinking that are brought about by thinking in a digital world, rather than an analog world.

This is a phenomenal transformation for any society. It is revolutionary and it is bringing about a sea change in Barbados. One of the things that I can say is that our society basically is not a Luddite society and therefore they have embraced the new technology because they have recognised its friendliness to the Barbadian culture. It is not gender specifically. It is not class specifically. It cuts across class barriers and gender barriers and therefore it gives great opportunity for everyone in Barbados to achieve and that is the beauty of the new digital age.

I think, Mr. President, that the direction the Ministry of Industry and Commerce is going on to develop this area of economic activity with some small assistance with the Ministry of International Trade and Business, is the correct direction. I think it will bring great economic and social benefits to Barbados as it increases not only our economic activity but the quality of life of all of our citizens.

I support this Resolution, Mr. President.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, I want to say a few words about this Resolution for a number of reasons and not least of all because I am a practicing small businessman in Barbados myself. I am fully seized with the number of challenges which we face in this business and some of the challenges are in our own power to change and within our own power to make a difference. Some of the challenges, however, are a lot deeper than that and speak to the core of some of the developmental difficulties, which we as Barbadians will continue to face, if they are not dealt with.

Sir, the other point is the land at Six Men's that is being contemplated and being dealt within this Resolution is again, an area with which I am very familiar. My first

interest is, what are we doing in respect to the development of industrial businesses in that area of Barbados? I think that northern area, St. Lucy and St. Peter have a proud tradition, in truth and in fact, in terms of its contribution to the industrial development of Barbados.

I recall first of all the existence of the Mount Gay Distillery at St. Lucy, which is a landmark in terms of industry in Barbados and it continues to be a very big contributor to the overall economy and the export economy of Barbados, with its strategic arrangements with Remy, for instance. This has allowed Mount Gay to become a real international challenge in terms of the spirit industry. It is very good to know that the northern parishes of St. Peter and St. Lucy can boast a fine record in this regard, Sir.

Then again, the question of the Antilles Development, the area just above the St. Lucy's Parish Church. This land would have been possibly acquired around the same time as the land at Six Men's with probably similar plans envisaged for the development of industry, as we saw it then and more recently, Sir, the Arawak Cement Plant.

One must congratulate the new owners of Arawak who have been able to turn around the fortunes of that facility. I expect, certainly about the projections I have been reading about in the paper, Sir, to see that facility contributing significantly to the economics of Barbados by way of provision of jobs and of corporation taxes paid at the highest level.

So, Sir, we have had a long look at industrial development in Barbados and I am concerned when I hear programmes being repeated by the Ministry of Industry about trade missions, about fairs, about things which are not seeming to make a significant difference in terms of concrete results on the ground. Sir, I want to refer to the Economic Report for Barbados 1996, prepared by the Ministry of Finance, and I think it is almost verbatim, Sir, to the Central Bank Annual Report for 1996. It talks about the fact that the industrial sector is in pondering and it is not moving with the speed and growth which we envisaged and indeed, which the Barbados Labour Party envisaged as part of its job creation plans in 1996.

Therefore, I think the Barbados Labour Party Government should be as concerned as we are on this side that industrial growth in Barbados is in truth and in fact, not taking place at a rate which could satisfy the expectations which we would like to see from that sector.

Sir, the figures actually talk about a 0.7 percent growth in 1996, which is minimal and which is normally, of course in statistical terms, would not be reported as a growth. It would be reported, you can use the terms "break even" as they say in Barbadian vernacular, "you are not saying anything," "you ain't saying nothing."

Sir, we must be concerned about this kind of thing and we have heard, again the presentation by the Honourable Minister of Trade, Senator Farley, Sir, speaks about the export growth and he admits, on the one hand that the export growth that is reported in these reports, Sir, is due in the main to the special arrangement which applied in 1996 for Caribbean Flavours, the people that make the Coca Cola concentrate, an arrangement which is not going to be sustained. This is information which is already available.

So in terms of the export growth, I think it would be fair to Barbadians, and indeed it would be fair to this Chamber, if it were reported as a clear one-off situation results, Sir, and not as something which we can expect in perpetuity.

So, it is with this kind of background, that one must look at this exchange of land and indeed the idea of moving the industrial park, Sir, from Six Men's, as was planned back then and moving it to Newton, as is obviously the plan now. It is by the vesting of the lands at Six Men's in the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation that we have to ask the question, why is Six Men's not suitable for industrial development? Or maybe, Sir, the answers to these questions will come later on tonight when we debate further into the evening and I will listen with prick ears to the presentation of the Senate Leader at that time, Sir.

We have got a situation where we are boasting of the tremendous development plans for Six Men's by way of the private sector entity, known as Port St. Charles. We have got, Sir, plans for even further development of Speightstown by way of shopping facilities and fishing facilities. So, my question is, why is the projection of industrial growth in Speightstown or in St. Peter something which we can take into consideration at this time also? The swap contemplated, Sir, does not really address the question of what is going to happen in terms of industrial development in the northern parishes. Are they going to be allowed to stand still at this stage?

5.45 p.m.

Sir, the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation has, in some respects, to be congratulated in its stated, and I say carefully, stated efforts in terms of growth of what I call the data processing sector. There are certain signs which we are seeing already in Barbados which are indicating very clearly to us that the technology is moving away from us very quickly.

Sir, we have a situation, for instance, where there appears to be very little common thinking between the Government of Barbados' position and that of the Barbados External Telecommunications Corporation. After all, Sir,

we must understand very clearly that under the existing agreement any growth in telecommunications or in the data processing industry will depend very heavily on a harmonious relationship between the Barbados External Telecommunications and the entity which proposes to bring about this data processing development.

Indeed, Sir, as we move away, as the last speaker said, to the truly digital age where everything is moved on the telecommunications circuit and nothing is converted until it is required and even then the requirements in terms of printout and hard copies are kept to an absolute minimum, the use of telecommunications in all its forms and advances will become more and more important to Barbados.

We have a situation where on the one hand we are hearing the telecommunications provider in Barbados indicating that they are under seige by the foreign bodies who set rates to move their rates to a level which they are saying will be uneconomical to operate in Barbados and we have another situation where the Government is saying this is not necessarily the position. So we need to have an urgent meeting of the minds in this regard.

This is something which I have been hearing about for a long time in respect of the ability of the Barbados External Telecommunications to reduce their rates. I think it is obvious that even more public debate is required in terms of what is really an economical rate for overseas calls in Barbados because it will not be sustainable. Development in this kind of industry will not be sustainable at the kind of rates that are being charged today. I think this is well known in the telecommunications sector but we need to get the private sector providers in line as far as this is concerned. They need probably to look seriously at trimming their operations in keeping with the modern approaches to this kind of service.

I believe, Sir, in this regard, the appropriate pressure is being applied but we need to do it even more quickly because in those countries where this pressure has been applied, obviously the investor will move to these places before they come to Barbados so if we are going to go that route, we have to go that route quickly.

Sir, in terms of industrial growth again, Barbados faces a daunting challenge as we approach the free trade era, as I like to call it. Only recently the reports I have been able to glean from what I call the event at Sam Lord's Castle, did not seem necessarily to address some of these burning questions because it is clear that in the United States there are still people whom we have to do a tremendous job on in terms of legislators, in terms of understanding the needs of these small islands.

I have heard American Senators and American representatives for a long time, and all they keep telling us is that their constituency in New York is bigger than the constituency of the Caribbean area, and this is a fact. In the meantime, countries like Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean in the case of Dominica, St. Lucia – we are talking about banana producers – are suffering untold economic damage at the threats of these larger powers. We need to look at new ways of dealing with these situations.

I believe, Sir, that the pressures on small economies like ours in terms of this kind of activity, industrial development, in terms of moving toward the kind of industrial environment which allows for the existence of the data entry service oriented businesses, businesses which can take advantage of the Internet, the information and the opportunities provided on the Internet, to really take full advantage of these opportunities we are going to have to make a much stronger effort in getting our strengths together and directed in the right way.

Sir, we have to indicate to the investors too, and my fellow Senator talked about this. She made the point that they have to understand too the language and culture of Barbados. There is a continuing impasse in Barbados today in respect of employees at the Harbour Industrial Park who suffer not only from obviously tough working conditions, but their wages are not in keeping with what we would want to see them able to earn. We need therefore to start looking at the higher end of the technology spectrum.

I was heartened to hear, for instance, of the results of the Java investors – I call them the Java investors because I do not know anymore about them but I will do the appropriate checks on them and see exactly what we are dealing with – as against the TTSL, the total technologies where, admittedly, in case of total technologies most of the employees are from overseas. We need to bring our people in line to take hold of these opportunities. In doing so, we need to be able to address a much wider cross-section too of the Barbadian business entrepreneur.

Sir, I want to refer to the Budget presentation for this section with the establishment of the Micro Enterprise Fund as it is called. I want to indicate my concerns even at this stage with that fund. It is seen as replacing, in part, some of the portfolios handled by the Barbados Development Bank in the past. But I am concerned with any fund which has such a high private sector leverage in terms of the influences which can be brought to bear on the kind of businesses that will fly in terms of the investment being provided. I would have liked to see a much heavier Government involvement and a much lesser private sector involvement. I believe that would have given for a much wider opportunity in terms of who will benefit from these funds.

5.55 p.m.

We know how business in Barbados works and we need not turn our heads because it is a fact and we have seen demonstrated in Barbados as recently as not even a week ago where there are still questions in the air with respect to the dealings in terms of the acquisition of the Pine Hill Dairy shares by Banks Holdings Limited and there are questions that ought to be answered in this regard. It is these same private sector persons who are contemplating to participate in this micro investment enterprise fund.

I want to ask even at this stage, Sir, that this funding arrangement be looked at again in terms of the influence that the investor can bring to bear. There are some, of course, who would want to tell that there will invest and that they will get their funds back and they will get their 150% return and that is what they are in it for. But I am saying to you that there is no person who is going to put \$1 million into a \$7 million portfolio, sit on the board of directors and then establish any small businessman or the like to compete with them, whether they are into raising chickens, planting canes, making rum, making beer or whatever, they are just not going to do it. It is just as simple as that and so we need to re-think these kinds of projects. If we are going to level the playing field, a theory which I do not subscribe to, Sir, I believe the playing field rather than being level need to be dug so that new entrepreneurs can break into business in Barbados, they need special opportunities.

I have heard a recent suggestion and I have thought about it a little bit because it seems a fairly reasonable suggestion. All the time we are prepared to bring in investors in Barbados and give them concession by way of non-payment of corporation tax, by way of waiving of import duties etc. and in some new cases I believe that we even waive the new tax that they have, the Value Added Tax. Sir, I make the point very clearly, this is a novel idea but I like it, why can't we look at waiving for instance, the N.I.S. contributions of small business.

Asides.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: It is as an incentive. We can provide millions and millions and surrender millions and millions of dollars in revenue on a continuous basis, we can sacrifice millions but we cannot sacrifice a couple hundred of thousand dollars with this little suggestion.

Sir, this question of avoidance of payment of National Insurance.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Can you bring us back to the Resolution, please.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Yes, Sir, the point of industrial development about small business, all

these things tie into what kinds of programme the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation are going to offer. The Minister in his presentation was at pains to talk about the renovations that were planned for the big building down at Pelican. The fact is that Pelican as it stands has not been used for about four years. So, we are going to dig down Pelican as it stands and we are going to build a new multi-storey building and who is going to use it? Who are the persons that are going to be able to use it and who are the persons that will come out of this incubator? Sir, you know what an incubator is, an incubator is something that you go into when you are not well, you go into an incubator to be kept away from the hazards of the outer world. So a baby that is born prematurely will be incubated and given enough, the necessary percentage of oxygen and nitrogen and mixture of air and possibly feed intravenously until the baby has enough strength to venture out into this wicked world that we have.

When our small business people come out of incubation as is contemplated in the presentation by the Honourable Minister they have got to go out there and compete in the real world of established big business. Only this week, we have heard references again to the lack of active black business persons in the Barbadian environment. It is a lacking, Sir, which needs to be addressed urgently and I think it is a lacking which falls squarely on the shoulders of Government to assist. In the same way that they can find the wherewithal, the consideration, the kindness of their heart and the willingness to provide the concessions for the overseas investor we can provide the concessions and the incentive too by way of whatever measures, and I named one, so as to allow the small businessman to continue in business. The trucker, the girl out there with two or three mini-buses plying her wares and trying to make it – it is a myth that these people for some reason make a lot. I know many truckers for instance who will be in business today and by next week they are out of business because they have not had a job for three days or so, they have not been able to land a contract. We need to provide incentives for these people too.

We always in Barbados seem to set up this blanket in front of us whenever we hear about waiving National Insurance or waive corporation tax for small business.

Asides.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I do not mean that it is abolished, I mean that Government pays it just like how they forego the revenue that can be derived from the large investors.

It is a known fact all over the world in terms of projections, in terms of employment that if we are going to achieve.....

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I hate to interrupt the Honourable Member when he is on a roll but the Honourable Member is misleading the Honourable Senate by suggesting that incentives are granted either on the basis of nationality or size. Incentives in Barbados are granted on a sectoral basis so that if you are in manufacturing or tourism, you qualify, whether you are foreign or local, large or small once you meet the qualifying criteria. The Honourable Senator is creating the impression that incentives are given to only foreign investors because those who come into a non-qualifying area will not get incentives and to suggest that no small Barbadians get incentives is to mislead the Honourable Senate.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I wish that the Honourable Senator who just spoke would listen carefully to what I am saying. I have never or do I ever intend to exclude a sector of this community or any other community by way of their race or whatever. When I talk about small business, I talk about white small business, Sir. I talk about black small business, Sir. I talk about Indian small business, Chinese small business, I talk about Barbadian small business, the people that I interface with at my level and I am saying that the same way the incentives are offered to the big businesses being white, Chinese or whatever who come into Barbados, Sir, we can offer some of these incentives to new entrepreneurial efforts in this country.

6.05 p.m.

In order for them to take off, Sir, it has to be done and we must not have this resistance to changes of this nature. So the intervention for what it is worth is in fact an admission of the *status quo* and once we are prepared to accept the *status quo* and never change it, it is when we know that this country is going to stay in the same economic framework in which it stands today. If everybody in Barbados is satisfied with it that way I will have no choice but to continue speaking about it, doing what I can about it, but if it is to stay that way, so be it.

I say that the *status quo* has got to change and Government must provide the leverage to make the status quo change. We do it all the time in a lot of other areas. We did it in education. We did it in terms of being able to vote in this country. We are afraid to do it in terms of changing the economic *status quo* and we have got to do it by way of provision by the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation and the preparedness to go out there, Sir, and fight for what we know is right, Sir.

Therefore, the Resolution in terms of the exchange of land at Newton etc. is not necessarily the bone of contention at this time. The bone of contention is where

on this Side we are saying, more attention has got to be paid to the opportunity being given to small business people in this country and not only by rhetoric. Let us stop the rhetoric and let us transfer that rhetoric into actual hard currency where instead of creeping to the bank through the back door on a Friday and begging for consideration for the wages cheque, including the National Insurance payments, one would be able to, at least, pay your way and develop a foothold from which you can launch out. I think that has been the hallmark of nearly all significant economic change in history in terms of business. Nothing is given for free. It does not reduce the amount of effort that the entrepreneur himself has to put into the business and we seem to think that if Government gives all then the entrepreneur does not have to do any thing and this is not so. The point is, what is happening now is just not working. If it is working tell me it is working and I will sit down. If it is working tell me there has been change in terms of the economic face of Barbados and I will sit down but the truth is, it is not working so we need to do something different.

Sir, this is the position which I am putting this evening. In terms of this Resolution, Sir, I would like to see the programme therefore shifted as one which embraces the people of whom I am speaking so vociferously this evening. I am grateful to you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I would not say you were speaking vociferously. You were whispering.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution and I listened very carefully to the Leader of Government Business and I must say that I am very impressed with the millions that are being spent in industrial development which I suppose is with a view to getting some form of a takeoff.

We have been hearing about takeoff since the 1960s and we have not been able to find the key to takeoff in industrial development yet. Let us hope we are on the right track this time. I wish Health could learn from Industry how to get this money so that we could use some to repair the Psychiatric Hospital.

In addition to that, Mr. President, I would like to also refer to this document that I referred to this morning – *The Manifesto for Mental Health* – Nurses Assistants Aid Association of Barbados. On page 8 it is a proposal submitted to Government which urges Government to ratify the International Labour Organisation Convention 161.

Now, Mr. President, this is a convention on Occupational Health and Services. There is no point spending all these millions and not looking after the mental health of the workers. So I suggest that what we need to do

is to take some of these millions and help to train Occupational Health Nurses to work in the industrial sector.

At the same time while I am speaking about that I would like to see a ratification of ILO Convention 149 on the employment and working conditions of nurses. Mr. President, in our attempt to groom labour for takeoff in the industrial sector we are introducing new technology. I must say up front I support it. We cannot get anywhere unless you start introducing computers in the schools because even the cars that come down have computers. You cannot repair them unless you have some knowledge of computers so I would like to say that I support that and I feel that it is profitable.

In addition to that what I would like to see is in addition to occupational nurses attached to the work place, also nurses attached to the schools.

Mr. President, much in Barbados has been said about Carpal Tunnel Syndrome which is an occupational health condition and since it has been brought to the public's eye I hope that we will look into it a bit more and see if we cannot come up with policies on mental health and physical health at the work place so that the health services would not have to spend additional dollars in treating Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Mr. President, this is very important for the industrial sector because in this condition it takes a lot of physiotherapy and through my experience with a health insurance what they have had to do is to increase the premiums of the health insurance because of the number of people who have had to go and get physiotherapy treatment and it is not cheap. So in other words, we are spending health dollars on conditions that could be prevented. At least 98 percent of them could be prevented in the first place.
6.15 p.m.

Also, in our industrial sector, we have submitted proposals to the Government and I am going to read from page 4 of the document which says,

"We believe that all working conditions should be conducive to mental health with easy access to employee assistance programmes. This can be done in collaboration with District Mental Health."

In other words, employee assistance medical programmes are programmes set up for employees in the work place and it does help. It is not very difficult to set up these programmes. We have a lot of nurses that are trained here who, if given the opportunity, will be able to help establish such programmes.

Asides.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Not only at the IDC, we need it for all work places.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I think you are ranging rather too widely. I have given a fair amount of latitude in this debate, but it really is not about mental health.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I did not mean to spread it away. What I was trying to show was that if we are going to spend millions of dollars in allocating for the infrastructure of the development for the industrial sector, part of this infrastructure should also incorporate not only the desk at the work place, but also looking after the health of the workers. I am sorry if it looks as though it is far effete, but it is a very important aspect of industrial development in the developed countries, which is costing us quite a lot of money here in Barbados.

I will again say that I support the Resolution.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, it amazed me a little bit to hear people talking about giving incentives to local entrepreneurs, because as far as I know, Members on this Side never did that sort of thing. Under the rules of the World Trade Organisation you cannot do that. When we had this shiprider thing, down here, people were thinking about sovereignty. We in Barbados are going to lose our sovereignty because our Coast Guards cannot go into Florida's waters, or something. But, we lost our sovereignty the minute we became members of this World Trade Organisation. If tomorrow somebody from one of these big countries wants to come in here and buy up half of Barbados or buy up all of the businesses, you are a Member and you can do nothing about it.

I went to the World Trade Organisation on the Internet and I sent them an E-mail and said that I would like an explanation on this rule and they came back very clearly and said that is the rule. If somebody comes in here you have to grant to them the exact same incentive that you would grant to anybody local.

Asides.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: This is the whole point. I had said from the beginning, cockroaches do not have any right at a fowl cock party. We have no rights. I have asked many people including the Right Honourable Prime Minister, why are we Members of the World Trade Organisation? Every single person I have talked to, in the private sector and in the public sector has one answer. We have no choice. Is that true?

Asides.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Is that really true? I mean if we have no choice, are we forgetting all about our sovereignty?

Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I just wanted to touch on a few areas just to clear up some issues which were raised by earlier debate.

First of all, I totally agree with and appreciate the concern expressed by Senator Thompson regarding Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and other illnesses that afflict workers, particularly in certain occupations in the informatic sector. But, I want to reassure her that Government is not only aware of that, but that it is working actively to produce a new Safety Act which will replace the rather narrow and limited Factories Act. This new Safety Act will apply to all establishments in Barbados whether they are in the private sector or in Government. So we are taking active steps to legislate certain conditions that would apply.

In addition, one of the problems from my understanding that has obtained in Barbados regarding Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, one contributing factor for the existence of this phenomenon, which is not unique to Barbados, is that in the old days when people used typewriters freely and readily and typewriters were on the cutting edge of technology for reproducing matter, people would be taught how to sit at their typewriter, how to stand, how to position their elbows. Therefore, they had certain protection built into their approach to their work and that is why those persons did not suffer from a similar affliction. Although they were indulging in the same repetitive tasks, therefore their bodies would have been subjected to the same stresses and strains, these principles were taught in the preparation to be a proper typist.

Nowadays, what happens is that anyone can buy a computer and you might have the right desk, but not the right chair and therefore, because of ignorance of the safety features, people indulge in activities in a particular manner that therefore contributes to this carpal tunnel syndrome and the like.

I want to stress that the Government is cognisant of it and Government has taken action, because the concern for workers does not need to be pressed on this Government. I have a very important document before me here, which came out for the most recent Annual General Conference.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I am willing to make it a document of the House, Sir. It shows how the Barbados Labour Party has always been concerned about the safety and well-being of workers. Way back in 1944 the Barbados Labour Party proclaimed the Workmen Compensation Act and we gave them a holiday with pay in 1950. Between 1951-1961 they had a Protection of Wages Act. So therefore we have a long history and tradition

of looking after the interest of the workers and this is being maintained in this current Government.

I also heard Senator Boyce indulge in what to me sounded like special pleading regarding incentives. If he was doing so, he should have said so. But to me, it sounded that way and I might be wrong. Way back in 1951-1961, the Barbados Labour Party also instituted the Pioneer Industries Act. We established the Development Board as it then was. His Party has been in office many times since then and they have maintained the recognition that in order to attract and encourage foreign industries and certain other industries, one has to give them incentives.

Therefore, I am amazed to hear him making such ballyhoo about the need for incentives. I wonder how recently he discovered this need and why his Party did not do that when it had its last chance to do so, Sir.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to conclude debate on this Resolution, Sir. I think I need to respond to a number of things. I will start first of all with clarifying what I guess, would have been a cameo presentation by Senator Laurie in which he asserted, as one would expect in cameo fashion, that Barbados had no right to be in WTO, that Barbados, because of WTO can no longer grant incentives to local businessmen and that Barbados can be bought out tomorrow because of WTO and that cockroach had no right at a fowl-cock party.
6.25 p.m.

Now, Sir, I do not want to get into a long debate on WTO. We will have many such opportunities but just suffice to say that the WTO is the successor organisation to the GATT.

The countries that have been part of the world trading system previously by way of the GATT are now there with the WTO. If he had taken the reasonable approach and pointed out some of the deficiencies there are in the WTO, as they were in GATT, and there are in the United Nations and other international agreements in which the developing world does not necessarily play a principal part in the drafting. I have accepted that.

What Senator Laurie is suggesting by way of suggesting that Barbados should not be in WTO is that we would no longer be able as a person who is outside of the world trading system to have some protection for some of our intellectual property for our artists, creators, musicians and so on, and that we would have some difficulties as far as our exports of commodities. We would not be able to obtain the benefits, and, like I said, the Government is currently working on that.

There are obviously special considerations for developing countries, and then within that for small countries. Barbados has taken an active part in framing out the transitional arrangements for developing countries where there is the phasing of the various provisions. As with all international agreements, there are exemptions and exceptions, so it is totally incorrect advice for Senator Laurie to suggest that Barbados should not be a part of the WTO. To suggest that is to suggest that we should not be part of the rest of the world.

Also, Sir, in terms of his specifics, it is not true to say that Barbados cannot offer incentives. As a matter of fact, if you were to combine his argument and you were to take the misguided argument of Senator Boyce that there is a skewing of the incentives towards foreign investors as opposed to locals, then my argument is that within a sectorially driven – and locals or foreigners can get incentives...

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President. I do not want to interrupt Senator Farley. It is late already but on a point of order and for the record to be correct, I have never indicated there is any skewing of incentives. I am merely asking that incentives for small entrepreneurs be considered as they are given to big business. I am not getting involved in the skewing of any incentives.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think it is a matter of interpretation, Senator, but you have made your point.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Now, Sir, continuing. What Senator Laurie was suggesting was that Governments would no longer be able to grant incentives to their local businesses which is totally incorrect. What the WTO insists, and this is where countries like Barbados, if they are skillful can make use of the provisions to their advantage, WTO attempts to set up a framework by which subsidies are ferreted out and they are not permitted. The developed countries have, over the years, been very skillful at being past masters at developing three or four different rule books. They set up this broad framework of rules.

Under the rules of GATT they set up certain frameworks but the GATT did not outlaw subsidies because there is an incentive and there are subsidies. One is entitled to give incentives. A subsidy, however, is a transfer payment so that it is one thing for the Government to say that is for a particular class of business and what WTO says is that if you are going to identify a class of business you cannot distinguish between your local or international business the right of establishment and this is what we are also moving to in terms of CARICOM.

If you are saying you are having a single market in the economy you are giving the right of establishment

to all businesses and they are treated equally but you can identify sectors which you believe need specific help, the small business sector, for example, and you say all small businesses fitting this description get these incentives.

What the WTO will do is to provide countries like the United States giving such subsidies to their chicken farmers as would see them being able to ship a chicken out of Miami at U.S. .59 cents or .80 cents or whatever it happens to be with heavy subsidies, or Japan subsidising their rice farmers and then claiming how competitive they are, or even Trinidad where a subsidy was being given to milk farmers. But we were able to get the documentation and were able to say that one cannot say that Barbadian milk is not competitive when in truth and in fact part of your price is based on a subsidy of \$1 per kilogram being paid by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to Nestle so that Nestle can pay a decent price to the farmers.

What WTO will do is to allow you to have a mechanism to deal with those issues like anti-dumping. Where it will work to Barbados' advantage is that Barbados when compared to many other competing countries, particularly in the developing world, all of whom are competing for foreign investment for exports but have atrocious labour standards, that have child labour, that have other social conditions and the absence of regulations in the workplace, which allows them to produce cheap labour through mass exploitation, Barbados, generally speaking does not have that. All of us are working to improve what we already have.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: It is a matter of urgent public importance that it must be improved because we are aiming for the highest standards. I am not by any stretch of the imagination suggesting that we should go there but the reality is that if there is not an international framework which seeks to rule out and which seeks to impose appropriate trade sanctions on those countries that are exploiting child labour, prison labour and those things and being able to sell a product to say we are competitive, then countries like Barbados that pride quality of life, that pride having proper conditions for working-class people, then we would not be able to compete internationally, so the WTO gives us all those advantages.

Anyway, this is not a WTO debate Senator Laurie, and I would be happy over one of the earliest industrial products of Barbados to have a more spirited discussion with you on WTO and other matters.

Sir, I want to deal with some of the aspects of the presentation of Senator Boyce. Senator Boyce continues to

amaze and astound me. Senator Boyce obviously did not listen to my presentation because one of the questions that he asked about the details of the transaction related to why were we not developing industry at Six Men's and hoping that perhaps I would debate it later but I deal with my business upfront one time.

He was wondering why go from Six Men's to Newton. Of course, I do not know why he would not want the good people of Christ Church to have enhanced opportunities for development. He seems now to be shifting from Christ Church to St. Peter and I wonder why he is running away from that place in the south where he swore he would never leave nor forsake, but he seems to be going to St. Peter.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Newton estate that is being contemplated is not in Christ Church South. It is part of the Christ Church East constituency.

Mr. PRESIDENT: No point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: When last I checked the map, Sir, Newton Industrial Park was in the south of Barbados relative to St. Peter, in case the Senator did not know that. Sir, earlier in the presentation, I indicated that the Six Men's land was purchased by the BIDC in 1983. It is interesting that he does not know his party's history or his party's politics. But in 1983 the Barbados Labour Party Government would have bought this land through the BIDC and started to develop it as an industrial estate. By 1988, the Democratic Labour Party changed the use. Roads and so were put in and the DLP chose to put it into housing so that that is why we are not proceeding with Six Men's as an industrial park because we in 1997 will have to remove the houses that the DLP put there. The point is that the Honourable Senator obviously went in some wrong directions in his presentation because he had not listened to mine because that was one of the points that I made earlier in my presentation by way of explaining an introduction. Just in case he did not also understand what happened with respect to Grantley Adams, I will repeat for his benefit that the reason why we had to give up the land at Grantley Adams was that the airport had encroached on four acres of the land, taking it in by their security fence and it was decided that rather than trying to remove the airport fence and to realise that that land would be transferred to the airport... 6.35 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Was that a point of order Senator?

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Yes, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Well, two things must happen on a point of order. First you must stand and second the speaker must give way. The record will show that it was not a point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, I want to respond to a number of the points made by the goodly Senator Boyce. He speaks about the small business sector and he expresses some concerns as a small businessman, I am not sure whether he was speaking as a small businessman in Barbados or a small businessman elsewhere but I will take his comments for what they were. He expressed his concerns about incentives and so on and I want to indicate to him that as it stands right now, small businesses are able to qualify for incentives on a sectoral basis, tourism, agriculture, manufacture or whatever.

However, as part of the Government's ongoing thrust to provide further incentives for entrepreneurship in Barbados and recognising that even though we had earlier identified some of the main export oriented aspects of business as being the ones for which incentives will be given, namely manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, we also recognise that given the history from which most of our aspiring entrepreneurs will emerge, that we needed to broaden the net, if we hope in the future to raise out of the community the cadre of business persons who are able to get into the difficult export areas and tackle tourism and international informatics sector and so on.

We recognise that they need to get their grounding somewhere in business and that the businessman who goes into retail trade, wholesale or providing services or whatever needs to be given encouragement because out of that successful experience in one sector is the potential for the wealth of knowledge as well as the monetary wealth to be invested into the key growth areas of the economy. That is one of the reasons why the IDC has broaden their focus to include all aspects of small business, not just manufacturing but from a barber to a beautician to a bottler of beer, you are able to deal with the IDC and obtain their assistance.

Although everyone is focussed on technical assistance, we in the Ministry recognise that some fundamental policy changes needed to be made and we have already circulated for comment drafts of the Small Business Development Act which has gone to Small Business Associations and persons out there who have a view on these matters and so on. And it is our proposal to use the framework of a Small Business Development Act to give clear direction so that to use the example of the gentleman from the Other Place who like to talk about a businessman from Timbuktu as opposed to one from Colleton that an aspiring small entrepreneur in Barbados would be able to look to see what incentives are readily available for small businesses in Barbados. A lot of

those incentives may already exist but there are given administratively via the Ministry of Finance here and something else there and they are not necessarily widely known of. We are therefore seeking to put this framework in place.

Senator Thompson has a reasonable approach to these matters. She is obviously very knowledgeable in these areas and very passionate about business development and entrepreneurship and we on this Side look forward to working with her in helping the small business community, of which both of us are a part, in raising their standards and reaching the level of success which we know that they are capable of. Sir, the Small Business Development Act which will include a proper definition of small business so that people know what is eligible and what is not, will provide a range of incentives and other facilities which will make it clear about what we are doing for small business in Barbados and that is very much on stream, it is out there for public comment and we are moving in that direction, so we are very much on top of that.

On this matter of promoting investments especially in the information services industry, Senator Thompson mentioned and it is worth repeating that as far as ensuring that there is an adequate framework for the protection of persons who work in the information services industries in all of its manifestations – because do not be fooled, whilst people who work in data capture may be the most obvious point of focus for computer related repetitive strain injury, the problem that has emerged especially as far as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is concerned is not limited to that.

It is said that any person who works in an area where there is repetitive activity and they mentioned especially motor mechanics, electricians with screw drivers and spanners and so on and persons who use computers often. We are not only talking about data capture people alone but we are also talking about journalists and so on. In fact I had one or two persons who I know well in journalism and all of the journalists key their work right into the system and they are spending time in front of the screen and many of them have complained of the problem. The secretaries in offices, the claim adjusters at insurance companies, the accountants where businesses are running computerized accounting systems, hairdressers, a whole range of persons. In fact I hope that Senator Thompson does not find herself in that position. The insurance business is very heavily into information technology and we have to watch out for these things.

While on this matter I want to commend persons such as the Assistant General Secretary for Barbados Workers' Union, Orlando 'Gabby' Scott who is a foremost leader in occupational, health and safety issues and who does work throughout the Caribbean Region and beyond on

this matter. That Occupational Safety Act deals with a wide range of things and it has implications for this vesting of land in the IDC and development of new industrial space because the focus of the Act is not just on keyboarding and so on but it is on the lighting and the air quality and there are many persons who have allergic reaction because of the poor quality in a number of our offices, not just factories. We are talking about offices whether in Government or the private sector and the Act will bind all sides, Government, private sector and whomever. It speaks to the type of flooring that is used, there are people who slip on floors and fall and injure themselves badly all over Barbados, it speaks to those issues and it speaks to a wide broad-based health and safety issue. What the Act would do is provide that through the use of regulations and through regulations and orders and so on that you have a main framework in the Act but you have subsidiary components which can be made to reflect the current knowledge. So that an order, for example, could be made prescribing certain minimal requirements for computer related facilities.

6.45 p.m.

I know in New York, for example, there is a particular regime that applies for all workers who use the computer screen more than 26 hours a week. If that happens then the screen has to have certain outfitting. You have to do this, you have to do that and so on. There are particular situations that arise in office buildings, in factories, in hotels and the Regulations and Orders to the Act will specify certain sectoral related issues and that direction will affect all business including the information services industry. So that will take care of much of that matter, not only in informatics industry but in other areas where it is neglected. A secretary or a journalist may be feeling a pain and not thinking it is carpal tunnel. But even without that, as part of the IDCs own responsibility for developing production facilities for this company, we have sent our officers overseas to look to see what are the basic requirements for these types of facilities.

It has cost us increased money but we have, for example, for each of those office buildings invested in special lighting which does not create glare off the computer screen. It costs 10 times as much as regular fluorescent lighting but we have the appropriate lighting facilities arranged. We have a number of safety features. The new buildings, for example, in the Harbour have passenger elevators so that you do not have to climb the stairs, three and four floors up. There are a number of features which are made to enhance the quality of the environment in which these workers operate, and then augmented by the regulations that would deal with the ergonomic issues and other detailed issues from a labour department perspective we are sure we would then have an enhanced environment.

I would also want to make the point in response to a suggestion that was made by Senator Thompson concerning the issues which we need to stress during our investment promotion mission that certainly on our watch, when I am promoting investment into Barbados, the approach that I take is outlining what the situation is in Barbados and I say to foreign investors, we are not inviting you to come ...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: We are not inviting persons to come to Barbados to pioneer and to create business as if business does not exist. We have a dynamic, stable, sophisticated, local business sector. We have a wide range of international investors already and we are inviting persons to come and join in for our mutual benefit.

I also make the point about the labour laws and the obligations and the requirements and so on and in fact on one of the investment promotions issues in which I was involved there was one of our international investors who runs a unionised company, who himself of his own free will and accord spoke extensively about his experience of running a unionised company in Barbados. He spoke in extremely glowing terms and it was a bit of a culture shock to him he admitted but he found that the greatest possible cooperation, the greatest number of suggestions for productivity improvement, reflexivity and the willingness to make up for lost time came from his union shop stewards. So that there could be no accusation of Government going out and secretly telling investors, well you can come down here and you do not have to worry about the unions and so on. That is one that I respond to Senator Thompson with.

Now, Sir, there is also a concern raised about whether we are providing the direction in terms of educational development for the future needs of the industrial and information sector as we are providing the physical facilities, as we are doing by way of this Resolution and I make the point that particularly in the information services industry we keep a strategic focus on the way the industry is changing.

Data capture for instance has changed. Data capture is no longer centered around basic data entry but scanning and other technologies will render quite a bit of data entry obsolete but we are willing to work with it to extract whatever benefits may remain. But through telecommunications and so on we have also been able to attract companies that are using scanning technologies and we do further processing here.

Call centres: We have been able to attract our first inbound call centre as of September this year and that is a high value added service.

Software development is another high value added service. We along with a number of companies in the industry have started working with the University and the Barbados Community College on curriculum changes which will render the graduates of those institutions more readily usable in a real world on-line situation using modern technology and the issue is two-fold. One is the fact that these two educational institutions for the most part did not have state of the art technology and also that the curriculum that was being taught, based on the experiential base of whoever taught them was not necessarily up to 1997 and the year 2000 and beyond.

Part of our thrust is to upgrade those institutions but also we are seriously examining the possibility of opening an information technology institute which will augment the work of the University of the West Indies and the Community College because at the end of the day an educational institution must still hold fast to some fundamentals. An educational institution cannot so reduce itself to training for work situations that it ignores some of the co-elements of education which would include citizenship and all of the other rounded elements. We think it is prudent that we have a finishing institution which would take persons who have come through that good quality sound education and then put them through a more intensive work oriented programme, a programme which would shift from time to time as technology and opportunities change but which would not affect the foundation of university that we are developing in association with our international investing partners along with other big names in information technology in Barbados.

So we are satisfied that we are definitely taking a strategic view of the development of industry in Barbados, both the manufacturing industry and information technology and that not only are we providing physical facilities but ensuring our educational system is changed in order to provide the necessary output.

Mr. President, I am satisfied that this Resolution, Sir, that we seek to pass today will go a long way towards advancing the cause for the development of that industry including manufacturing and information services.
6.55 p.m.

I am also satisfied, Sir, that the efforts we have made in seeking to attract foreign investment have been paying off. I am also, more satisfied at our early efforts at seeking to broaden opportunities for entrepreneurship in Barbados and at seeking, Sir, to broaden the base of support mechanisms available to local entrepreneurs, particularly persons who are entering business for the first time.

Over the medium term, we will be able to see a business sector in Barbados that is characterised by new

players in the market, greater innovation, a greater local involvement and that the entrepreneurial programmes will see many persons who are small businessmen today, becoming the large industrialists of tomorrow and that is our approach.

We may talk about small business by way of definition, but we do not take a romantic approach which simply says, that small is beautiful, let them remain small. Small is just a place to start and if you want to get into definitions, you will define them that way. But our approach to the entry into business is successful and we want to move on and on. There will always be small business people around, but we do not necessarily want to have the same people being the small persons for the next 100 years and we will expect to have a rotation basis.

I will throw out the challenge, Sir, to those entrepreneurs who have been successful to come out first of all and to speak a bit about their success. Because the myth has gone abroad to some extent, that there are no successful local entrepreneurs and in truth and in fact there are. There are not as many as we would like to see, but we need to provide encouragement for our young people by letting them know that in spite of the fact that there are improvements which are yet to be made in the environment, which will make it more facilitatory for new entrepreneurs that people have been able to succeed. Furthermore, those persons should also give something back to the community by way of providing guidance, based on their wide and varied experiences, to all of our new and younger persons.

When this Newton Industrial Estate expansion gets off the ground, Sir, it would give me the greatest of pride, if the enterprises which are located in this 23 acres of land which we are vesting in the Barbados Industrial and Development Corporation (BIDC) will include a substantial number of Barbadian entrepreneurs who are involved in a wide range of export oriented activity on a large scale which is characterised by high technology, sustainability, Sir, and most of all, significant profitability for Barbadian successful entrepreneurs.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

**ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT
SIX MEN'S BAY, ST. PETER FOR
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to introduce this Resolution, Sir,

which seeks to acquire some land at Six Men's in the parish of St. Peter for the purpose of housing development.

This land, Sir, which is known as Six Men's tenantry was earmarked for housing when it was first going to be acquired in 1986. The process had been started and the idea at that time, Sir, was to provide a development which would give an alternative accommodation for persons who were going to be relocated from the foreshore at Six Men's because of the erosion which was occurring at that point and time.

This Six Men's tenantry is adjacent to the Six Men's parcel of land which was owned by the Barbados Industrial and Development Corporation at that time, Sir. The then Government in 1988 decided to abandon this original proposal of 1986, when we were pursuing it at the time. But, an election intervened and the rest is history. They decided to abandon this original idea and instead, to place the persons who were affected by erosion over on the sea side, in what was to have been the industrial park at Six Men's.

Sir, due to a continual high demand for housing in the area, and given that it was widely known that the Government was planning to acquire this land for housing, it resulted in a high level of squatting in the area. An uncontrolled development pattern therefore ensued in the area. This area in question that we are seeking to acquire is 120 888 square metres which is something in the region of 27 acres.

There is a mixture in that area, Sir, of the original portion of the Six Men's tenantry, which would have had families who would have lived there for over 100 years and who were therefore longstanding persons in the community. But there also would have developed around that nucleus, a number of squatters and persons who were otherwise illegally tenantry. Because there was a practice then, as I suppose there perhaps might be now, where persons suspected that either the Government may own a piece of land or they are about to own it, they try to position themselves in place that if the Government gets it then, they have to make provision for them.

But the net result, Sir, is that there are now some 161 houses on this land in question and that is not an inconsequential number, Sir. Most of the houses are of fairly substantial construction at this point and most of them are served by utility services and so on. Some are not, but the majority are. The householders have generally expressed an interest in purchasing the spots and having the matter resolved. In fact, time has shown that the longer the matter continues to be unresolved, the greater is the problem of squatting.

The Government does not condone this whole idea of persons squatting on lands. We have had to take action in other districts where there has been squatting. Particularly where that squatting was in relation to Zone 1 water areas, or in water courses, or in other areas where the Government will still ultimately have to take care of the problem. The case was borne out quite well in the example at Weston. In addition to persons who were on the flat portion of Weston and who were legitimately located there, there were a number of persons who, without sight from public road had squatted down in the water course in Weston, lovely steps leading down to their homes and so on.

But, at the end of the day, even though they were squatting, when the torrent of water swept through that area, the Government still had a social responsibility to provide assistance and relief at a time when it was needed. 7.05 p.m.

The Government cannot condone the action but Government also has a social responsibility to bring an equitable resolution to the matter. I do not think the society would expect that Government would simply take a position "well, you are a squatter, you will have to move, take whatever comes your way" because that would cause, I am sure, a major problem.

The situation also is one in which the landowner, in order to bring resolution to such a matter, would naturally have to go through the appropriate legal procedures and so on which, as we all know, can be long, costly and tedious. Although the matter speaks of acquisition of land and so on, of course, Government is obligated by the same act to ensure that fair compensation is given for any property which is acquired for public purpose. Therefore, the owner will be fully compensated for this land.

Sir, with the acquisition of this land, the Government would be in a position to control and rationalise the development of this Six Men's Tenantry in an orderly way. It will be able to bring an end to the continued illegal squatting and other unplanned development where in the areas of the tenantry where there is a need for road services, waterborne facilities and other utilities, that will also have to be provided by way of the development which will be done. The Government will also then facilitate the purchase of the land by the tenants who are there and where there is additional room on the tenantry, and it is estimated that an additional 100 houses can be accommodated in the area, that that would also be developed in order to provide that opportunity for development in that area.

Sir, we are satisfied that the acquisition of this land will bring an end to what has been a problem for over

10 years for the residents as well as for the owner of the property there.

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

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, I rise to speak in this Resolution a little bit scared of the interpretation on the Other Side because already this afternoon they have accused me of leaving the constituency of Christ Church South and looking to defend the constituents of St. Peter.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am sure I heard the word "constituency".

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Of leaving the area of the south to venture into the area of the north. Sir, when I go into the north of Barbados it is not venturing. It is a place of my birth. As they say, "my navel string is buried somewhere under the breadfruit tree in the back of that small dwelling at Mile & A Quarter where my Mum and Dad still live."

Sir, the Resolution today contemplates the acquisition of lands at Six Men's which have been thoroughly described by Senator Farley. Indeed, again as is Senator Farley's strength, he puts these positions as if, "well, here exists this little Six Men's problem all by itself in Six Men's and here the solution comes back. Ladies and gentlemen, let us close our books, turn off our microphones and go home." That, Sir, is Senator Farley's skill. He has displayed it again in his presentation of the situation at Six Men's.

In truth and in fact, Sir, the history of this piece of land and the history of this acquisition is a lot more emotional than that. We are talking about a potentially extremely valuable piece of property, a value which was enhanced first of all by the development on the landside, as I call it, of Heywoods where many properties were sold toward the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s and some rather lovely houses were erected.

I believe the last development there would have been the development by Ideal Homes. They started the development there for some houses which were being sold, I think at the time for \$250 000 and \$300 000 properties. Of course, the value even before that had been tremendously enhanced first of all by the development of Heywoods Resort, as it was then called.

Further, at the time of privatisation and the sale of Heywoods to BS&T, for all intents and purposes, and the renaming to Almond Beach, and the almost sudden development of a viable tourism product with the oncoming of the all-inclusive product being offered which was very attractive and which became an area of much development.

Then, Sir, the Port St. Charles Development came about. That is now history, or modern history, as they say, as Port St. Charles is attracting probably some of the highest cost development seen in Barbados to date and probably to be only bettered from what is in the public domain by planned developments in the area of Bennetts and Molyneux in the very near future. So we wait to see what is happening in this regard, the point being that Port St. Charles and Heywoods took over that area and have brought that area of St. Peter into a very high valued area of Barbados real estate. It is now probably rivalling the Sandy Lane area in terms of value because of the special development which has taken place there.

There is no quarrel – and I keep making this point – there is no basic quarrel with this kind of development. We accept that it needs to come about but along with this came, as I like to say, the erosion of the use of these beaches in the area by the public of Barbados, and this is an area which is very dear to my heart, Sir.

I remember the Sunday afternoons which we enjoyed. It was like the entire village of Ashton Hall, Mile & A Quarter and Benn Hill went to swim on Sunday afternoons religiously. All the young boys, all the mothers and all the fathers of the village would have found themselves at Heywoods on Sunday evenings and we would swim there. Sir, that is where I learnt, for instance, to swim and my expertise in swimming which I have been able to transfer to Oistins Bay. I can now span the length of Oistins Bay out to the boats and back in with safety. This began and was nurtured in the area of Heywoods Beach where I learnt my first strokes in swimming.

Of course, Senator Farley would not have been able to give us this kind of amplification in terms of the potential of either Heywoods or Six Men's having himself been born in St. George and up until now the promised beach in St. George has not been delivered so Senator Farley can only wait for the cities to arrive where he can build his industrial parks and set up his shopping areas as is his expertise.

Sir, Six Men's estate and the one which has caused the most debate is the one which is described probably in the Second Schedule belonging to a Mr. Broome. Whether it is a T. B. Broome or not, I am not sure.

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Cameron Broome, Sir. This land has created quite a lot of stir over the recent past, Sir, there has been threats, of course, of people being forced off it. It is Mr. Broome's right, whether it be his right under the Constitution of Barbados or his right under the World Trade Organisation Charter or what but as is

his right, he dreamed of creating a project probably at the same scale as the adjacent Port St. Charles, so what is wrong with that?

7.15 p.m.

However, the difficulties which the Government faced in terms of the squatting as referred to by the Honourable Senator Farley, I was relieved that he did go on to add that he would not be condoning squatting at the Belle or he was not going to condone squatting in Bibby's Lane, he was not going to condone squatting in Arthur's Seat nor he was not going to condone squatting in Six Men's. Some amount of squatting took place as he said persons got the impression that the land would have been converted to Government use and indeed to Government use for housing, which came about at the time when some people had to be re-sited. I do not know why he said this disparagingly because if your land on the beach side is eroded and you have to be moved in order to maintain that community spirit and the village, there is absolutely nothing wrong in my mind with looking around you to see where the nearest piece of idle unused land is and using that land.

The decision that was taken to place the houses that were in danger on the seaside on the land side by the Democratic Labour Party, as history has shown, would have been taken given all the factors before them at the time. I do not think that it is a particularly strong point to score, to say that the Democratic Labour Party put them there and started the ball rolling. I think that Government when they are given mandates have the full authority. You do not give a Government half of a Government to run or tell them, well you can run the Ministry of Housing but you cannot acquire land or give ministerial orders to have people moved from one site to another especially for their safety. So it is not a big point and it happens from time to time where land usage sometimes have to be changed. We have had examples in the public even recently and indeed they were not apparently as honourable as the changes that had to occur in this case, the changes that have occurred for instance at Apes Hill, Sir, appear to be clouded with more mystery and are not as open for public scrutiny as these have been.

We have a situation where there are a large number of squatters, I think he referred to 167 households of some sorts.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. The business of this Honourable Chamber is not conducted in secret and therefore to suggest that a matter which would have been dealt with by the Senate that is the decision to rescind a previous decision to acquire land cannot be so described without casting an unfortunate reflection on this Honourable Chamber. It cannot be described as being

secret or being not open to public scrutiny and I would therefore request that the Honourable Senator withdraws his suggestion that the transaction as referred to at Apes Hill was perhaps less than honourable and that it was not opened to public scrutiny because all the business done in this Honourable Senate is by definition open to public scrutiny.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I will ask you to withdraw the reference.

Mr. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, Sir, with respect, I was not talking about anything that happened in this Chamber, Sir. What do I have to withdraw, Sir, I am talking about public debate about the use of Apes Hill land, about the fact that the land was acquired by Government and road and pipes were put in and I am talking about public debate that that land was subsequently returned to the same C. O. Williams. So I do not understand the interruptions.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The matter was debated in this Chamber.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I am not referring to that debate, Sir. I am talking about public debate about it, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Any debate in this Chamber is a public debate.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, I am referring to publishing in the newspapers for instance. I am saying that that is what I have seen reported in the newspaper.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am going to ask you to withdraw the reference. The interpretation which the Honourable Leader of the Senate put on what you said was the same interpretation which I drew.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, if you ask me to withdraw the Honourable Senator Farley's interpretation of my presentation, I will do so.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not asking you to withdraw the interpretation, I am just asking you to withdraw what you said in the context in which it was said and in which it was understood.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I withdraw any remark, Sir, which would reflect on the work of the Senate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is satisfactory to me.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, the point being that change of use will occur sometimes, will be forced

upon Government after Government and sometimes change of use might even be more transparent than on other occasions.

Sir, in the case of Six Men's we had a situation where as many as 150 families probably have made their homes there by one or other arrangement. And so in some regards, Government's hands were tied because the choices in respect to disrupting households as against an acquisition which would allow the community to continue as an existing community, the choice would have obviously been a difficult one. One would have to hope then, Sir, that this kind of arrangement will certainly take into consideration Mr. Broomes or the owner of the land being fairly compensated and this has been referred to already by Senator Farley in which he indicated that it is Government's intention to ensure that the land owner referred to in the Schedules attached will be fairly compensated. I certainly hope on Mr. Broome's behalf that this compensation will not be characterised by the usual tardiness of these kinds of acquisition but will be attended, Sir, with some dispatch in order that his dreams, though not maybe recognised in full, will be partly realised.
7.25 p.m.

More important too is that Government and the National Housing Corporation, more specifically, must pay closer attention to the property which it may acquire from time to time and it has been referred to before where large land banks might be built up with the result of indeed being simply forgotten in some areas. Of course as Senator Farley intimated, Sir, if the public out there sees a piece of land in a strategic location, it is not being attended, nobody comes to look after it and they can squeeze in a lodging, Sir, and things are rough and tough as they are for a number of people in Barbados today, well then, Sir, they will seek to do this especially as Government continues to find it so difficult to provide land and housing at rates that are truly affordable to the purses of the people who most need this land and, Sir, it has been referred to many, many times the owning and the provision of housing at whatever price.

Some people talk about \$40 000. Some people talk about \$50 000. Some people talk about \$15 000, Sir, the point being that the numbers that are being called in terms of available mortgages, etc. are not necessarily attainable by members of the society who most need them. Until our programmes take all these things into consideration, Sir, we will have to be very careful about how we go about it.

Sir, indeed the entire development of this area will be very important and will be carefully scrutinized by Barbadians over the next 3 to 4 years as it unfolds. The exclusive zone that has been created and I related the story of Heywoods Beach already, the exclusive zone that has

been created by the development of Almond Beach and Port St. Charles cannot be tolerated throughout this country and we have to make sure that Government seeks to develop the lands in this area in a way that the people of Six Men's and the people of Barbados can use the lands more fully.

I must indicate that already there is some progress in this regard because there is activity on Friday nights and Saturday nights at Six Men's very similar to the kind of activity there is at Oistins where Barbadian entrepreneurs are involved in the provision of fare for locals and tourists alike.

The other important consideration, Sir, must be the exact one which was referred to by Senator Farley and that is the erosion of the beach side of Six Men's and indeed going on further into Half Moon Fort where enough attention has not yet been paid to this programme and we know that under the Democratic Labour Party administration we have been able to secure areas off Accra Beach for instance. We have been able to do some remedial work at Paynes Bay where we were losing the cliff sides and we need to look at programmes to involve reclaiming of our beaches in the Six Men's/Half Moon Fort area. This is of urgent importance, Sir, if it is to provide a truly fulfilling area in terms of where the Barbadian public, as obviously now must be the intent of Government to provide an alternative area, where the public from Maynards, Ashton, Mile-and-a-Quarter, and Benn Hill can go to enjoy the beauty and the comforts of the invigorating comforts of a sea bath, something which the tourist come to Barbados and pay for, pay thousands and thousands of dollars to have, something which we have in abundance free, and for one reason or another, and I hope certainly not deprivation, Sir, are not always able to take full advantage of.

I would like to see the programme of development for Six Men's and the surrounding area which would be developed around this acquisition include this kind of beach development. It must also, as a sort of counter or balancing act to the kind of development that is taking place at Port St. Charles for instance, it must include opportunities for more ordinary Barbadian business people to get involved in programmes on that side of the country.

Certainly on that side of Six Men's there are at least 2 old sugar bonds where one can have, I do not know the ownership right now, but one can envisage development of shopping complexes where young Barbadians or old Barbadians alike can display their goods for sale either to tourist or to locals. I do not like this idea too much of developing shopping complexes with tourists in mind.

I believe, Sir, that we have to develop things for our community. We cannot run away or chase away our

Barbadian public either by the type of goods offered or by the prices of the goods offered and I would like to see the development in Six Men's take on a very local characteristic, the development possibly of a market for indigenous food.

We have heard reference again to the lacking in terms of the consumption of local foods. We would like to see this kind of development ensue. We would like to see some order and structure placed on the present activity which though extremely useful is not necessarily as healthy or wholesome as it could be and I would think that some pages could be taken out of the leaf of the developers of the Oistins project in terms of the tiling etc. of the areas where the fish is provided and the provision of benches.

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I do not care whether it is BLP or DLP. Don't you realise that by now? But this time too we must address the provision of seating because one of the drawbacks of the Oistins project, regrettably is that whenever there is rain the entire project goes into a fiasco and the resort to the rum shops and the fish vendors do not necessarily have the opportunity to do as well as they should. So we should look at adequate coverage of the areas where the vending is contemplated and covering of the seating that is going to be provided.

If, Sir, the Members on that Side do not want to cover it they will be there only until 1999 and I will make sure, in spite of Senator Forde's objection, that they are covered.

7.35 p.m.

So we will aim toward carrying on from the good work and the good example set in Oistins, Sir, and making sure that Six Men's becomes a beautiful area where a number of Barbadians can really enjoy for a long, long time.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I hate to interrupt the Honourable Senator, but I have not at any point in this debate made any comment at all on this Resolution and I would like for the Honourable Member to please withdraw the comments he made.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not sure what the comments are.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: I have not objected to anything in this particular Resolution. I have said nothing. He said "despite Senator Forde's objection."

Mr. PRESIDENT: He has in fact, concluded his speech, but what in fact, you said, will be on the record.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I just want to make a few comments on this Resolution. First of all, Sir, I support the Resolution because it brings order to what is evidently chaos because, Sir, as we heard from the Leader of the Senate, the history of the whole project...

Certain remarks made by Senator Barker were ordered to be struck from the records by Mr. PRESIDENT.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: In 1988, the then Government which was characterised by inaptitude, totally mismanaged this whole project and allowed a chaotic situation to develop. And true to form, it has now taken this Barbados Labour Party to put wrong things right and to offer security to the 160-odd families. In spite of the fact that some are squatters, you still have 160 families tonight as a result of us passing this Resolution, who would sleep a little bit more comfortable.

Sir, it also shows that there is a very significant demand for affordable land in this island of Barbados. Although, Sir, in an earlier Resolution, some Senators commented that they do not see the homelessness that we talk about, in evidence, this is testimony to the fact that there are a lot of people out there who will go to almost any desperate ends to find somewhere to put their house.

Do not forget, Sir, that as a result of the Democratic Labour Party's manhandling of the Freehold Tenancies Act, which reduced the qualification from five to two, a lot of people were displaced. I wonder, Sir, if some of these squatters were not the result of that action by the then Democratic Labour Party Government. I am glad to say that we are at least bringing some sort of order to this situation.

Before I go any further, I want to make reference to a point made by the last speaker when he referred to Apes Hill. Sir, I want to alert the last speaker that impressions, it is very true at times, matter more than fact. The impression that he created was that the Government put in roads in Apes Hill and handed back the project to Mr. C. O. W. Williams. But, that is not true.

The Government did not put in those roads. I checked on it.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: The roads were put in by the same developer. The Government acquired the land, but when the Government did not go through with the resiting there of the people from White Hill, the land was given back to the developer. So the impression which was given that Government put in the roads and handed it back to the developer, is not true. The Honourable Member knows

that but he continues to create an impression. I just wanted to correct that misconception that has been deliberately put there.

In any case that land went back into low cost housing for which there is a great demand and is evident by the fact that similar houses at Bourne's Village were snapped up in a short space of time. So, the constant reference to Apes Hill, just seeks to create an impression, which is not borne out by fact and to continue to perpetuate that is just an attempt to further mislead people.

At Six Men's we have a situation where the rights of an individual are balanced against the rights of the society as a whole. Because, if you have a community which has been in total existence of 100 years or more, it is not fair to remove that community and a community that has been settled and developed, for as long as all of us in here have been alive we have heard of the Six Men's community, it would not be fair then, for these people to be uprooted from the place where they spent all their lives. I am not talking about the squatters. I am talking about the families who were there legally. A lot of the families had a legal entitlement to be there, because they were tenants of the Mr. Broomes or whoever was the owner before him. Some were squatters but some were legal tenants. We have to balance their rights against the rights of the individual.

The point is that the owner of the land is not the owner to the extent that he will be paid a fair market price. Under the laws of the land, Sir, as all of us are familiar, once the Government has acquired land, the owner is compensated. If the two parties cannot agree on the price, then a valuation is done and both parties would have to agree to that valuation.

Sir, so the owner of this land is going to be compensated and the 161 families will then be consoled and will have the right to purchase the land. Sir, whether or not he gets the money is beside the point because a marina was not there in the first place. If he so desires, he can take the money, and any incentives which are currently in force and he can then, since he is obviously a friend of the last Senator, he can put a marina in Christ Church South and hope, Sir, that will save a lost cause.

In my view, Sir, this is a fair solution to a messy problem where both sides can come out of this situation in a win-win situation. The owner of the land has his compensation in the form of ready cash. The 161 families, a lot of whom were legal tenants, because not all 161 families were squatters, some of them were legal tenants. So then, they will get their satisfaction in terms of proper security and the threat of eviction will be removed from the heads of 161 Barbadian families.

In all fairness, I think that that is a fair solution and I do not see the problem that the last speaker has with this Resolution. He should be supporting this Resolution since, as he said, his navel string is buried in St. Peter and he will be glad that a lot of St. Peter families, families, Sir, that he might know, would have the sort of security that all Barbadians would long for and that is to own a piece of real estate and to have a legal title to this real estate.

Sir, I want to support this Resolution and commend the Government for once again, showing what good Government is all about, taking messy situations and finding a solution which is fair and equitable to all sides concerned.

Thank you very much, Sir.
7.45 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, although I am going to support this Resolution, listening to the contributions to the debate I have some concerns about what type of message we are sending to squatters. Are we telling people that they could just go and squat on land and then the Government is going to buy it? I think people ought to be informed and educated that squatting is wrong, and that they should not go and squat and then hope that the Government will acquire the land so that in the end they get a piece of land.

I agree that Government should try and buy land and make it available to persons at a cost they can afford but one needs to draw the line between those people who were legally on the land and those people who decide that they are just going to go and squat and then end up with the property. We have to get that through to every Barbadian in this country if not what we are going to find is that other people are going to follow suit, go and start squatting on other bits of land and hope that before elections the Government will acquire the land so they would be comfortable and there will be no problem.

Mr. President, I myself am also from Speightstown. I was born in St. Peter. I am accustomed to using the beaches, both Six Men's and Heywoods. My concern is that I visited Port St. Charles and I do not see how if I was still living in Speightstown I am going to get on the beach. I really do not know what provisions are being made for the people in Speightstown and around the areas to use the beach to which they were accustomed. I am very concerned about it. I feel that they should make provision for persons to get access.

I was allowed to go through and I went and visited the condominium. I had no problems being shown around. It was very beautiful but the way it is built it is a completely secluded area with no access.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I have been there and that is what I have seen. I am appealing and saying that there should be enough access for the people of the area to enjoy the beach to which they have been accustomed.

Apart from that comment, Mr. President, I will support the Resolution.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I would just like as an elucidation there on what Senator Rickinson said and reference to this beach being exclusive. There is a public access situated between Almond Beach and Port St. Charles with a parking lot. You can go right away down and walk on the beach and then, of course, you have access to the Port St. Charles Beach and Almond Beach. There is no problem there whatsoever.

Secondly, I would like to get some clarification. I am getting a bit confused here. Senator Barker said we were going to acquire this land at its value. I would think that the land at Port St. Charles would be valued somewhere in excess of \$10 a square foot. Is Government going to pay \$10 a square foot for this land? If they do, let us say they only pay \$7 a square foot for this land, it means that these lots they are going to have to make available to the people are going to be in the region of \$30 000 – \$50 000 per lot. How can that happen? Are we going to acquire this land and then sell it at a huge subsidised price? This would sound like a very strange thing to do. Should we be really putting housing on land that is so valuable? I do not know but from a previous debate in here one gets the impression that this is extremely valuable land. Would it not have made sense to move them backwards away from it so that that valuable land would not be used just for that kind of housing?

Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise at the conclusion of debate on this matter just to make one or two quick points by way of information. First of all some mention has been made of this matter of beaches, access to beaches and so on. This has been a matter which had been left perhaps a bit loose for too long.

I know that the early interpretation of ownership rights in relation to high watermarks has caused some problems and concerns over time because high water marks tend to shift with tides. An interesting area which has come up is what happens in relation to where new land is developed by accretion – is a technical term I understand – as a result of governmental activity. For example, on the

eastern side of Accra Beach where as a result of the work which is being done to remove some of the sea grass and to shore up the reef protection system additional beach land was created on that side. Promptly soon after I noticed that the restaurant facility there seems to have extended its facility to the new high watermark.

The Government is therefore moving to do a number of things as far as beach land is concerned. Really the law as I understand it, is that all accreted land belongs to the Crown and the Crown by virtue of securing its right of that land, will also be able to ensure continued passage because one of the techniques that have been used by land owners on beach front property is by extending their full constructions out toward the high watermark, they have been able to frustrate the natural flow of persons along the beach and steps are being taken to deal with that type of situation.

Another matter that has arisen which has an impact on access to the shoreline is the building of guard walls right up to the edge of a cliff. A Town Planning Order was signed some time earlier this year, or late last year, which prohibits developments which are within 10 feet of a cliff edge without the prior permission of the Town Planner so that the practice of building right up to the cliff and thereby frustrating efforts to walk around as well is one that is getting our attention.

In addition, the matter of coastal erosion is one which is undergoing continuous study by the officers at the Coastal Conservation Management Unit. They have been doing excellent work in that area. They have been able to map the movement of sand right around the coast and they have been following quite closely any groynes which have been illegally erected by individuals on the coastline because they are aware of the impact. We anticipate that with the heightened awareness and the development of predictive models by the Coastal Conservation Unit and the continued execution of successful projects around the coast that we will be able to reduce the impact of erosion on the coast. They, however, point out for our benefit that there are areas along the coast of which it is inadvisable to have development right up to the water line because every several years in particular areas there is a natural removal of some of the sand and it is replaced by natural processes in due time but part of that natural movement is disturbed by some man-made structures.

7.55 p.m.

I just wanted to add that bit of information to the debate and to let the Senate know of the continued work which is being done by the Coastal Management Unit and the fact that the Ministry of the Environment takes this whole matter of preservation of beaches and public access to beaches as a very, very serious matter.

Mr. President I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 5 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A
RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CODRINGTON,
SPOONERS HILL, LONG GAP,
ST. MICHAEL FOR ROAD
IMPROVEMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to introduce this Resolution which seeks the Senate's approval for the acquisition of some 22 parcels of land required as part of the road improvement works in the Codrington, Cave Hill area and a little bit beyond.

The original scope of the project included the acquisition of 26 portions of land to facilitate the construction of traffic lights, the widening of the junction and other road improvements at the junction of Cave Hill and Codrington and Stadium Road. That work also included Sir, the provision of additional turning lanes to facilitate movement of traffic, the construction of sidewalks, the provision of a layby and the setting back of guard walls and that project would have run in terms of geographic distance from the junction of Codrington and Cave Hill Road down to just beyond Tyrol Cot. Once the project was in progress, it was recognised by all concerned, the general public and everybody involved that it would make infinitely more sense to extend the scope of the project and to extend the work down toward the Lawrence T. Gay School because it was recognised that the entrance to Long Gap was very narrow. It was recognised that there were a number of children particularly who travelled from the Cave Hill direction, Stadium Road and lower part of Green Hill down towards Lawrence T. Gay and that here we were providing sidewalks and widening the road at the junction but then the children had to face the traffic going past Long Gap and going towards the school.

It was decided as well that whilst the construction work was in progress there and whilst persons were mobilised in that location it would make a lot more sense to extend the project right away and try to put the project on a fast track. The land owners were therefore notified and the project was extended so that the road widening works for Long Gap included the widening of the entrance to give a safer entrance and exit to cars at the Long Gap, Spooners Hill junction and also, as I said, to provide pavements right through to the Lawrence T. Gay Primary School.

It is therefore now necessary to complete the formal acquisition process so that the owners can be compensated

for the land. The works have been concluded already and the project is a wonderful one and it is working. The 26 original portions – a four feet here and a three feet there off the frontages was part of the early part of the project. However, because of the decision to expand the scope of the project going from Tyrol Cot down towards Lawrence T. Gay and rather than going back to that three years from now, they decided to use the same equipment and resources that were already mobilised by way of expansion. The project therefore ended up being concluded ahead of all of the legal formalities of acquisition which as soon as they are concluded will allow the Government to pay the compensation to the owners for the lost of some narrow areas of frontage.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, given the lateness of the hour I wonder why we carried on with this matter but of course, it is not my authority to question why we have carried on, the fact that we carried on, I will discharge my duty and I take this opportunity to address the Resolution before us dealing with the acquisition of land in Codrington and Spooners Hill and Long Gap, St. Michael. I am sure that the Government side would have heard some of the difficulties being encountered by road users in Barbados.

Sir, I believe that the condition of our roads must now be in the worst state that they ever have been. I think I should repeat that, Sir, for emphasis. I believe that road conditions in Barbados are now in the worst state that they ever have been since this country has achieve nationhood. I have never encountered so much interruption and disruption, I have never encountered so much bad timing and total disregard for public feeling as I have encountered over the last six months to one year in terms of the road projects that have been undertaken, the way the priorities have been set, the way roads have been cut and re-cut and repaired and then opened again. Sir, most of all the obvious lack of direction in terms of policy and that is what I want to deal with, the obvious lack of policy and input as to what goes on and when it goes on. Do not come and tell me about any utility company requiring to do this or to do expansion or the Water Authority having to lay new pipes etc. I am saying, Sir, that these things, yes they have to take place but they can take place as part of a plan.

We had a lot of trouble in Christ Church when the Sewerage Project moved into the Christ Church area and began its excavation.
8.05 p.m.

Sir when the sewerage project moved into Christ Church area of course leaving behind total chaos on the roads in Bayville, which has not yet been repaired we tried our best to extract from the Ministry responsible for the sewerage project some kind of plan and some kind of commitment towards advertising at least, as they would say, Sir, minimalist advertising, to indicate where the project was likely to impact from time to time and we achieved that under vigorous approaches and under much bad treatment by some policy makers in the relevant Ministry.

We were accused of all kinds of things, of politicking. We were accused of playing party politics etc. The point is, Sir, if we continue in Barbados every time we get up to speak to a certain malady we cannot speak to it without being accused of playing party politics well we are in a sad state.

The road improvements at Codrington I remember when the lights for instance there were switched on. I remember the fanfare because it is fashionable for this administration to fan and fare these things and I remember the headlines which said, "Talking lights switched on". So curious as I am, Sir, I decided that having read the headlines and seen the Minister of Transport symbolically turn on these lights I said I would have to investigate this talking thing because, imagine going up to a street light and you say to the street light, "I would like to cross the road" and the street light answers "Okay, you hold on a second, young man" and then, Sir, "Safe to cross". So I went to these lights and I did the normal thing, pressed the button and after some time and it went through the cycle, the walking image came on and I heard "Cuckoo, Cuckoo". Sir that was the extent of the talking lights. So, Sir, I went there expecting the lights to tell me what was advertised by the Government to be thoroughly disappointed when this light, sounding like a Cuckoo bird came on in response to my request to cross the street. Sir, this in truth and in fact reflects the way road improvement is being dealt with, for to use the word "road improvement" would be a misnomer, the way that the roads of Barbados are being treated because that is the way they are being treated by this administration in terms of policy, Sir, in terms of what they are doing.

Sir, these things are serious because even today as I was coming to this Chamber to do the work of the people of Barbados the sad news came that both those young men who were involved in that accident on Sunday morning had died bringing the road fatalities in Barbados to something like 24 or 25. I think this is sad and I extend my sincere sympathies to the families but it is a reflection on our road conditions and what is happening in our roads in terms not only of the physical condition of the road, but in terms of the condition of the vehicles which are being allowed on

our roads. Are we allowing wanton abuse and misuse of our traffic regulations? Are we allowing people to exceed the speed limit? We have got traffic lights in place that do not work. Many of them, Sir, not far away, you can take a stroll after this meeting to the top of Broad Street.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not going in that direction.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I will go out, Sir, and check myself and I will report at the next sitting whether they were working or not. But the pedestrian crossing lights, where there are pedestrian crossings, it is a serious matter in Barbados where they are un-highlighted. There have also been what to my mind are silly attempts to put up signs that are not saying anything. New signs that you cannot see to indicate that these crossings are there. These are crossings that are placed in areas of schools, in our smaller towns where we find a concentration of old people who do their shopping at pensions day and whatever and, Sir, there seemingly is no attempt to improve the conditions of these crossings until somebody is killed.

I have heard suggestion after suggestion on our radio programmes, giving good ideas in terms of how do we approach the painting of these signs. I heard one suggestion which I think is excellent. It does not have to cost that much. You do not have to put up any electricity or any lights and that kind of thing. You can have a painting in the road indicating "Slow", "Crossing", something like that to indicate to the driver that there is a pedestrian crossing.

Well Senator Forde is out of her seat now but we have got this grand building erected with automatic gates and everything on Constitution Road, the Ministry of Education, and just above it, on the Constitution Bridge is the ridiculous situation of not one but two shaded pedestrian crossings. So when you approach that bridge, first of all the crossings are very feint and second to begin with, as they say, Sir, you have got to wonder which crossing the pedestrian will use. There is absolutely no attempt by the Ministry of Transport and Works to address this problem and we have got Minister after Minister and policymaker after policymaker making excuses as to why the road conditions in Barbados should be as disrupted as they are today. I find it absolutely intolerable.

Sir, in Redman Village ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: What about Codrington and Spooners Hill and the traffic lights.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: We are talking about traffic lights, Sir, and traffic lights that are not working.

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are not talking really about that. We are talking about compulsory acquisition of land.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, the land at Codrington and Spooners Hill. Some of the land was used not only for provision of sidewalks for the people using the area but it was also used for the provision of the traffic lights at Codrington, Sir. The remarkable story though in relation to the provision of traffic lights by this administration, Sir, is that after much demand, much public outcry, lights have been placed at Redman Village and have been in position now for about 6 months. I do not know whom they are waiting on to switch them on, if they are waiting for somebody to lose his life or limb. I am calling, Sir, on the Honourable Attorney General to take a little time out of his obviously busy schedule, if that is what they are waiting on, to go and turn on the lights at Redman Village.

8.15 p.m.

Sir, it is ridiculous that you have a situation where the lights are in position, they have not been blown down yet, like the others. They have not been blown down like the ones at Bank Hall which is very near to Codrington. The lights at Codrington look to me like they will soon get blown out too. With the kind of weather that is being contemplated and with the changes in the weather patterns, for example, the heat and then the cold and then the effect of wind during the hurricane season, we do not know what will happen.

But, I think that it is true and I will try to be fair, Sir. It happened in our watch too. Street lights were blown down while the Democratic Labour Party was in Government, Sir, but I would have thought that by now somebody would have done something to have improved the quality of fixtures that we buy. But most important, if there is some difficulty besides the presence of the Attorney General to turn the lights on, maybe they should tell the public of Barbados what this difficulty is and the road improvements that have occurred not only at Codrington, but the road improvements that have occurred by way of provision of street lights at Redmans Village should be fulfilled and not be a laughing stock. It is only a laughing stock, Sir, because nobody has been hurt yet, but I think that it is a ridiculous testimony to the policy of this administration in terms of road improvements.

So, we are faced with a Resolution which is introduced by Senator Farley, Sir, and it is accompanied by great tribute being paid to the Government because, not only did we extend the project beyond Tyrol Cot, but we took it down to Long Gap, where the gap was not long but narrow and all that kind of fancy talk, Sir. I have said in here and I am getting tired of saying it that the facts do not represent what is going on out there, because the grandiose and the fan-fare and the flurry that might have attended the project at Codrington is not reflected in any of the seriousness being passed on to the public at Redmans Village.

I only ask why? I only beg, Sir, that the appropriate ears have heard and I am sure that Senator Forde is going to make sure that those lights are turned on before Friday. She is an industrious Senator, Sir. She works hard at her work and I know that the people of Redmans Village can rest assured that Senator Forde will have those lights turned on, even if she has to turn them on herself, before Friday. She is not going to let me come back in here and talk about that again.

Sir, the project at Codrington and Spooners Hill, *etcetera*, was indeed, as Senator Farley indicated, well executed and by all reports, was completed well in time and within the budget. There are areas of it, Sir, which beg for attention even now, especially, Sir, if you are leaving the lights and you are going toward Green Hill. The filter to take you into White Hall, *etcetera*, could be more strategically placed. I think that the Heads of Government should come together with their technocrats and decide if something can be done about that left turn.

In actual fact, like so many of the left filters, Sir, in Barbados, they are not really useful and cause road blocks. Again, if Senator Forde does not want to do it, Sir, it is not too long now, it is only two years and we will do it, Sir. The point is that if you are going to have a left filter, you might as well have a left filter that serves a purpose and not a left turn that is blocked after every two vehicles. This is technical information which is there and available for scrutiny.

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: There are litigating circumstances, of course, and not least among them is the difficulty with that corner. There will be a lot of bridge work involved and there are houses. There will also be some acquisition of disruption, but this administration is not unknown to acquire as they see fit. If it is fit that the adjustment has to be made and that you can provide a better and more useful road for the road users of Barbados, well, then that is the strategy which we should follow. So we could look, Sir, to really completing the improvements and make sure that the left filter, applying to the White Hall Road is made more effective. I think that is the way to sum it up, Sir.

Sir, the Resolution gives us the opportunity to debate in some measure some of the difficulties which the travelling public of Barbados are experiencing on our roads today. We reflect on the dangers which our roads continue to present in terms of the traffic that uses them and there has been a tremendous increase in the density of traffic on Barbados roads. One wonders sometimes, unfortunately when it is one's turn and we must, I think, revisit our regulations in terms of the speed limits that we apply

to our so-called highways. When they were constructed, they might have been indeed seen as highways, but when you look at areas like the Wildey area and in front of Banks Breweries, *etcetera*, these are not highways, these are really cities. In the strictest sense these are cities and the potential danger which could come into effect with traffic travelling in excess of 60 kilometers per hour on these roads, is horrendous because of the human traffic crossing the street. A lot of people cross the street between BET and back to the Courtesy complex.

Another one is the roundabout in front of the Life of Barbados. I use it every evening and I believe you do too, Sir. When you see children come up to the top of that road by bus and they get off and walk into that layby area, I call it, "the rum shop layby", and they attempt to cross when the person on the right lane gives way to them, and they do not know what is coming at the back. I shudder, Sir. I do not care how the Senators on that Side might want to grovel and cringe and do what they like but. The point is that if we are looking seriously at making road improvements that make life easier and better for Barbadians, we must make as a priority the pedestrian access and we must look to a more controlled vehicular environment in this country.

The wanton use of high speeds in dense areas must come to an end. This applies equally to all of our little cities, Speightstown, Oistins, Hastings and Bay Street. What seriously fails the entire Bay Street up to Oistins area right now is the sewerage project, because that has introduced a number of sleeping policemen and it appears, sleeping project officers, too, in terms of the execution of the sewerage project, Sir. But, when they awake, I hope that they will ensure that the roads can be put back. The view of the sleeping public officers is not mine, Sir. It is a view expressed at the highest levels in this country that the sewerage project being executed, the way the roads are being treated and the disruption in our road traffic is being condemned at the highest levels in this country and rightly so.

When we were doing it, we might have been seen as political. I am happy now that ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Can we get back to the Resolution?

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: ...everybody has agreed, Sir, that there is need for more control of that sewerage project, so that there can be more compatibility. There is no reason for so much disruption, Sir.

Certainly the improvements at Codrington, Spooners Hill, Long Gap have made a difference in that area. I use that area frequently too, Sir. I was at the Lawrence T. Gay

School only a couple of nights ago to listen to the contributions of some residents. I travel that road and know what I am talking about when I say it really has improved both in terms of day when you can see and the lighting at night, Sir.

8.25 p.m.

I did not see any Members from the Other Side up there but I was there and I heard what the people of St. Michael West Central had to say. Maybe the amount of residents there was probably a reflection of the fact that they could get there and access has been made more convenient because of the improvements.

Of course, I am not going to be uncharitable, Sir. The development has included the development of Tyrol Cot which is the home of our first Premier, the late Sir Grantley Adams. I think a tremendous job has been done in this regard too, to create that area. We have to park on the other side and go across. I have not attended so far, Sir, but it is not deliberate. I hope one day to be able to visit the place and see more closely and not depend on brochures or reports. But I have been invited on a couple of occasions to functions at that facility and I look forward to being able, like so many other residents of that area, to enjoy the full facilities that are provided there.

With those few comments, Sir, I would like to indicate support for the Resolution. I hope that the words of caution and the pleas have fallen on the sober ears of Senator Farley and he would take them back to the appropriate authority. I cannot depend upon the same consideration from Senator Forde, Sir.

Thank you very much, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I had really been looking forward to debate on this Resolution if only because, as they say in the good old Barbadian tradition, my navel string is buried in Spooners Hill. I lived the very first 20 years or so of my life there and I am a frequent visitor there as I go to see my mother four or five times a week. I travel that road to get to Rock Dundo Park.

I am afraid that Senator Boyce's histrionics, melodramatics, his usual hyperbole and his diatribe really have put a whole tone on what to me would have been an uplifting occasion. Senator Boyce likes to pontificate on where he went, whom he saw, which meeting he attended, who was there, who was not there. I am beginning to believe that when he was growing up he could not walk about with the boys in the gap. He had to stay at the window and watch the boys playing. He could not play cricket so he has not gotten freedom and he likes to brag on what he can do now. You have my sympathy,

Senator Boyce. Be that as it may, Sir, Senator Boyce exaggerated to talk about the condition of roads in Barbados as being the worst they have ever been since nationhood. He could not be serious.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, I know I have had my say, but on a point of order. When I commented on the conditions of the roads, it was not an exaggeration. It was an informed conclusion on my part.

Mr. PRESIDENT: No point of order, Senator Boyce. Please take your seat. Senator Murray.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, it has been said on a number of occasions, and it is worth repeating here even if briefly. The conditions which he has been complaining about are not the conditions of roads in Barbados all over because Government has embarked on a very ambitious and well-funded road development, street lighting *etcetera*. If you look at the work of the Rural Development Commission, you will see the lights and the roads they have improved all over Barbados.

We have now this year put \$10 million into tenantry roads alone so he cannot be speaking about the roads all over Barbados. He has to be speaking about a few roads which are connected to the Sewerage Project or to the work of utilities. The utility companies themselves have admitted that there have been delays or foul-ups on their part which have contributed somewhere to the overlapping and mis-scheduling of their work which has caused it to run into the reopening of schools right into the busy school season.

Senator Boyce, Sir, also talked about the project managers, and it is the fault of the project managers when in truth and in fact, as has been established both here and news coming out of Jamaica, that there is a large fault attributed and attached to the contractors for the way they have been handling the project. Therefore, it is not fair to attack civil servants who are at the head of these projects. The project managers of Barbados are civil servants who are battling against contractors who have an established record, we now know, of dealing very badly with these issues.

Part of the problem has been, Sir, that works would have been scheduled at some time to go on Bay Street, say March 10 and the contractors are known to turn up February 5 and do it without any notice so that there could not have always been the public relations and the prior notifications to the public as had been intended to be. Therefore these are some of the factors that have contributed to the unfortunate situation which we have apologised for. We have said that some of it is largely going to be the outcome of the price we have to pay for the progress and development of our country, but be that as it may...

Sir, I am delighted to be part of the real debate on the developments at Codrington/Spooners Hill because I myself had traversed that road as a youngster and I had to dodge trucks, stand on sidewalks, jump in gutters and almost climb up walls to avoid traffic. I have lived as a youngster. I have tasted the near danger. I have escaped, at least, serious injury on several occasions as I move up and down that area. Therefore, it is a delight, Sir, to see the utter transformation that has been wrought in that area where kids and adults, the young and the old, could walk freely and safely without having to look over their shoulders at the sound of every vehicle approaching and to fear for their lives every step of the way.

I was in there a couple of weeks ago and I spent some time talking to the residents in the area stretching from both Codrington Hill down to Lawrence T. Gay and my old gap, Chapel Gap just before Grace Hill School and they are delighted. They think that, as had happened when the Barbados Labour Party in its earlier term of office brought paved roads and light to the neighbourhoods they see this as an extension of this same work and it has elevated and upgraded their whole standard of life once more. I am delighted to be part of it.

Sir, why I am so impressed is that not only can it be said that it is being done to an area that is now represented by the Barbados Labour Party Members of Parliament, but when I read in today's "Nation" on page 5C of October 22, a headline says: "Better, brighter in Crawford Land" and it tells a story...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, you are not permitted under the rules to quote from a newspaper.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, I read the delightful news. I have tasted the delightful news of similar treatment being meted out to people in Crawford Land, an area which had been represented by the Democratic Labour Party for nearly a generation. They now have their first road, their first set of street lights and to them life has now begun. Therefore, I am saying that the same feeling of affection and the gratitude I have for what has transpired at Spooners Hill and Codrington Hill, I also empathize with the residents of Crawford Land who have benefitted from the work of the Barbados Labour Party.

I commend the Ministry of Public Works for the excellent job they have done managing the project. Some of the same people who have been termed and described as sleeping project managers those very same types of persons were in charge of this project and they were able to finish it ahead of time, under budget with no cost overruns, no dislocation and ill-will toward the residents for the use of that road.

As a matter of fact, I recall very well that when that work was being done there had to be traffic diversions, the road had to be narrowed, there was dust but people took it in their stride because they realised that it was a change for the better. It was part of the price of progress. I am sure that the very same attitude will eventually prevail to the work that is being done in the areas being affected by the Sewerage Project and other massive projects for the infrastructural and social development of Barbados.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Honourable Senator constantly referred to local project managers and said that I spoke about local project managers. The project managers on the Sewerage Project are Fomento y Cubiertas who are overseas project managers. I did not in my speech refer to any local project managers. I would like the record to reflect that, Sir.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, I would just like to make two comments in relation to this particular Resolution to say that the people of the Codrington/Long Gap/Spooners Hill area have spoken. They have expressed their gratitude to this Government for the tremendous upgrading of the facilities there. I see with my naked eyes daily that it is a welcomed project. 8.35 p.m.

The only concern, Sir, that I have about the area and this is a concern that carries throughout the rest of Barbados is to do with the pedestrian crossing. The unfortunate situation is in existence there and in other districts where the signs that say that it is a pedestrian crossing are right on to the crossing and then there are no lines marked in the road for vehicles coming in the other direction to stop a good distance away from the pedestrian crossing. The same obtains right by the same traffic lights on top of the hill of Codrington where the widest part of the road is where the pedestrian crossing is placed. I am not a technician or anything but as a layman I can see that there is need for the crossings to be removed and carried a little higher up to Green Hill side and likewise the other removed.

The other final comment that I would want to make in giving my support to this Resolution is to say that I think that the Minister and officers in the Ministry of Transport & Works should be commended because at the inception of the project there was no plan to go as far as the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School and it is because of request from locals and others that the project was extended and it is to the acceptance of all. I think that where credit is due, it should be given and I think that they have done a wonderful job in that area.

Finally, Mr. President I am happy to be associated with this Barbados Labour Party's regime in the light that

this is the first time in many years that compensation for acquisition of land has been done so speedily within less than a year after these Resolutions are here. So that people whether they are rich or poor, I do not care, but property owners in that area will soon be able to receive the compensation for the lots of land that have been taken to help with the enhancement of the road in that area. I trust that that trend will continue because we know that over the years that thousands of people have been waiting sometimes more than ten years to get the monies owed to them as a result of their land being acquired and payment not coming on time.

I am happy to say that the performance of the Government is commendable and I trust that this kind of practise will continue and that we will continue to be proactive and let people know, yes we care and that is the reason why we would start to act as quickly and speedily as possible to the satisfaction of all.

Thank you and I lend my full support to this particular Resolution.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you Mr. President, I also rise to support this Resolution for road improvement which is not only visible but which has been experienced by myself and many others.

A contribution I would like to make as well is that I hope that Town & Country Planning or the Ministry of Transport & Works or whoever is responsible would not let this beautiful project be ruined by the erecting of billboards that I am seeing being erected throughout Barbados because these billboards distract you when you are driving and could lead to increased accidents. The only boards that we should be reading when we are driving is direction signs to go to certain places and certain areas. I would like to call on Town & Country Planning not to let this happen to this beautiful area and to ask those persons who have ruined our beautiful country to remove those large billboards that are being erected throughout the country.

Mr. President, Members have mentioned about zebra crossings and I agree that there is a problem but in addition to that, I would like to give the Ministry of Transport & Works very high praise on behalf of the nurses and nurses' assistants of Barbados. We requested a zebra crossing in front of the Psychiatric Hospital and it was erected in no time. We needed it both for the nurses and especially the patients going into the hospital.

Mr. President, I would also like to mention briefly about road improvement and hope that with this beautiful improvement we can now have the introduction of seat belts and breathalysers so that we can cut down on the accident. We have this beautiful road, we have a

highway code but the incident of traffic accidents are increasing and we need much more education to educate persons about driving and the use of roads etc. So that it is not only pot holes that are causing the accidents but it is also fast driving, bad driving *etc. etc.* and seat belts can reduce that significantly.

Mr. President, one last plea. I would like to see this type of improvement erected at the Lazaretto Hill where there are two heavy walls and if two cars are coming you can easily get squeezed as there are no pedestrian crossings. I would like to see that happen, I would be very grateful.

I congratulate you on this beautiful improvement.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate do now adjourn *sine die*.

The question that the Senate be adjourned sine die was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
8.45 p.m.

CONTENTS

PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY 1

1. The Representation of the People (Expenses) (Amendment) Regulations, 1997.
2. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 14) Order, 1997.
3. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 15) Order, 1997.
4. The Duties, Taxes and other Payments (Exemption) (No. 16) Order, 1997.
5. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 17) Order, 1997.
6. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 18) Order, 1997.
7. The Excise Tax (Rate of Tax) Order, 1997.
8. The Sugar Industry (Sugar Workers' Provident Fund) Order, 1997.
9. The Annual Report on the Operations of the Severance Payments Scheme for the period January 1 to December 31, 1996.
10. Report on the Operations of the Sugar Workers' Provident Fund for the period January 1 to December 31, 1996.
11. The Barbados Economic Report, 1996.
12. The Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Barbados Port Authority for the period January 1 to December 31, 1996.
13. The Annual Reports of the National Assistance Board for the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96.
14. The Annual Report of the National Sports Council for the year April 1, 1994 to March 31, 1995.
15. The Annual Reports of the Department of Labour for the years 1992 and 1993.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Tributes to the late Joseph J. Payne.

Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 2; Senator T. E. Barker, 3; Senator J. D. E. Boyce, 3.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SALE OF CROWN LANDS TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD, OF LAND SITUATE AT DODDS PLANTATION, ST. PHILLIP 4

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 4; Senator J. D. E. Boyce, 5; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 5; Senator N. P. Welch, 6; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 6; His Honour Senator C. L. Bolden, 7.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GRANT TO THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF LAND SITUATE AT SAINT HELENS, ST. GEORGE 8

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 8, 9, 10; Senator J. D. E. Boyce, 10, 12, 14; His Honour Senator C. L. Bolden, 14, 15, 16; Senator N. P. Welch, 16, 17; Senator the Hon. Miss O. P. Symmonds, 18, 19; Senator Miss C. Y. Forde, 19; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 20, 21; Senator C. K. Laurie, 22; Senator Miss J. C. Odle, 23; Senator T. E. Barker, 24; Senator the Hon. P. C. Goddard, 25; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 26; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 28, 31; Senator N. A. Lynch, 30, 32;

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE BARBADOS INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF LAND SITUATE AT NEWTON, CHRIST CHURCH 34

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 34, 46, 48, 49; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 36; Senator the Hon. P. C. Goddard, 39;

Senator J. D. E. Boyce, 40, 42, 43; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 44; Senator C. K. Laurie, 45; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 45.

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND SITUATE AT SIX MEN'S, ST. PETER 50

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 50; Senator J. D. E. Boyce, 52; Senator T. E. Barker, 55; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 56; Senator C. K. Laurie, 57.

ORDER NO. 5 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND SITUATE AT CODRINGTON, SPOONERS HILL, LONG GAP, ST. MICHAEL 58

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 58; Senator J. D. E. Boyce, 58; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 61; Senator Miss C. Y. Forde, 63; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 63.

SUSPENSIONS 16, 33

ADJOURNMENT 64

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 64.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BARKER, Senator T. E.

BOLDEN, His Honour Senator C. L.

BOYCE, J. D. E.

FARLEY, Senator the Honourable R. R.

FORDE, Senator C. Y.

GODDARD, Senator the Honourable P. C.

LAURIE, Senator C. K.

LYNCH, Senator N. A.

MURRAY, Senator the Honourable G. S. H.

ODLE, Senator Miss J. C.

RICKINSON, Senator Mrs. P. E.

SYMMONDS, Senator the Honourable Miss O. P.

THOMPSON, Senator Mrs. A. P.

WELCH, Senator N. P.